



Miscellaneous No. 1 (1928)

# League of Nations

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY

## Report of the British Delegates to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

LONDON, NOVEMBER 25, 1927

[*In continuation of "Miscellaneous No. 12 (1926)" (Cmd. 2780)*]

Presented by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs  
to Parliament by Command of His Majesty

LONDON:  
PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE  
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Astrak House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2; 120, George Street, Edinburgh;  
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1928

Price 9d Net

Cmd. 3008

EIGHTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

**Report of the British Delegates to the Secretary of State  
for Foreign Affairs.**

Sir,

*London, November 25, 1927.*

WE have the honour to submit the following report on the proceedings of the Eighth Assembly of the League of Nations, which met at Geneva on Monday, the 5th September, and concluded its session on Tuesday, the 27th September.

2. Of the fifty-five States Members of the League, forty-nine were represented at the Assembly, the absentees being the Argentine, Bolivia, Brazil, Honduras, Peru and Spain.

3. The growing importance attached to these meetings is evidenced by the fact that no fewer than nineteen States were represented by their Minister for Foreign Affairs. When it is remembered that a large number of Member States are far removed from the seat of the League, it will be seen that a very large proportion of those States able to send their Foreign Minister availed themselves of the opportunity.

4. In accordance with precedent, the Acting President of the Council, M. Villegas (Chile), opened the Assembly and occupied the presidential chair until the election of the new president, M. Guani (Uruguay), which took place in the course of the opening meeting.

5. At the next meeting delegates of the British Empire, France, Germany, Italy, Austria and Hayti were elected as Vice-Presidents, and of Japan, Canada, Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands, Norway, Luxemburg and Belgium as the chairmen of the six main committees.

6. The general debate, on the Report on the Work of the Council, on the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly, was begun on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 6th September, and continued during ten sittings, finishing on the morning of Monday, the 12th September.

7. The many speakers who took part in this debate dealt, between them, with nearly all branches of the League's activities, but the topic of principal importance was that of security and disarmament. Nearly all speakers expressed the hope that the work begun by the Preparatory Committee for the Disarmament Conference would be resumed as soon as possible and carried to a successful conclusion, while at the same time it was urged that a necessary condition for success was the extension and reinforcement of security, without which no great practical progress in disarmament could be looked for.

8. On the 6th September the Netherlands delegate moved the following resolution :—

“ The Assembly,

“ Convinced that, without reopening the discussions on the Geneva Protocol of 1924, it is desirable to consider whether the time has not come to resume the study of the principles on which that Protocol was based;

“ And considering it of the highest importance that the Assembly should give an impulse to the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference;

“ Decides to refer the study of the fundamental principles of the Geneva Protocol and the conclusions of the report of the Preparatory Commission to the appropriate committees.”

9. Owing to criticism, from various quarters, of the terms of this resolution, and in view, particularly, of the warning from the British delegation of the difficulties and disadvantages that might be caused by any attempt to revive the Geneva Protocol of 1924, the Netherlands delegate, at a subsequent sitting on the 10th September, submitted a revised version, as follows :—

“ The Assembly,

“ Convinced that, without reopening the discussions on the Geneva Protocol of 1924, it is desirable to consider whether the time has not come to resume the study of the principles of disarmament, security and arbitration, which are expressed in the Covenant;

“ Considering it of the highest importance that the Assembly should give an impulse to the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference;

“ Decides to refer to the Third Committee the study of the above-mentioned principles, and the chapter of the Report and Supplementary Report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat relating to disarmament.”

10. In this form the resolution was referred to the Third Committee.

11. To the same committee also was referred a resolution in the following terms, moved by the Polish delegate :—

“ The Assembly,

“ Recognising the solidarity which unites the community of nations;

“ Being inspired by a firm desire for the maintenance of general peace;

“ Being convinced that a war of aggression can never serve as a means of settling international disputes, and is, in consequence, an international crime;

“ Considering that a solemn renunciation of all wars of aggression would tend to create an atmosphere of general confidence calculated to facilitate the progress of the work undertaken with a view to disarmament;

“ Declares—

- “(1.) That all wars of aggression are, and shall always be, prohibited.
- “(2.) That every pacific means must be employed to settle disputes, of every description, which may arise between States.

“The Assembly declares that the States Members of the League are under an obligation to conform to these principles.”

12. At the conclusion of the opening debate, the Assembly broke up into the usual six main committees, whose work is dealt with separately hereunder.

13. A plenary meeting of the Assembly was held on the 15th September, for the purpose of electing new Members to the Council.

14. Under the scheme approved last year, three members—Belgium, Czechoslovakia and San Salvador—were due to retire. It was open to any of these to ask the Assembly to declare them re-eligible in spite of the general rule that retiring Members may not be re-elected. Belgium alone asked for such a declaration, but failed to secure the necessary two-thirds majority in favour of her request.

15. The three vacancies were thereupon filled by the election of Cuba, Finland and Canada.

16. The following paragraphs deal with the work of the committees :—

## FIRST COMMITTEE.

### (LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS.)

#### I.—*Accessions to International Agreements given subject to subsequent Ratification.*)

17. The Council had drawn the attention of the Assembly to the fact that, as regards agreements concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations, certain States which had not signed those agreements within the official period allowed for signature had subsequently made their accession by means of instruments which were themselves subject to ratification. The Council had pointed out that this practice did not appear to be in accordance with earlier procedure. Previously accession had always been full and complete as soon as it was notified.

18. One advantage of the new procedure was alleged to be that in certain cases a Government which had not signed a convention, and desired to accede thereto, would find it easier to obtain parliamentary approval if it had already performed an international act, such as that of notifying its accession subject to ratification. As a matter of fact, twenty-two States had followed this line of action, and it might, for the above reason, be undesirable to forbid this procedure.

19. The question was referred to a small sub-committee whose recommendations, subsequently approved by the committee itself, were to the following effect :—

The procedure of accession to international agreements given subject to ratification is an admissible one which the League should neither encourage nor discourage.

20. Nevertheless, if a State gives its accession it should know that, if it does not expressly mention that this accession is subject to ratification, it shall be considered to have undertaken a final obligation. If it desires to prevent this consequence it must expressly declare at the time of accession that the accession is given subject to ratification.

## II.—*Work of the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law.*

21. The discussion was opened by the French delegate (M. Fromageot), who gave a short résumé of the activities of the League in this matter. He reminded the committee that the Assembly in 1924 had requested the Council to convene a Committee of Experts, who were to prepare a provisional list of the subjects of international law, the regulation of which by international agreement seemed to be most desirable and realisable. The committee was to communicate this list to the Governments for their opinion, and on receiving their replies to report to the Council on the questions which were sufficiently ripe, and on the procedure that might be followed with a view to preparing eventually for conferences for their solution.

22. The committee met three times and forwarded its conclusions to the Governments. After examining the replies of the latter, the committee presented a fresh report to the Council indicating seven subjects which it considered sufficiently ripe for international regulation. These were divided into two groups, the first comprising (1) Nationality, (2) Territorial Waters, (3) Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities, (4) Responsibility of States for damage done in their territory to the person or property of foreigners, and (5) Piracy. The second group comprised (6) the Procedure of International Conferences and the Procedure for the Drafting and Conclusion of Treaties, and (7) the Exploitation of the Products of the Sea.

23. The Committee of Experts considered that points (3) and (5) might for the moment be left alone. As regards point (6), it considered that it would not be wise to attempt to draw up a hard and fast set of rules. Point (7) was a highly technical matter already being dealt with by existing organisations, and it was therefore suggested that it might be referred to the Oceanographical Commission of Copenhagen and the Economic Organs of the League.

24. The First Committee now had to decide whether to proceed with points (1), (2) and (4). Further, it would have to consider

whether it would be best to hold a general conference to study each question and perhaps draw up special conventions, or whether special conferences should be held. Finally, ought not points (6) and (7) to be recommended to the attention of Governments, and ought not a special conference to be held on the question of the exploitation of the products of the sea?

25. To these questions the delegate of Salvador added the further question whether the Committee of Experts should be requested to continue to exercise the mandate conferred upon it by the Assembly in 1924, and, if so, to what extent?

26. Considerable discussion arose on these points and on the suggestions made to the Council by the Polish delegate (M. Zaleski), who had acted as *rapporteur* when this question was before it at its June session (see "Miscellaneous No. 7 (1927)," Cmd. 2925). Though various opinions were expressed, there was no great divergence of view on fundamental points. Certain delegates, notably the Belgian delegate (M. Rolin) and the Greek delegate (M. Politis) urged that the work of the conference should be "progressist" and not only "progressive," *i.e.*, that it should not content itself simply with registering accepted facts and views, but that it should itself contribute to the evolution of international law. On this, the British delegate (Sir C. Hurst) expressed some doubt, pointing out that international law had evolved from practice and must therefore always to some extent lag behind the necessities of the moment. He also suggested that it was worth considering whether, as had been assumed by most speakers, the best method of procedure would be by way of a convention or conventions. States signing conventions definitely bound themselves to observe certain rules or provisions. There might be a generally accepted rule of international law on a certain point, but if that rule were embodied in a convention there might be a risk that States non-signatories might claim that as they were not parties to the convention they were not bound by the rule. If that were to happen, the situation would be worse than it was before. In his opinion it might be better to proceed by way of declarations to the effect that such and such was the rule of international law on a given point.

27. There was also an exchange of views as to the place where the conference should be held and the manner in which it should be summoned.

28. The Netherlands delegate (Dr. Limburg) announced that, in accordance with the desire expressed by M. Zaleski, his Government would be glad to arrange for the meeting at The Hague. Several delegates, notably the Greek and Norwegian delegates (MM. Politis and Lange), while expressing appreciation of the generous offer of the Netherlands Government, emphasised the necessity for making it plain that the conference was summoned by the League and that the direction of the work remained in the League's hands. The preparatory work should not be entrusted to any single Government but should be the general concern of the League.

29. These and other points were referred to a sub-committee, whose report was eventually adopted.

30. It was to the following effect:—

Only the three questions, of nationality, territorial waters and the responsibility of States for damage done in their territory, should be dealt with at present.

As regards point (6) above, it was suggested that the Council should be invited to instruct the Secretary-General to have this question investigated by his services, and that the Governments should at the same time be asked to give information as to their own practice. The proposal of the Committee of Experts in regard to point (7) was endorsed. For the rest, the sub-committee laid it down that States attending the conference would not be entitled to add any further questions to the agenda.

The three questions selected should be dealt with at one single conference, which might meet at The Hague in 1929. The convocation of the conference and the preparatory work should be left entirely to the League.

The preparatory work should be performed by the Secretariat, assisted by a committee limited to five persons, possessed of a wide knowledge of international practice, legal precedents and scientific data relating to the problems to be resolved. This committee should be appointed by the Council.

The Council should be asked to attach to the invitations draft regulations for the conference, indicating a number of general rules which should govern the discussions, more particularly in regard to certain specified points.

Finally, it was suggested that the Committee of Experts should be asked to hold a session in 1928 for the purpose of finishing the work it had begun.

31. The Assembly itself finally adopted all these recommendations. Some slight difficulty arose over the last of them, as the Fourth Committee cancelled the item of 75,000 francs for the expenses of the Experts' Committee. The Swedish delegation moved in the Assembly that this item should be restored; the motion secured a majority and, after consultation between the First and Fourth Committees, means were found of providing funds to cover the expenses of a meeting of the Committee of Experts.

### III.—*Norwegian Proposal for a Draft Optional Convention for Obligatory Arbitration of Disputes.*

32. This proposal, which was originally submitted to the Third Committee (see paragraph 90), was referred by that committee to the First Committee.

33. There was some general discussion of the proposal, though it was generally recognised that the time at the disposal of the delegates did not admit of a thorough examination of it in all its aspects. Some delegates warned against the possible danger in

developing arbitration at the expense of conciliation. Arbitration, they urged, was not a universal panacea, and recourse to the intervention of judges should only be had in case of necessity.

34. The proposal was referred to a sub-committee, which expressed itself in principle as favourable, and recommended its detailed consideration by the committee provided for in the resolution on arbitration, security and disarmament adopted by the Third Committee on the 21st September (see paragraph 85).

35. The sub-committee drew attention to the following points in particular :—

(a.) An investigation should be made into the means of fostering and encouraging the acceptance of the Optional Clause of Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, and the conclusion of special treaties for judicial settlement, arbitration and conciliation.

(b.) Any investigation into the methods of the pacific settlement of disputes between States should include special attention to the procedure of conciliation, the value of which cannot be exaggerated.

(c.) Very special attention should also be given to the question of the relations between the Council's and the Assembly's mediatory action and the procedures of arbitration and conciliation.

(d.) For the study of a general convention for compulsory arbitration, it would be desirable to consider how such a convention could be given sufficient flexibility to enable the contracting States to regulate their engagements in accordance with their special conditions.

36. The Assembly approved the proposal to refer the whole matter to the new committee to be constituted by the Preparatory Committee for the Disarmament Conference.

#### IV.—*Paraguayan Proposal for a General Plan of Codification of International Law.*

37. On the 10th September the Paraguayan delegate, M. Caballero, submitted to the Assembly a resolution inviting the Council to entrust the Committee of Experts with the preparation of a general and comprehensive plan of codification of international law, paying due regard, as far as possible, to the work of codification which is being carried on in America.

38. M. Caballero explained that the commission of American jurists, composed of official delegates of the American States, had drawn up, at its last meeting at Rio de Janeiro, a plan of general codification of international law, involving a series of draft conventions which were to come into force in America if they were adopted by the Sixth Pan-American Conference which was to meet at Havana in January 1928. If the codification realised in America were to precede universal codification, there was a risk of two



different codes being established side by side. To obviate this, he wished the Committee of Experts or any other organ to be asked to present, as soon as possible, a general plan of codification.

39. The Assembly passed a resolution, submitted to it by the First Committee, requesting the Council to invite the Committee of Experts to consider, at its next session, under what conditions the work referred to in M. Caballero's proposal could be undertaken. A decision would be taken later on the course to be adopted after taking note of the suggestions of the Committee of Experts and of the opinion of the Council in regard thereto.

## SECOND COMMITTEE.

### (TECHNICAL ORGANISATIONS OF THE LEAGUE.)

40. The work of this committee was divided in the following manner:—

- (1.) Work of the Health Organisation of the League.
- (2.) Mission of the President of the Health Committee of the League in South America.
- (3.) Work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit of the League.
- (4.) Result of the Conference for the Creation of an International Relief Union.
- (5.) The question of alcoholism.
- (6.) Settlement of Bulgarian refugees.
- (7.) Work of the Economic Committee of the League.
- (8.) Opening of a Protocol regarding the execution of foreign arbitral awards.
- (9.) Resolutions and recommendations of the International Economic Conference.
- (10.) Work of the Financial Committee of the League.
- (11.) Settlement of Greek refugees.
- (12.) Work of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation.
- (13.) Creation of an International Educational Cinematographic Institute.
- (14.) Relations between the League and Institutes and Bodies set up under its authority.

#### I.—*Work of the Health Organisation of the League.*

41. The Second Committee considered the report of the Health Organisation of the League on its work during the past year, and heard a statement by M. Velghe, the vice-chairman of the Health Committee, outlining the scope of his committee's activities. The Second Committee then passed a resolution on the proposal of its *rapporteur*, Sir Ramaswami Ayyar (Indian delegate), approving the work of the Health Organisation, and expressing special satisfaction with the work of the Epidemiological Intelligence Bureau at

Singapore, with the agreement concluded with the Permanent Committee of International Public Health Office in Paris (see "Miscellaneous No. 7 (1927)," Cmd. 2925), with the work done by the Malaria Commission, the Sleeping Sickness Commission and the International Rabies Conference, and with the investigations of the Health Committee respecting infantile mortality and health insurance. Hope was also expressed that the Health Committee would consider the possibility of acting on the recommendations of the International Pacific Health Conference, held in Melbourne in December 1926, in regard to the study of health problems in the Pacific. This resolution was adopted by the Assembly on the 20th September, 1927.

## II.—*Mission of the President of the Health Committee in South America.*

42. Professor T. Madsen, chairman of the Health Committee, and Dr. Rajchman, director of the Health Section in the League Secretariat, had attended a Conference of Health Experts on Infant Welfare, which was held at Montevideo in June 1927, and had submitted a report on the possibilities of technical co-operation between the Health Organisation of the League and public health and medical authorities in Latin American countries. This report and that of the above-mentioned conference were considered by the Second Committee. The *rapporteur*, Professor Calvo Mackenna (Chilean delegate), read a report summarising the results of the Montevideo Conference on Infant Welfare and the suggestions which had been made for co-operation between the authorities of Latin American countries and the Health Organisation of the League, not only on the question of child welfare, but also in regard to other problems, such as leprosy, health insurance and nutrition. The Second Committee passed a resolution expressing satisfaction that the activities of the League's Health Organisation had extended to several Latin American countries, welcoming the suggestions for co-operation made by the health authorities of those countries and requesting the Council to consider how these suggestions might be put into practice after obtaining the advice of the Health Committee. This resolution was adopted by the Assembly on the 20th September, 1927.

## III.—*Work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit.*

43. The Second Committee had under consideration the report of the Communications and Transit Organisation of the League on its work during the past year, and also the results of the Third General Conference on Communications and Transit.

44. The Report of the Organisation for Communications and Transit on its work during the past year gave rise to no discussion in the Second Committee, and a resolution was passed expressing satisfaction with its work.

45. The Third General Triennial Conference on Communications and Transit, which met in Geneva on the 23rd August, 1927, was mainly concerned with possible improvements in the methods of co-ordination employed by the League to aid international transport, and made a number of suggestions on this subject. The conference also urged that all the signatories of the various international instruments on communications and transit should hasten their ratification. The statutes of the Communications and Transit Organisation were revised, and recommendations were made with regard to identity papers for persons without nationality. This conference was attended by delegates from forty-three States, including the United States of America, Ecuador, Egypt and Turkey, which are not Members of the League.

46. The Second Committee passed a resolution expressing satisfaction with the results of the work of the Third General Conference on Communications and Transit, inviting the Communications and Transit Committee to study the questions raised by the conference, approving the new statute for the Communications and Transit Organisation prepared by the conference, urging the Members of the League to facilitate the collection of the information required by the Communications and Transit Organisation, and inviting the Members of the League to give favourable consideration to the recommendations of the conference with regard to identity papers for persons without nationality.

47. The resolutions of the Second Committee on the work of the Communications and Transit Committee and on the results of Communications and Transit Conference were adopted by the Assembly on the 26th September, 1927.

#### IV.—*International Relief Union.*

48. The Second Committee heard an interesting account of the proceedings of the International Conference for the setting up of the Union from M. Kulz (Germany), who had presided over the conference. He stressed the importance of concerted action for the relief of suffering in realising that great object of the League, the reconciliation of the peoples. He trusted that the greatest possible number of States would become members of the Union, and so testify to the growing feeling of human solidarity. The representative of Italy spoke on similar lines, suggesting that it was for the League to control international philanthropy, a function which, in the Middle Ages, had been carried out by the Church.

49. The following resolution was passed by the Assembly:—

“ The Assembly.

“ Highly gratified at the success of the Conference for the Creation of an International Relief Union;

“ Convinced that the Governments, before which the results of the conference have now been laid, will definitely decide to co-operate in this work of international solidarity;

“Offers its thanks to Senator Ciruolo, to the President of the Conference, and to the members of the Preparatory Committee for the scheme on which the conference’s work was based, and requests the President of the Conference and the members and experts of the Preparatory Committee to hold themselves at the Council’s disposal to propose to it all measures that may be calculated to facilitate the putting into force and the application of the convention concluded by the conference.”

#### V.—*The Question of Alcoholism.*

50. The Finnish, Polish, Swedish, Belgian, Danish and Czechoslovak Ministers for Foreign Affairs had addressed a letter to the Secretary-General requesting him to place the question of alcoholism on the agenda of the Assembly and proposing that the Assembly should ask the Council (a) to convene a conference for the conclusion of a general international convention to prevent the smuggling of alcohol into countries having prohibition, and (b) to appoint an Advisory Committee on alcohol or to direct the Health Committee to nominate a sub-committee to deal with this subject.

51. When this proposal was discussed in the Second Committee, it received support from the Finnish, Swedish, Danish, Hungarian, Roumanian, Indian and Belgian delegates, whilst the French, Italian, Canadian, Portuguese, Uruguayan and Australian delegates opposed it on the ground that the question of alcoholism was outside the duties of the League, that the study thereof might lead to intrusion into essentially national questions, and that the League must not be entangled in the controversy raging around prohibition. In view of the opposition encountered by the proposal in question, the delegates of those countries by which it had been submitted to the Assembly agreed to withdraw it provisionally while reserving their right to submit it to a later Assembly in another form.

#### VI.—*Settlement of Bulgarian Refugees.*

52. The British delegate (Major Elliot) was appointed *rapporteur* on this question, and presented a report setting out the progress made since the inception of the scheme. The successful flotation of the Bulgarian Refugee Loan made a total sum of approximately £2¼ million sterling available for settlement work, and the activities of the Bulgarian Government, and of M. Charron, the Commissioner of the League, were devoted to laying firm foundations for the expenditure of this sum. It was gratifying to note the thoroughness and determination with which the various difficulties which presented themselves had been met and overcome. Steps had been taken to provide a proper system of maps and surveys; to remove legal difficulties in the way of securing to the State unencumbered title to land to be used for settlement purposes; to set up a competent organism to deal with the menace of malaria; and to revise upon a scientific basis the plans for the drainage of marsh land.

53. These difficulties have necessarily delayed the actual work of settlement, but the manner in which they have been overcome is itself an assurance of future success, and it is hoped that it will now be possible to make speedy progress.

54. M. Molloff, Bulgarian Minister of Finance, paid a striking tribute to the assistance which the League had given to his country, and informed the Second Committee of recent steps to accelerate the work, and of the placing of large contracts for the building of houses.

55. The Assembly passed the following resolution :—

“ The Assembly,

“(1.) Welcomes with great satisfaction the successful flotation of the Bulgarian Refugee Loan, providing funds for the carrying out of the scheme approved by the Council.

“(2.) Takes note of the progress already made in the work of making land and houses available for the occupation of the refugees.

“(3.) Expresses the hope that, during the coming year, it will be possible to record the completely satisfactory progress of the work of settlement.

“(4.) Desires to express its appreciation of the courage and resolution displayed by the Bulgarian Government and the Commissioner of the League of Nations in carrying out the scheme.”

#### VII.—*Work of the Economic Committee.*

56. The report of the Economic Committee on its work during the past year was submitted to the Second Committee. Apart from current work, this report dealt mainly with the following subjects : preparation for the International Conference for the abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions, and the recommendations of the Economic Conference in regard to tariffs and commercial treaties, the unification of customs nomenclature, and the treatment of foreign nationals and enterprises.

57. When the report of the Economic Committee was discussed in the Second Committee, the Venezuelan delegate drew attention to the desirability of international action for the protection of foreign buyers against worthless goods, and the Indian and Persian delegates welcomed the conference for the abolition of export and import restrictions and prohibitions which was about to take place. The Second Committee passed the following resolution, which was adopted by the Assembly on the 20th September, 1927 :—

“ The Assembly,

“(1.) Reiterating its conviction that the conclusion of an international convention for the abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions would greatly facilitate the recovery and future development of world trade, appeals to all Governments to send duly authorised representatives to the conference which will take place at Geneva on the 17th October, 1927, and expresses the most earnest hope that no efforts will be spared to bring the work of the conference to a successful issue ;

(2.) Notes with satisfaction that steps have already been taken by the Council to set in motion the preparatory work connected with the execution of certain urgent resolutions of the International Economic Conference, in particular those relating to tariffs and commercial treaties, to the unification of Customs nomenclature and to the treatment of foreign nationals and enterprises duly admitted to carry out their activity on the territory of a foreign State;

“(3.) Takes note of the ratifications of the International Convention relating to the Simplification of Customs Formalities and of the Protocol of 1923 on Arbitration Clauses during the past year, and expresses the hope that those States which have not yet found it possible to adhere to these two international Acts will do so at an early date;

“(4.) Notes with satisfaction that it is proposed to convene a conference in the near future with a view to achieving greater uniformity in economic statistics;

“(5.) Notes with approval that the recommendation that the Economic and Financial Section of the Secretariat should issue a ‘Statistical Yearbook’ has now borne fruit, and recommends that this valuable volume should become one of the annual publications of the League;

“(6.) Observes with satisfaction the progress which the Economic Committee has made in the study of the question of false declarations in Customs matters, of the progressive assimilation of laws relating to bills of exchange and cheques, and of economic barometers, and hopes that no effort will be spared to bring this work to a successful issue;

“(7.) Notes with satisfaction the progress made in the Economic Section’s enquiries regarding the direct and indirect means placed at the disposal of foreign purchasers in the different countries for the purpose of satisfying themselves of the quality of the goods which they acquire in those countries;

“Recommends that these enquiries should be pursued on the lines indicated in the provisional pamphlet communicated to the Second Committee and that the Governments should assist the Secretariat in order that a further publication, which should be as complete as possible, may be issued at an early date.”

#### VIII.—*Opening of a Protocol regarding the Execution of Foreign Arbitral Awards.*

58. At the Fourth (1923) Assembly, a Protocol was opened for signature which provided for the mutual recognition of arbitration clauses in commercial contracts (see “Miscellaneous No. 1 (1924),” Cmd. 2015). However, this Protocol did not provide for the enforcement of arbitral awards made in foreign countries. The Economic Committee had requested a committee of lawyers to consider the possibility of rectifying the omission by means of a further international instrument, and this committee of lawyers accordingly

submitted a preliminary draft Protocol to that effect. At its Forty-fifth Session in June 1927 the Council placed on the agenda of the Assembly the question whether or no this new Protocol should be opened for signature, and invited the various Governments to submit such observations as they might wish to offer on this draft (see "Miscellaneous No. 7 (1927)," Cmd. 2925).

59. When this matter came up for discussion in the Second Committee, it was decided that the draft Protocol and the observation of the various Governments thereon should be examined by a committee composed of lawyers appointed by those delegations which were interested in the question. Mr. H. Claughton Scott, K.C., was British representative on this committee, which prepared a final draft Protocol. On the 26th September, 1927, the Assembly adopted a resolution, on the recommendation of the Second Committee, opening this Protocol for signature by all States which are contracting parties to that of 1923.

#### IX.—*Resolutions and Recommendations of the International Economic Conference.*

60. The report of the International Economic Conference was submitted to the Second Committee. This conference was composed of independent persons appointed by the Governments on the strength of their personal qualifications and not the spokesmen of an official policy, and met in Geneva from the 4th to the 23rd May; it was convened in pursuance of a resolution adopted by the Sixth Assembly on the 24th September, 1925 (see "Miscellaneous No. 1 (1926)," Cmd. 2576). The preparatory work required for the conference had been performed by a committee, consisting not of representatives of Governments or organisations, but of persons chosen as experts (see "Miscellaneous No. 2 (1926)," Cmd. 2594, and "Miscellaneous No. 1 (1927)," Cmd. 2799). The report of the conference was divided into three parts: Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, and contained recommendations on liberty of trading, customs tariffs, commercial policy and treaties, indirect means of protecting national trade and national navigation, rationalisation in industry, international industrial agreements, collection of industrial information, agricultural co-operation and agricultural credit. At its Forty-fifth Session in June 1927 the Council had expressed its appreciation of the results of the Economic Conference and had commended its report and recommendations to the favourable consideration of all Governments.

61. When this report was discussed by the Sixth Committee, M. Theunis, who had been President of the Conference, gave an account of its work and of the results achieved. The British, Bulgarian, Chilean, Belgian, Austrian, Netherlands, German, Finnish, Japanese, Italian, Norwegian, Polish and Swedish delegates expressed the whole-hearted support of their respective Governments for the recommendations of the conference and urged their immediate application by all States. Lord Lytton (Indian delegate) informed the Second Committee that none of the con-

clusions of the conference appeared to be incompatible with India's policy, but that more time was required to consult the representatives of her people. The French delegate stated that his Government had noted with satisfaction the recommendations and resolutions of the conference. The Portuguese, Persian and Serbian delegates said that whilst their respective Governments concurred with the principles contained in the recommendations of the conference they might be unable to bring these into effect for the present, and the Uruguayan delegate informed the committee that his Government accepted the recommendations of the conference subject to certain reservations on fiscal equality between public and private enterprises and on the application of the most-favoured-nation clause.

62. The Second Committee passed the following resolution which was adopted by the Assembly on the 24th September, 1927 :—

“ The Assembly,

“ Takes note of the report of the Economic Conference held in May last, in accordance with the initiative taken by the Assembly at its sixth ordinary session ;

“ Congratulates sincerely the president and the members of the conference appointed by the Governments of fifty countries upon the fact that, comprising so many qualifications and representing every variety of responsible opinion, they were able to agree unanimously upon recommendations at once definite in character and wide in range, whose adoption would effect a substantial improvement in the present economic policy of the world ;

“ Notes with satisfaction that many Governments have already made declarations accepting the principles laid down by the conference and stating their intention of co-operating in their application, while no declaration in the contrary sense has been made ;

“ Believes, therefore, that there is every reason to hope for universal approval when the public opinion of all countries has been sufficiently instructed ;

“ Recommends the resolutions of the conference, as the Council did in June 1927, to the favourable consideration of all Governments, and trusts that those Governments which have not yet declared their support will shortly be able to do so ;

“ Invites the Economic Organisation of the League of Nations to prepare as soon as possible a summary of the replies of the various Governments as to their attitude to the recommendations of the International Economic Conference, and to make known the action that the various Governments have taken or may take in pursuance of the recommendations of the Economic Conference ;

“ Trusts that the economic policies of all countries may develop in accordance with the principles laid down by the conference, and desires that the Economic Organisation of the League should take these recommendations as the basis of its work ;



“Trusts, in particular, that the recommendations of the conference relating to tariffs and commercial policy will be put into effect, not only by national action and bilateral agreements, but also, whenever practicable, by collective conventions reached by means of international conferences of accredited representatives with the aim of gradually evolving among the trading nations of the world, and particularly among those of Europe, common lines of policy beneficial to all and not subject to the uncertainties of purely bilateral bargaining, careful attention being given to the special conditions existing at any moment and to the necessity of realising this policy by stages and without undue disturbance;

“Expects the Council of the League of Nations and the Economic Organisation to devote their untiring efforts to the realisation of this urgent task, and hopes that the Governments will give to it their cordial support and active collaboration.”

63. The Economic Conference had adopted a resolution to the effect that, with regard to the action to be taken on its recommendations, whilst offering no suggestion as to a permanent organisation, it desired to draw the Council's attention to the well-balanced composition of the committee which had done its preliminary work.

64. When this resolution of the Economic Conference was discussed in the Second Committee, M. Loucheur (French delegate) proposed that the Economic Committee of the League should continue as heretofore; that a General Committee should be created somewhat on the same lines as the Preparatory Committee for the Economic Conference, to supervise the execution of the recommendations of this conference; and that this General Committee should be empowered to send its decisions direct to the Council. This proposal was supported by the German and Polish delegates. Major Walter Elliot recommended that the new committee should be called the “Consultative Committee” rather than the “General Committee”; that its composition should closely follow that of the Preparatory Committee for the Economic Conference; that its reports should be sent simultaneously to the Council and the Economic Committee; and that the former should not act thereon without first consulting the latter. The Italian delegate supported Major Elliot's recommendations. M. Loucheur did not agree that the Council should wait for the views of the Economic Committee before taking action on the reports of the new committee. M. Jouhaux (French delegate) urged that the new committee should be really representative of all interests concerned, and should not feel itself in any way hampered or limited in its deliberations. After several delegates had expressed a wish that the agricultural and co-operative interests should receive proper representation on the new committee, the following resolution was passed by the Second Committee and adopted by the Assembly on the 24th September, 1927:—

“The Assembly considers—

“(a.) That the Economic Committee should continue to be, as at present, the organ through which the Council deals with

economic affairs, and that it should be constituted—under such rules as the Council may consider appropriate for its effective functioning—so as to be best suited for its principal work, which, in the near future at least, will lie within the sphere of the economic relations between States and their economic policies so far as they have international aspects. It should consist of not more than fifteen members.

“(b.) That the Economic Committee should have the power to appoint temporary sub-committees of experts for preparatory work, and, subject to Council approval and in consultation with the States in question, to name economic correspondents in countries which have no member on the committee.

“(c.) That a ‘Consultative Committee,’ the object of which is to follow the application of the Economic Conference recommendations, should be constituted by the Council.

“It might be composed of about thirty-five members, as was the Preparatory Committee, and the conditions of equilibrium attained in the latter between the various elements should be maintained as far as possible.

“It should therefore include, among others, persons competent in industry, commerce, agriculture, finance, transport, labour questions and questions relative to consumption.

“The International Labour Office should be invited to submit the names of three labour members for this committee.

“The Council will doubtless also wish to secure for the committee the co-operation of the International Institute of Agriculture and of the International Chamber of Commerce.

“Five members chosen by the Economic Committee should take part in the work of the Consultative Committee with the same rights as the other members.

“The Consultative Committee should submit its report directly to the Council of the League of Nations. At the same time, it would forward a copy to the Economic Committee and to the other technical organisations concerned.”

#### X.—*Work of the Financial Committee.*

65. The *rapporteur* (M. Diouritch, delegate of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) gave a rapid review of the work of the Financial Committee since its inception after the Brussels Conference of 1920. The most obvious manifestation of its activities is the series of loans raised by different countries under the auspices of the League. These include the loans to Austria, Hungary, Greece, the Municipality of Danzig, Bulgaria, Estonia and the Free City of Danzig. The aggregate amount is approximately £70 million sterling. These loans have enabled financial reforms, recommended by the committee, to be carried out by the countries concerned, and the experience has taught the interdependence of balanced budgets, stabilised currencies, and scientific management of the banks of issue.

66. The British representative, in congratulating the Financial Committee on its work, pointed to the skill with which it had

adapted the means at its disposal to the assistance of a particular case, without insisting on any rigid formula. He said that it must not be assumed that all problems of reconstruction were similar to those presented by the first case undertaken by the League, that of Austria, or that the measures of solution were invariably the same as those then adopted. That was very far from being correct, and to the student of finance, as well as to the student of the means which the League possessed for promoting the cause of reconstruction, it was most instructive to note not merely the similarities, but also the differences, both in the problems presented and in the means employed to deal with them.

67. The following resolution was passed by the Assembly:—

“The Assembly takes note of the activities of the Financial Committee and expresses its great satisfaction with the highly useful work accomplished by it.”

#### XI.—*Settlement of Greek Refugees and Financial Reconstruction Scheme.*

68. The committee listened with great interest to an account of the negotiations between the Financial Committee of the League and the Greek Government, leading up to the framing of a draft Protocol which embodies a comprehensive programme for the financial reconstruction of Greece. The plan rests on three main bases: The constitution of an autonomous bank of issue; the achievement of budgetary equilibrium; and the stabilisation of the currency. At the same time, provision is made for the payment of budgetary arrears, and for the completion of the work of settling the refugees. This will be made possible by the issue of a foreign loan for £9 million, the proposed securities for which will include the surplus of the revenues already assigned to the service of previous loans and at present supervised by the International Financial Commission. One third part of the loan (£3 million) is to repay the debt owed by the Greek State to the National Bank, which will be passed over to the new bank of issue to provide the latter with liquid funds. The new bank will be responsible for the maintenance of the Greek currency, and will be organised in accordance with the principles recognised as essential for the efficient operation of a Central Bank. A further £3 million will be devoted to the repayment of Treasury arrears, and the final £3 million to refugee settlement.

69. The Second Committee, after hearing the representative of Greece, adopted the following resolution, which was passed by the Assembly:—

“The Assembly,

“Has learned with great interest of the successful result of the negotiations which have taken place with a view to the issue, under the auspices of the League of Nations, of a loan to enable the Greek Government to take measures of financial and monetary reorganisation, and to proceed with the settlement of the refugees;

“ In particular, expresses its appreciation of the plan which has been drawn up for the creation of a new bank of issue and for the stabilisation of the Greek currency;

“ Expresses its appreciation to all those who have collaborated in these investigations, and especially to the Greek Government and to the Financial Committee;

“ Approves the progress made in the refugee settlement work and expresses the hope that this work will soon be successfully brought to a close;

“ In conclusion, expresses the hope that the entire scheme which has now been elaborated will be fully successful.”

## XII.—*Work of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation.*

70. The report of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation reviewed the work of its sub-committees on the Instruction of Children and Youth in the existence and aims of the League, on University Relations, on Bibliography, on Intellectual Rights, and on Arts and Letters, and the work of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation in Paris. The report also dealt with the importance of the formation of National Committees to maintain relations between the League's Committee, the Institute in Paris and intellectual circles in various countries, with educational films, and with the International Exchange of Official Publications.

71. When the report of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation came before the Second Committee, the chairman of the former committee, Professor Lorentz, made a statement describing the work of his committee. The Italian delegate and Dame Edith Lyttelton said that although the field of work to be covered by the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the Institute in Paris was very wide, yet they recommended that these bodies should concentrate on a few subjects at a time and Sir Fazl-i-Hussain urged that, as far as practicable, the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation should extend its work to cover oriental countries. On the proposal of the *rapporteur*, Herr Breitscheid (Germany), the Second Committee passed a resolution expressing the hope that the example of Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Italy, Monaco, Poland and Switzerland in making grants to the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation in Paris would be followed by other countries, and recommending the increase of national committees and the grant of subsidies to them by their respective Governments. The resolution also especially approved the recommendations of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation in regard to:—the creation at the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation of an international co-ordination service of information offices attached to libraries; co-ordination between the organs of bibliography for the various sciences; the International Office for Annual Tables of Constants and Mathematical Quantities; preparation for the Popular Arts Congress; an international agreement in regard to casts and exten-

sion of the work of museums as a means of artistic education. Finally, the Second Committee approved the recommendations of the Sub-Committee of Experts for the Instruction of Children and Youth in the Existence and Aims of the League, and in particular that respecting the creation of a League of Nations information centre. This resolution was adopted by the Assembly on the 22nd September, 1927.

#### XIII.—*Creation of an International Educational Cinematographic Institute.*

72. The Italian delegation informed the Assembly that their Government proposed to create an International Institute of Educational Cinematography in Rome, which would be placed under the direction of the League of Nations in accordance with article 24 of the Covenant. The Italian Government offered to provide suitable premises for this institute and to furnish the necessary funds for its establishment. The object of the institute would be to gather and distribute information on cinematograph films of educational value and on all questions connected therewith.

73. This proposal was referred by the Assembly to its Second Committee, where the Italian delegate suggested that the Council should be requested to determine in agreement with his Government, and after consulting the competent organisations of the League, the duties of the new institute and the manner in which it should be organised and should work. Some delegates expressed a desire to ensure that the work done by this new institute should not overlap with enquiries in regard to the educational value of the cinematograph which were being carried out by existing organisations of the League, and the Second Committee passed a resolution acknowledging with gratitude the generous offer of the Italian Government, and requesting the Council to decide in agreement with that Government what steps should be taken to bring it into effect after consultation with the competent organisations of the League, particularly the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation. This resolution was adopted by the Assembly on the 20th September, 1927.

#### XIV.—*Relations between the League and Institutes and Bodies set up under its Authority.*

74. With a view to defining the relations between the League and international institutes and bodies set up under its authority, Dame Edith Lyttelton proposed the following draft resolution in connection with which she referred to article 24 of the Covenant :—

“The moment has arrived when the general question of the relations between the League of Nations and institutes or bodies set up under its authority, but not forming part of its organisation, should be studied, and the principles which should govern their acceptance by the League of Nations be laid down by the Council.”

75. After considering this draft resolution the Second Committee passed the following resolution :—

“ The Second Committee has given preliminary consideration to the draft resolution presented by Dame Edith Lyttelton on the institutes and bodies formed under the authority of the League of Nations. It recognises the great importance of the question, which is entirely new to the Assembly.

“ It proposes that the Assembly should invite the Council to have the question studied and a report on it presented to the next ordinary session of the Assembly,”

which was adopted by the Assembly on the 26th September, 1927.

### THIRD COMMITTEE.

#### (ARMAMENTS.)

#### I.—*Arbitration and Security, and Work of the Preparatory Committee for the Disarmament Conference.*

76. The Netherlands delegate (M. Loudon), chairman of the Preparatory Committee, gave the Third Committee of the Assembly, on the 12th September, a short account of the work achieved by the Preparatory Committee itself and by the various subordinate committees. He thought that on the whole there was little ground for the disappointment at the results obtained which was expressed in some quarters, though he admitted that time should be given for consultation between Governments and for the press to be able to exert its great influence before the committee could usefully resume its discussions. If this should involve some delay, he nevertheless thought it essential; the disadvantage of losing some weeks or even months would be as nothing compared with the disaster of failure to reach agreement.

77. In the ensuing debate, various speakers, the Polish delegate being the first amongst them, emphasised that the difficulties experienced in the Preparatory Committee were due, above all, to the state of unrest, uncertainty and suspicion that still clouded international relations. This argument was taken up by the French delegate (M. Paul-Boncour), who suggested that the apparent failure of the Preparatory Committee might be ascribed to its having attempted to go too fast and too far, and who maintained that the difficulties in which the committee now found itself involved arose out of the question of security which inevitably intruded on every discussion of disarmament.

78. The Greek delegate (M. Politis) agreed with this diagnosis. It had always been recognised that effective measures of disarmament depended on progress in the establishment of security. That theory had resulted in the Geneva Protocol of 1924. He understood the nature of difficulties which made that instrument unacceptable to certain States. But the principles of the Protocol remained, and

had indeed been applied in the Treaties of Locarno. The Protocol, as a general agreement for peace, was in suspense, but it was not dead. He wondered whether it could not be revised and presented anew in a different form which might afford all States a wide latitude in choosing the degree and extent of the obligations which they might be prepared to assume under it.

79. After some further discussion, the French delegate (M. Paul-Boncour) summarised the views which had been expressed in the course of the debate, and endeavoured to crystallise them in a single resolution, of which he submitted the following text:—

“ The Assembly,

“ Taking note of the progress made on the technical side by the work of the Preparatory Commission and of the Committee of the Council towards enabling the Council to be rapidly convened and to proceed to a decision in case of emergency;

“ Desirous of bringing about the political conditions indispensable to the success of the work of disarmament;

“ Convinced that such success can only be obtained if every State, sure of not having to provide for its security unaided by means of its own armaments, can also base the consciousness of such security on the organised collective action of the League of Nations;

“ Affirming that such action should aim *chiefly* at prohibiting, forestalling or arresting any resort to war, and, *in case of need*, at giving effective protection to any State which is a victim of aggression;

“ Convinced that the burdens imposed thereby on States will be the more readily accepted by them in proportion as—

“ (a.) they are shared by a greater number of States;

“ (b.) their individual obligations are more clearly defined and limited;

“ (1.) Recommends the conclusion of arbitration agreements ensuring the pacific settlement of all disputes by creating between all countries the mutual confidence indispensable to the effective continuance of the work of the Preparatory Commission;

“ (2.) Requests the Council to direct the Commission to study simultaneously with a draft Convention for the limitation and reduction of armaments, measures calculated to give to all States such guarantees of security as will enable them to fix the scale of their armaments at the lowest possible figure in an international disarmament treaty.

“ The Assembly is of opinion that these measures may be sought—

“ either in action by the League of Nations with the object of multiplying and co-ordinating special security agreements;

“ or in systematic preparation for the application of the various articles of the Covenant;

“or in a modification of the provisions of the Protocol of 1924 in the direction of greater elasticity, which would enable the signatories, without prejudice to the general obligations of the Covenant, to graduate their commitments in proportion to the degree of solidarity existing between themselves and other States by reason of the geographical situation of the latter.”

80. This text was referred for further examination to a sub-committee consisting of the French, Netherlands, Norwegian, Polish, German, British, Italian, Japanese, Belgian, Finnish, Greek and Swedish delegates, together with the chairman and vice-chairman of the committee, Dr. Benes (Czechoslovakia) and M. Guerrero (Salvador).

81. Meanwhile, before this sub-committee could begin its work, the German delegate submitted a resolution requesting the Council to urge the Preparatory Committee to hasten the completion of the technical work and thus enable the Council to convene the Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments before the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Assembly. Count Bernstorff explained that his object in moving this resolution was to avoid the delay in disarmament that might be involved by imposing on the Preparatory Committee itself a quantity of new work in connection with the study of security. The Assembly of 1926 had recognised that the signature of the Locarno Treaties affords a measure of security sufficient to justify the summoning of a disarmament conference; that measure of security remained unimpaired and preparations for the conference must therefore be hastened. If a further study of security could produce results enabling States to proceed to even greater reductions of their military forces, so much the better. But the first step towards disarmament, to which Members of the League were committed by the Assembly resolution of 1926, must not be made to wait on the results of that study.

82. The sub-committee held its first sitting on the 19th September, and began a detailed examination of M. Paul Boncour's proposal. The German delegate strongly upheld the view of his Government that the Preparatory Committee should be urged to proceed with its work and bring it to a speedy conclusion, and that it should not be hampered, or given any excuse for delaying its conclusion by imposing on it fresh studies and further duties.

83. At the second sitting of the sub-committee, the British delegate dealt in particular with the last paragraph of M. Paul Boncour's text, and he suggested that this should take the form of inviting the various nations to inform the Council of the measures they would be prepared to take to support the decision of the Council in case of war breaking out in a particular sphere in which they had special interests—in other words, to say that in such and such a case their whole strength would be thrown into the struggle in support of the Council's decision.

84. It was agreed to appoint a small drafting committee.



consisting of the British, Czechoslovak, French, German and Netherlands delegates, to draw up a final text combining as far as possible the views of the British, French and German delegations.

85. This Drafting Committee produced a text, which was approved by the Third Committee with only slight modifications, and finally adopted by the Assembly itself in the following form:—

“ The Assembly,

“ Noting the progress achieved in the technical sphere by the Preparatory Disarmament Commission and by the committee of the Council towards enabling the Council to be rapidly convened and to take decisions in case of emergency;

“ Being anxious to bring about the political conditions calculated to assure the success of the work of disarmament;

“ Being convinced that the principal condition of this success is that every State should be sure of not having to provide unaided for its security by means of its own armaments and should be able to rely also on the organised collective action of the League of Nations;

“ Affirming that such action should aim chiefly at forestalling or arresting any resort to war and, if need be, at effectively protecting any State victim of an aggression;

“ Being convinced that the burdens which may thereby be imposed on the different States will be the more readily accepted by them in proportion as—

“ (a.) They are shared in practice by a greater number of States;

“ (b.) The individual obligations of States have been more clearly defined and limited :

“ (1.) Recommends the progressive extension of arbitration by means of special or collective agreements, including agreements between States Members and non-Members of the League of Nations, so as to extend to all countries the mutual confidence essential to the complete success of the Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments;

“ (2.) Recalls its resolution of the 24th September, 1926, which reads as follows:—

“ Being desirous that the investigations, in regard to which the Assembly itself took the initiative in its resolution of the 25th September, 1925, should be brought to a successful conclusion as soon as possible, it requests the Council to call upon the Preparatory Commission to take steps to hasten the completion of the technical work and thus be able to draw up, at the beginning of next year, the programme for a Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments corresponding to existing conditions in regard to regional and general security, and it asks the Council to convene this conference before the Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly, unless material difficulties render this impossible.”

“ Accordingly requests the Council to urge the Preparatory Commission to hasten the completion of its technical work and to convene the Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments immediately this work has been completed ;

“ (3.) Requests the Council to give the Preparatory Commission, whose task will not be confined to the preparation of an initial conference on the limitation and reduction of armaments, and whose work must continue until the final goal has been achieved, the necessary instructions for the creation without delay of a committee consisting of representatives of all the States which have seats on the commission and are Members of the League of Nations, other States represented on the commission being invited to sit on it if they so desire.

“ This committee would be placed at the commission’s disposal, and its duty would be to consider, on the lines indicated by the commission, the measures capable of giving all States the guarantees of arbitration and security necessary to enable them to fix the level of their armaments at the lowest possible figures in an international disarmament agreement.

“ The Assembly considers that these measures should be sought—

“ In action by the League of Nations with a view to promoting, generalising and co-ordinating special or collective agreements on arbitration and security ;

“ In the systematic preparation of the machinery to be employed by the organs of the League of Nations with a view to enabling the Members of the League to perform their obligations under the various articles of the Covenant ;

“ In agreements which the States Members of the League may conclude among themselves, irrespective of their obligations under the Covenant, with a view to making their commitments proportionate to the degree of solidarity of a geographical or other nature existing between them and other States ;

“ And, further, in an invitation from the Council to the several States to inform it of the measures which they would be prepared to take, irrespective of their obligations under the Covenant, to support the Council’s decisions or recommendations in the event of a conflict breaking out in a given region, each State indicating that, in a particular case, either all its forces, or a certain part of its military, naval or air forces, could forthwith intervene in the conflict to support the Council’s decisions or recommendations ”

## II.—*The Polish Proposal.*

86. This proposal, the text of which has already been given, was shortly debated by the Third Committee on the 19th September. It was warmly supported by all speakers, though the Netherlands delegate (M. Loudon) expressed some regret that the resolution could not be so framed as to prohibit all wars of any kind, and not

only wars of aggression—a classification which might in practice be difficult of application. He did not, however, wish to propose an amendment, and the resolution was forwarded to the Assembly in its original form. The Assembly adopted it unanimously, voting by roll-call.

### III.—*Supervision of the Private Manufacture of Arms, Ammunition and Implements of War.*

87. The Special Committee appointed by the Council in December 1926 to examine a preliminary draft for a Convention on the Private Manufacture of Arms had reported that this question was too closely bound up with that of the limitation and reduction of armaments for agreement to be reached on a unanimous text for a draft convention when no such text had yet been obtained for submission to a General Conference on the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments (see "Miscellaneous No. 7 (1927)," Cmd. 2925).

88. In the Third Committee, the delegate of Salvador (Señor Guerrero) deprecated the tendency to make this question dependent on a solution of the general problem of the limitation and reduction of armaments. What was required in connection with the manufacture of arms was not necessarily limitation, but publicity on lines similar to those followed in the Convention on the International Trade in Arms. Pending a solution of this question, that convention could never come into force. He therefore proposed that the Special Committee should be instructed to continue its work with a view to agreeing upon a single text which might enable the Council to convene an international conference before the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Assembly.

89. Other delegates reminded the committee that in point of fact the Special Committee had found it impossible to proceed with the matter owing to a fundamental divergence of views, some Governments desiring the convention to deal solely with private manufacture, others refusing to take part unless it dealt also with State manufacture. No way out of this difficulty could be seen for the moment, and therefore it was useless to attempt to fix a date for the conference. M. Guerrero ultimately agreed to amend his resolution in the sense of instructing the Special Committee to make such progress with its work as would enable the Council to convene an international conference "as speedily as possible." In this form the resolution was adopted.

### IV.—*Norwegian Proposal for a Draft Optional Convention for Obligatory Arbitration of Disputes.*

90. The Norwegian delegate (Dr. Nansen) submitted a text whereby Signatory States would bind themselves to submit all disputes arising between them either to judicial decision by the Permanent Court of International Justice, or to a special procedure whereby, in case a settlement could not be reached through the intervention of the Council of the League in accordance with

article 15 of the Covenant, the dispute would be referred to arbitration by a committee of arbitrators to be constituted by agreement between the parties. If the parties could not agree on the constitution of this committee, the Council should, by a majority, settle the points at issue. The parties would undertake to accept and carry out in good faith the award of the Committee of Arbitrators.

91. In introducing this proposal, Dr. Nansen explained that there was already an optional clause attached to the Statute of the Court, under which States which desired to do so could accept the jurisdiction of the Court in legal disputes. The draft now put forward simply proposed that a similar arrangement should be drawn up under which States could, if they so desired, accept also compulsory arbitration in non-legal disputes, if the Council was unable, under article 15, to secure a settlement of them.

92. The Third Committee, after pronouncing in favour of the principle of this proposal, referred it to the First Committee, who suggested that it should be studied by the new committee to be constituted by the Preparatory Committee (see above under No. 1). The Assembly adopted this suggestion.

#### V.—*Financial Assistance to States Victims of Aggression.* (*Finnish Proposal*).

93. At the meeting of the Preparatory Committee in May 1926, the Finnish delegation had submitted a proposal that some financial guarantee should be afforded to the less wealthy States which, after having reduced their armaments, might find themselves in an unfavourable situation owing to lack of funds wherewith to purchase munitions without delay in the event of their being victims of aggression. This proposal was referred to the Financial Committee of the League, who reported favourably upon it and submitted a draft outline of a possible scheme for giving effect to it. This report was referred to the Governments, and at the September Council meeting several delegates (including the British delegate) were able to express the general approval of the Governments which they represented.

94. The Finnish delegate on the Third Committee submitted a resolution inviting the Council to continue its examination of the scheme and to prepare and complete it with a view to its final adoption, either by a Disarmament Conference or by a special conference to be convened for the purpose. This resolution was adopted, including a recommendation that the scheme should be referred to the new committee to be constituted by the Preparatory Committee.

#### VI.—*Expeditious Enforcement of the Obligations of the Covenant.*

95. The Third Committee adopted two resolutions submitted by the Czechoslovak delegate: (1) asserting the obligation of States

Members of the League to facilitate by every means in their power the rapid meeting of the Council in times of emergency and requesting the Council to continue its study of the proposals made for assuring communications between the seat of the League and the different capitals and (2) approving the report of the Committee of the Council of March 1927 in regard to the procedure to be followed in dealing with appeals made to the Council under article 11 of the Covenant.

#### VII.—*Belgian Proposal regarding Civil Aviation.*

96. The Belgian delegate (M. de Brouckère) submitted a resolution inviting all States Members of the League to act as far as possible on the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee on this subject, which was designed to differentiate civil from military aviation and to divert the development of the former solely to economic ends, to the exclusion of military interests.

97. This resolution was adopted.

### FOURTH COMMITTEE.

#### (FINANCIAL.)

98. The Fourth Committee passes in review the whole of the work of the League, regarded from the financial aspect. Not only has it to approve the annual budget, but also to consider the various financial questions arising throughout the year. It was again greatly assisted by the sound principles enunciated by the Supervisory Commission, whose thorough examination into the estimates presented left little room for criticism on points of detail.

#### *The Budget for 1928.*

99. A general discussion took place before the committee examined the items of the budget, in which attention was called to the resolution, passed at the instance of the Indian delegation to the Seventh Assembly, which read as follows:—

“The Fourth Committee,

“Noting the tendency of the budget of the League to increase, and considering that, in the present financial state of most countries of the world, every effort should be made to resist this tendency:

“Is of opinion that, as a preliminary to the discussion of the details of the budget and as a general guide to their consideration, it is desirable, without putting obstacles in the way of the development of the League, to keep in view a maximum

limit of expenditure with the object of securing that the contributions of individual States shall not normally in future exceed their contributions for the current year;

“And that copies of this resolution should be communicated to other committees concerned with measures involving expenditure.”

100. In this discussion the British representative, drawing attention to the need for economy, pointed out that one of the great difficulties in controlling the level of expenditure lay in the requests for additional credits, which reached the Fourth Committee from other committees during the sessions of the Assembly. He secured general assent to a proposal that all such requests should be considered simultaneously together with a report thereon from the Supervisory Commission. He stated that the present system regarding requests for additional credits raised certain difficult questions of financial principle, and that he felt that the League would sooner or later find it necessary to impose a limitation upon the initiative for proposals involving fresh expenditure. The Secretary-General of the League agreed with the British representative that it would ultimately be necessary to set up a body to decide which proposals for new expenditure should have preference.

101. The question of expenditure affecting one State or a limited number of States Members of the League was also raised by several members of the Fourth Committee. The Secretary-General stated that he had not lost sight of the resolution adopted in this connection by the Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly. For instance, certain States not Members of the League which had been invited to participate in conferences convened by the League had, although they were not bound to do so according to the terms of the financial regulations, paid at their own wish an equitable part of the expenses of these conferences. It would, however, be dangerous to give too wide an application to this principle, especially in the case of Members of the League that derive few direct advantages from their participation in the work of the League of Nations.

102. The committee then turned to the detailed examination of the budget, which, as laid before them, showed a total estimated expenditure for 1928 of 24,879,622 gold francs.- After discussion, in the course of which a reduction of 4,500 gold francs was made, the budget was provisionally accepted, subject to revision, if necessary, when the committee came to consider requests for supplementary credits.

103. The Supervisory Commission reported in due course on the various supplementary credits, which fell in two categories. The first comprised a number of items of a miscellaneous character arising chiefly out of the fact that the estimates were originally framed some months before the meeting of the Assembly. The committee approved these, to a total of 154,695 gold francs.

104. The second category comprised the following items,

representing in the main either new activities of the League or the extension of existing activities:—

I.—Reduction of Armaments—	Gold francs.
(a.) Supplementary credits for Preparatory Commission ... ..	10,000
(b.) Conference on the Private Manufacture of Arms ... ..	105,000
II.—Advisory Work on Resolutions of the Press Conference ... ..	10,000
III.—Development of the Economic and Financial Organisation ... ..	74,000
IV.—Technical investigations to be carried out in South America ... ..	100,000
V.—Committee to prepare for a Conference on the Codification of International Law	80,000
VI.—Collection and exchange of information on communication and transit problems	44,384
VII.—Central Opium Board ... ..	63,000
Total ... ..	486,684

105. The Supervisory Commission, which had been invited to assist the Fourth Committee by expressing its opinion as to the financial policy involved in the supplementary credits and to place them in order of urgency, recommended that the committee should approve the first five of the above list of credits. The commission was, however, of opinion that at a moment when the requests for supplementary credits were greater than could be justified under a sound budgetary policy, it would perhaps be wise not to vote the credit asked for the collection of information on transit questions. It also proposed that the existing credit for the Experts' Committee for the Progressive Codification of International Law (75,000 gold francs) should be cancelled and replaced by the item of 80,000 gold francs included above. As regards the Opium Permanent Central Board, the commission felt that it was improbable that any expenditure would actually be required during 1928, and accordingly recommended that no credit should be included in the budget.

106. The Fourth Committee, after considerable debate upon the various points arising, concurred with the report of the Supervisory Commission. Joint meetings took place with the Second and First Committees respectively regarding the refusal of credits for the collection of information on transit questions, and for the Experts' Committee on Codification of International Law, and in each the decision of the Fourth Committee was, after discussion, upheld.

107. The budget for 1928, as approved by the Fourth Committee and finally passed by the Assembly, accordingly amounted to 25,333,817 gold francs, as against 24,512,341 gold francs for 1927.

*The Opium Permanent Central Board.*

108. Considerable discussion was aroused as to the propriety of including in the General Budget of the League the expenses of the Permanent Central Board which will be set up under the terms of the Geneva Opium Convention of 1925, when that convention has received a sufficient number of ratifications to bring it into force. Certain delegations took the view that it should not be open to a proportion only of States Members of the League to impose a charge upon the League by entering into conventions to which other States Members of the League might possibly be opposed. The Supervisory Commission, limiting its conclusions entirely to the case in point, recommended that, having regard to the specific reference to opium in the Covenant of the League, to the close relationship with the League envisaged in the articles of the convention relative to the Central Board and to the fact that the convention was prepared under the auspices of the League at a conference convoked by the League and attended by a great majority of the States Members, the Assembly should include the estimates for the Board in the General Budget of the League. This view was upheld by the Fourth Committee and adopted by the Assembly.

109. Moreover, the Supervisory Commission supported the view, which was strongly expressed by the British representatives in the Fourth and Fifth Committees, that no exception should be made in the case of the Central Board to the general rule of the League, that the work of members of advisory committees should be undertaken by those who were able, in a spirit of public duty, to place their time and experience without remuneration at the service of the League. This view also was upheld by the Fourth Committee.

*New Building for the League.*

110. Three hundred and seventy-seven architects took part in the competition for the plans for the new League building, and in May 1927 the Jury of Architects issued its report, stating that the results of the competition did not justify it in recommending any of the plans for execution. The jury, however, awarded nine equal first prizes and made nine honourable mentions in Class I and nine in Class II.

111. The Assembly appointed a Special Committee of five members to present suggestions with regard to the decision to be taken. The members were:—

Mr. Adatci (Japan), *Chairman.*

M. Osusky (Czechoslovakia), Chairman of the Supervisory Commission.

M. Politis (Greece).

M. Urrutia (Colombia).

Sir Edward Hilton Young (Great Britain), *Rapporteur.*

112. The Special Committee reported that a study of the prize-winning plans had convinced it that the amount at present available



(15,400,000 gold francs) would not be sufficient to ensure that the new building should, without being unduly luxurious, be satisfactory from the æsthetic point of view as well as the practical. Basing itself upon a reasonable estimate of the cubic capacity necessary to provide the accommodation required, and upon a by no means extravagant estimate of the probable cost per cubic metre, the committee was of opinion that it was necessary to contemplate that the credit allotted would ultimately have to be increased to approximately 19,500,000 gold francs.

113. As regards the choice of a plan, the committee thought it just and reasonable that one of the nine prize-winning architects should eventually be chosen. They suggested that the Assembly should appoint a small committee with powers to study the nine plans, and to choose, with any changes that may be necessary, a plan which in its opinion complies most nearly with the practical and æsthetic requirements. This committee, which would be provided such expert assistance as it might desire, would submit its decision to the Council for approval and ratification.

114. The Assembly approved this report, and requested the Special Committee to continue the study of the question on the lines suggested.

#### *Rockefeller Library Gift.*

115. The committee considered the action necessary with regard to the generous gift of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Junior, for the establishment of a special League library, and recommended that a detailed budget, setting out the proposed expenditure, should be drawn up and annexed to the General Budget of the League.

#### *Allocation of Expenses.*

116. The chairman of the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses pointed out that, although it has been hoped that the committee would have sufficiently reliable figures in 1928 to establish on a solid basis a final scale for the allocation of the expenses of the League, general stability was still far from being attained, and it would probably be impossible for the committee to find, in 1928, a sufficiently sound basis for scientific work. The Fourth Committee agreed with this view, and, without wishing to encroach on the sphere of the 1928 Assembly, which alone is competent to take a decision on the substance of the question, expressed the opinion that the time has not yet come to draw up a final scale.

#### *Adjustment of Salaries.*

117. A sub-committee of the Fourth Committee gave careful study to certain questions arising out of the system now in force for the adjustment of the salaries of the staff. It was recognised that the method hitherto adopted for the establishment of a cost of living index is not really satisfactory; and the sub-committee proposed that investigations should be undertaken which would allow the Super-

visory Commission to make a full enquiry into the whole problem before the next Assembly. The sub-committee recommended that meanwhile the Assembly should once more apply the system at present in force, under which no change will be made in the salaries in 1928.

118. The Fourth Committee and the Assembly adopted these recommendations.

## FIFTH COMMITTEE.

### (SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN QUESTIONS.)

#### I.—*Work of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs.*

119. The *rapporteur* on this subject, Mme. Larsen-Jahn (Norwegian delegate), read a draft report to the Fifth Committee summarising the reports and resolutions of the Opium Advisory Committee during the past year. The British delegate, Dame Edith Lyttelton, urged that the Geneva Opium Convention of 1925 should be ratified as soon as possible by all States and requested the representatives of those countries which had not ratified that convention to state the reasons of their respective Governments for this omission. The Austrian, Canadian, Japanese, Luxemburg and Venezuelan delegates informed the committee that their Governments expected to be able to ratify the convention in the near future. The Swedish and Norwegian delegates said that their Governments were unable to ratify the convention without making certain reservations.

120. On the proposal of the *rapporteur*, the Fifth Committee passed a resolution approving the report of the Opium Advisory Committee and recommending this committee's resolutions to the attention of all States Members of the League. This resolution was adopted by the Assembly on the 20th September, 1927.

#### II.—*Production of Opium in Persia: Report of the Commission of Enquiry.*

121. The Sixth (1925) Assembly had recommended that a special commission should be sent to Persia, with the consent of the Persian Government, to study (a) the existing situation with regard to the cultivation of the opium poppy and (b) the replacement of a proportion of this cultivation by other crops. This commission proceeded to Persia in 1926 and drew up a report which was placed on the agenda of the Assembly by the Council at its Forty-fourth Session in March 1927 (see "Miscellaneous No. 6 (1927)," Cmd. 2894).

122. Mr. Delano, a United States citizen who had been president of the Commission of Enquiry into the production of opium in Persia, was invited to participate in the discussion of the Fifth Committee. He replied to certain criticisms of his commission's report which had been made by the Persian Government, and explained that the commission had been animated by a desire to

show the leading persons in Persia that it would be to their advantage to reduce, and eventually to abolish, the cultivation of opium poppy. The Persian delegates (Hussein Khan Ala and Colonel MacCormack) expressed the Persian Government's appreciation of the work which had been performed in this connection by the League and by the Commission of Enquiry; they explained the hardships and difficulties involved in the adoption of the commission's recommendations but stated that, nevertheless, the Persian Government had submitted a law to their Parliament providing for an annual reduction of 10 per cent. in the production of opium in Persia for a period of three years, after which the situation would be re-examined. They laid stress on the necessity that Persia should obtain tariff autonomy and added that their country could not be expected to continue a policy involving grave hardship for the peasants and a dangerous disturbance of its economic structure unless it could be proved after three years that the sacrifices had not been made in vain and that the other producing or manufacturing States had made equal efforts in the same cause. In reply to the desire expressed by the Persian delegates that countries producing dangerous drugs or prepared opium should reduce their output, M. van Wettum (Netherlands delegate) reminded the committee that this desire would be fully met as soon as the Geneva Opium Convention of 1925 had received sufficient ratifications to enable it to be put into effect. M. Gallavresi (Italian delegate) expressed approval of the policy contemplated by the Persian Government and drew attention to the manner in which the Government of India were successfully proceeding with their programme for the reduction of poppy cultivation. Dame Edith Lyttelton, after paying tribute to the great value of the Commission of Enquiry, said that the British Government agreed with the opinion expressed by the Persian delegates on the importance of restricting the sale of derivatives, and stated that the control of dangerous drugs was so strict in Great Britain that not a grain manufactured there went directly into the illicit trade. M. Burckhardt (Swiss delegate) took the opportunity to state that his Government would shortly propose to their Parliament ratification of the Geneva Opium Convention of 1925.

123. On the proposal of the *rapporteur*, M. Veverka (Czechoslovak delegate), the Fifth Committee passed the following resolution which was adopted by the Assembly on the 20th September, 1927 :—

“ The Assembly takes note of the report (document A. 7.1927) of the Commission of Enquiry into the production of opium in Persia, of the observations of the Persian Government on that report, and of the letter from the chairman of the Commission of Enquiry to the Secretary-General dated the 23rd April, 1927.

“ It expresses its sincere thanks to the members of the commission for their valuable work, and its high appreciation of the goodwill shown by the Persian Government in co-operating with the League in its attempts to reach a solution of the difficult and complicated problem of narcotic control.

“The Persian Government having declared that the success of its programme will, in large measure, depend on its obtaining liberty of action in tariff affairs and on the removal of the restrictive tariffs on Persian products which must be substituted for opium, the Assembly expresses the hope that the Governments concerned will give their earnest and favourable attention to those conditions and that the Persian Government will keep the League of Nations informed of the progress made in carrying out the scheme proposed for the gradual diminution of the cultivation of the opium poppy in Persia.

“It earnestly recommends to all countries concerned with the production and manufacture of dangerous drugs and their raw material the enactment of legislation similar to that now proposed by the Government of Persia, or such equivalent action as will ensure the necessary reduction of raw material and the manufacture of drugs.”

### III.—*Expenses of the Central Board to be set up on the Entry into Force of the Geneva Opium Convention of 1925.*

124. At its forty-fifth session in June 1927 the Council considered a memorandum by the Secretary-General of the League on the expenses of the Permanent Central Board to be set up after the entry into force of the Opium Convention of the 19th February, 1925, as article 7 of the Final Act of the Second Opium Conference of February 1925 contained a request that the expenses of this Board should be included in those of the Secretariat of the League. As this matter involved an alteration in the budget of the League, the Council placed it on the agenda of the Assembly. The Fourth Committee of the Assembly, which deals with the budget of the League, requested the Fifth Committee to report on the manner in which the provisions in question of the 1925 Opium Convention should be carried out.

125. The *rapporteur*, Dame Edith Lyttelton, explained that the two questions to be considered by the Fifth Committee were whether the members of the Central Board should be remunerated and, if so, what such remuneration should be. She urged that the League's traditions of gratuitous service should be maintained and pointed out that, if the members of the Central Board were to be remunerated, the remuneration suggested by the Secretary-General in his memorandum would hardly be sufficient to attract persons possessing the requisite experience and knowledge. She also urged that the Assembly should not refuse to include the cost of the Central Board in the budget of the League, as its authority would be gravely impaired if it were not regarded as an organ of the League. Sir John Campbell, President of the Opium Advisory Committee, who was invited to participate in this discussion, explained that after the entry into force of the 1925 Opium Convention his committee would continue to advise the Council on all matters connected with opium and dangerous drugs, whilst the Central Board would watch over the

execution of the 1925 Convention. He expressed the opinion that if the services of suitable members could be secured for the Central Board without payment, this would be preferable, but in case this should not prove feasible provision should be made in the budget of the League for their remuneration. Signor Cavazzoni (Italian delegate) informed the committee that he would be unable to consent to the inclusion of provision for the expenses of the Central Board in the budget of the League and repeated the objections of his Government which had been made at the previous Assembly (see "Miscellaneous No. 12 (1926)," Cmd. 2730). The French, Persian, Netherlands, Japanese and Norwegian delegates spoke in favour of the remuneration of the members of the Central Board out of League funds. On the proposal of Dame Edith Lyttelton, in her capacity as *rapporteur*, the Fifth Committee requested its chairman to address a letter to the chairman of the Fourth Committee expressing the opinion that it would be well if the Council could secure the services of suitable persons for membership of the Central Board without remuneration, but that, if this should prove impracticable, the provisional estimate for remuneration submitted by the Secretary-General might prove insufficient. The Italian delegate abstained from participating in the vote requesting the chairman of the Fifth Committee to make this communication to the Fourth Committee.

#### IV.—*Work of the Committee on Traffic in Women and Children.*...

126. When the report of the League's Committee on Traffic in Women and Children on its work during the past year was considered by the Fifth Committee, several delegates outlined the measures taken by their Governments to combat and abolish this traffic. It was urged that licensed houses should be abolished throughout the world, and approval was expressed of the work of the Special Body of Experts appointed by the Council in 1923 to study the extent of the international traffic in women and children. After a general discussion the committee passed the following resolution, which was adopted by the Assembly on the 20th September, 1927:—

“ The Assembly,

“ Takes note of the report of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee, thanks the committee for the good work it has accomplished, and expresses the hope that this work will be continued along the same lines;

“ Having learnt with the greatest interest that the Traffic in Women and Children Committee is examining carefully, in connection with Part I of the experts' report, the problem of the relationship which exists between the licensed house and the traffic in women, requests the Traffic in Women and Children Committee to examine as soon as possible the question of the desirability of recommending to all Governments the abolition of the system of the licensed house;

“Desires to express its warmest approval of the able and courageous work of the Special Body of Experts, and earnestly recommends Part I of the report, and especially its conclusions, to the study of the Governments of all States Members and non-Members of the League of Nations.”

*V.—Work of the Committee on Child Welfare.*

127. The Fifth Committee had under consideration the report of the Committee on Child Welfare on its work during the past year. Several delegates laid stress on the importance of the work of this committee, particularly as regards its enquiry into the age of consent, the status of illegitimate children and the effects of the cinematograph on children. The Fifth Committee passed a resolution expressing appreciation of the work done by the Child Welfare Committee and requesting this committee to continue its work on the same lines.

*VI.—Protection of Women and Children in the Near East.*

128. The Seventh (1926) Assembly had decided that the mission of Miss Jeppe, League Commissioner at Aleppo for the rescue of Armenian women and children, should be prolonged for another year and that her mission should then terminate. The Fifth Committee had before it Miss Jeppe's final report to the League on her work. After several speakers had expressed their appreciation of her admirable work, a resolution was passed thanking her and expressing the hope that the generous financial support given to her by voluntary organisations in the past would continue in order that she might be enabled to give such further assistance as might be required to the women and children who had been rescued. This resolution was adopted by the Assembly on the 20th September, 1927.

*VII.—Measures in favour of Armenian and Russian Refugees.*

129. In May 1926 an inter-governmental conference met in Geneva for the purpose of improving the refugee passport systems and of raising a working capital fund of not less than £100,000 to provide for the transport and settlement of refugees. This fund was to be raised by the introduction of a yearly tax of 5 gold francs on self-supporting refugees. With this object an arrangement was signed on the 12th May, 1926. The money thus raised had hitherto only amounted to 150,000 Swiss francs, which was inadequate. An appeal was therefore made in June 1927 to the various Governments to contribute towards this fund, in reply to which an offer of 100,000 marks was received from Germany. When this matter was discussed in the Fifth Committee, Dr. Nansen made an appeal, in his capacity as League of Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, for contributions by the various Governments towards that fund, and M. Albert Thomas, Director of the International Labour Office, explained to the committee the work which still remained to be done on behalf of refugees.

130. The necessity for regulating the legal status of refugees was considered by the committee and, on the proposal of Baron von Rheinbaben (German delegate), the committee decided that a small inter-governmental conference should be convened to formulate proposals on the subject for submission to the Council.

131. M. Albert Thomas informed the committee that 5,000 Armenian refugees had been settled in Syria, but that 40,000 still awaited settlement there. He was negotiating for this purpose and contemplated an appeal to France, the mandatory Power, in order to obtain the necessary financial support to accomplish this task. M. Bastid (French delegate) said that his Government would give favourable consideration to M. Thomas' appeal.

132. With regard to the settlement of refugees in South America, M. Thomas stated that this proposal had been favourably received by the Governments of the Argentine, Paraguay, Bolivia and Peru, but that money was required for transport and settlement if refugees were to emigrate to those countries. M. Thomas therefore reiterated Dr. Nansen's appeal for contributions by the various Governments to the capital fund for this purpose.

133. On the proposal of the British delegate (Major Walter Elliot), in his capacity as *rapporteur*, the Fifth Committee passed the following resolution, which was adopted by the Assembly on the 26th September :—

“ The Assembly,

“ Having carefully examined the reports of the High Commissioner and of the International Labour Office on the refugee questions;

“ Recognises the progress that has been made towards the solution of a problem that at one time constituted a very serious danger;

“ Expresses its high appreciation of the important work that has been accomplished on behalf of the refugees;

“ Invites the High Commissioner to convene a small conference, on the lines indicated in his report, to formulate proposals for submission to the Council in regard to the legal status of refugees. This should be preceded by a full and careful examination of the juridical situation of the refugees in the different countries, the necessary information to be communicated to the respective Governments beforehand;

“ Congratulates those responsible for the measures already taken and contemplated for the permanent settlement of Armenian refugees in the Near East;

“ Expresses the hope that, as a result of the efforts described by the High Commissioner in his report, the necessary funds will be secured for the execution of this work, and that, with the continued co-operation of the mandatory Power, this aspect of the problem may be successfully liquidated;

“ Approves the provisions in the budget for the Refugee Service, in addition to the supplementary credit of 7,500 Swiss francs for the service for establishing Armenian refugees in Syria.

“ Further, the Assembly—

“ Notes with interest the offers of employment now available for refugees in overseas countries ;

“ Recognises that the execution of these schemes requires the immediate establishment of an adequate revolving fund ;

“ Urges the Governments concerned to inform the High Commissioner as soon as possible what measures they are prepared to take for financing the settlement of refugees from their territories ;

“ Requests the Council to invite the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, in examining the budget of the Refugee Service for 1929, to consider whether adequate funds for settlement have been thus provided.”

## SIXTH COMMITTEE.

(POLITICAL QUESTIONS.)

134. Before the Assembly opened, the only two items which figured on the agenda for consideration by this committee were :—

- (1.) Slavery Convention : annual report by the Council.
- (2.) The system of the single transferable vote and the principle of proportional representation in general, in connection with the election of the non-permanent members of the Council.

Subsequently the “ Resolutions and Recommendations adopted by the Conference of Press Experts ” were added to the agenda in accordance with a resolution of the Council, and “ mandates ” were also added on the proposal of the Portuguese delegation.

### I.—*Slavery Convention : Annual Report by the Council.*

135. This report was submitted by the Council in accordance with a resolution of the Seventh (1926) Assembly (“ Miscellaneous No. 12 (1926),” Cmd. 2730), in which the Council was requested to communicate to the Assembly every year a document indicating the laws and regulations applying the provisions of the Slavery Convention of the 25th September, 1926, which the parties thereto had forwarded to the Secretary-General, together with any supplementary information that might be furnished spontaneously by the various Governments. The only States which furnished information on this subject prior to the Assembly were : the British Empire, India, the Sudan and Portugal. During the discussion in the Sixth Committee a communication was received from the Abyssinian Government giving certain lists of persons freed from slavery and of persons convicted for offences against the slavery laws of Abyssinia.

136. The Maharajah of Kapurthala (Indian delegate) made a statement to the committee on the progress made by the Government of India and by the Ruling Princes in abolishing slavery and conditions akin thereto. Dr. Nansen (Norwegian delegate) expressed regret that so few States had furnished the League with information



on the measures taken by them to abolish slavery and conditions analogous thereto; Dr. Nansen referred especially to Abyssinia, whose communication on this subject had not at that time been received and which was under special obligations to the League. Dr. Nansen also suggested that perhaps the British delegate might welcome this opportunity to furnish information respecting a recent decision of the Supreme Court of Justice in the Protectorate of Sierra Leone in regard to slavery. Sir Hilton Young informed the committee that, owing to a recent decision of that Court, a hiatus had been discovered in the legislation of that Protectorate by which the status of slavery was found to be recognised under certain conditions. The decision had unpleasantly surprised His Majesty's Government and immediate measures had been taken to fill in this breach as soon as possible. Sir Hilton Young also associated himself with the remarks made by Dr. Nansen in regard to the position of Abyssinia. The French, Italian, Portuguese, Netherlands and Norwegian delegates informed the committee that their Governments would ratify the Slavery Convention in the near future. Reference was made to the work of the committee appointed by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to study the question of forced labour and to prepare a draft international convention on this subject. The Belgian and French delegates observed that, in view of the fact that the legislation of many States already fulfilled the provisions of the Slavery Convention and had been communicated to the Assembly in 1924 and that future progress, although continuous must necessarily be gradual, the parties to the convention should not be expected to furnish a lengthy report each year on the progress achieved. Sir Hilton Young was appointed *rapporteur* of the committee to the Assembly on this subject. When submitting a report to the Assembly summarising the discussion in the committee, he stated that he was able to supply further information in regard to the position in Sierra Leone to the effect that the Legislative Assembly of that Protectorate had adopted at first reading a Bill which would absolutely abolish legal recognition of any modified form of domestic slavery as from the 1st January, 1928.

137. The Assembly adopted a resolution taking note of the report of the Council and of the information furnished by the various Governments and expressing the hope that those States on whose behalf the Slavery Convention had been signed would ratify as soon as possible.

## II.—*System of the Single Transferable Vote and of Proportional Representation for the Election of the Non-Permanent Members of the Council.*

138. On the 25th September, 1926, the Seventh Assembly adopted a resolution requesting the Council to instruct the Secretariat of the League to study the system of the single transferable vote and the principle of proportional representation in connection with the election of the non-permanent members of the Council. The Norwegian Government had taken the initiative in

submitting this question to the Assembly and subsequently forwarded a memorandum to the Secretary-General explaining the working of the system of the single transferable vote and the reasons for which, in their opinion, the League should adopt this method for the election of the non-permanent members of the Council. A second memorandum was forwarded later by that Government expressing the opinion that the single transferable vote system was the only form of proportional representation which could be successfully applied to elections to the Council. The Council considered this question at its Forty-third and Forty-fourth Sessions in December 1926 and March 1927 (see "Miscellaneous No. 1 (1927)," Cmd. 2799, and "Miscellaneous No. 6 (1927)," Cmd. 2894), and instructed the Secretary-General to circulate to the Members of the League the two memoranda received from the Norwegian Government and any other communications that might be received from other Members of the League on this subject.

139. After a general discussion in the Sixth Committee, a sub-committee consisting of the delegates of Luxemburg, the Union of South Africa, Cuba, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway and Siam was formed to draft a report for submission to the Assembly. This sub-committee prepared a report to the effect that, if the principle of proportional representation were to be accepted, the system of the single transferable vote would constitute a form of proportional representation suitable for application to the election of the Members of the Council, but that further experience of the working of the existing system was required and that there should be no change in the present method of voting until such a change should appear desirable. This report was passed by the Sixth Committee and was adopted by the Assembly on the 22nd September, 1927.

### III.—*Resolutions and Recommendations of the Press Experts Conference.*

140. On the proposal of the Chilean-delegation, the Sixth Assembly adopted the following resolution on the 26th September, 1925 (see "Miscellaneous No. 1 (1926)," Cmd. 2576):—

"The Assembly,

"Considering that the press constitutes the most effective means of guiding public opinion towards that moral disarmament which is a concomitant condition of material disarmament;

"Invites the Council to consider the desirability of convening a committee of experts representing the press of different continents with a view to determining methods of contributing towards the organisation of peace, especially—

"(a.) By ensuring the more rapid and less costly transmission of press news with a view to reducing the risks of international misunderstanding;

"(b.) And by discussing all technical problems, the settlement of which would be conducive to the tranquillisation of public opinion."

141. In accordance with this resolution, the Council took the necessary steps to prepare for a conference of press experts and caused an agenda for this conference to be drawn up by representatives of the press. At its Forty-fourth Session in March 1927 the Council decided to convene the conference to meet in Geneva on the 24th August, 1927, and to invite Viscount Burnham to preside.

142. The conference met from the 24th August to the 29th and adopted resolutions in regard to the improvement of telegraph, telephone and postal facilities for journalists, the protection of news, professional facilities for journalists, censorship in peace time, the publication of tendencious news, moral disarmament and regional press understandings.

143. M. de Brouckère (Belgian delegate), who had attended the conference and had acted as *rapporteur* to the Council on this subject, made a statement to the Sixth Committee outlining the results of the conference and the action to be taken on its resolutions. M. Hambro (Norwegian delegate) and M. Restrepo (Colombian delegate) criticised certain of the resolutions of the conference and also the trend of modern journalism. Sir Hilton Young, replying to the criticisms made by M. Hambro and M. Restrepo, expressed his confidence that in Great Britain journalists were growing more conscious of their responsibilities. M. Hambro had complained that certain press agencies possessed a monopoly of news and that they published biased and tendencious information. As regards the first complaint, Sir Hilton Young observed that, in those countries with which he was familiar, he had noted competition between different agencies and, if monopolies existed elsewhere, they were due to the fact that the agencies enjoying them have proved themselves to be the most efficient.

With regard to the second complaint, which was easy to make and difficult to refute, Sir Hilton Young expressed the opinion that if enquiries were made concerning such complaints, they were found to have been made by persons who had themselves tried unsuccessfully to influence the agencies in question; in conclusion, he thanked all those who had participated in the conference. M. Lucien Hubert (France) pointed out the difficulties experienced by journalists in distinguishing truth from error and that they had asked in the resolutions of the conference for help to overcome these difficulties and for facilities to transmit true news. Count Bonin-Longare (Italian delegate) closed the discussion by remarking that the Sixth Committee of the Assembly could hardly pass a better judgment on the reasonable needs of the press than the Press Conference itself.

144. On the proposal of the *rapporteur* (M. de Brouckère), the Sixth Committee passed the following resolution which was adopted by the Assembly on the 22nd September :—

- “ The Assembly,
- “ Noting the success of the Conference of Press Experts, and conveying its thanks to the representatives of the press for their collaboration ;

“ Expresses its satisfaction that the Council has considered the steps required for promptly giving the necessary effect to the resolutions of the conference ;

“ Trusts that the technical organisations to which the Council has submitted a number of these resolutions will undertake as soon as possible the special enquiries relating, in particular, to the questions of telegraphic and telephonic rates, the improvement of communications, the conveyance of newspapers, identity cards for journalists and visas for journalists' passports ;

“ Trusts that the Council, at its December session, will take the most suitable measures to enlist the sympathetic attention of Governments for the other resolutions adopted by the conference in order that effect may be given to them ;

“ Notes with satisfaction that the Council, taking into account the recommendation made by the conference, has declared that, should it at some future time appear necessary, and should developments in the technical international problems which affect the press make it seem desirable to those concerned, it will in principle be willing to lend the assistance of the organisations of the League for the study of these questions and to organise a consultation or call a conference for this purpose.”

#### IV.—*Mandates.*

145. Dr. Nansen (Norwegian delegate) made the following observations on the chapter in the report on the work of the Council dealing with mandates and on the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission. He expressed satisfaction at the report adopted by the Council on the 8th September, 1927, in regard to the legal relationship between the mandatory Powers and mandated territories. As regards the right of petition to the Mandates Commission, Dr. Nansen suggested that an explanation of the practice in regard to petitions should be published in order to dispel such misunderstandings as might exist on this point, and he also mentioned a rumour that petitions had been forwarded to mandatory Powers for transmission to the Mandates Commission, but had not reached that destination. Referring to the liquor traffic, Dr. Nansen alluded to the definitions evolved by the Mandates Commission for the technical terms connected with that traffic found in “ B ” and “ C ” mandates in the St. Germain Convention of 1919 and expressed the hope that the mandatory Powers would accept these definitions. He also referred to the increase in the liquor traffic and suggested the Mandates Commission should report thereon. The press had recently reported that there had been trouble in Western Samoa, and Dr. Nansen suggested that the New Zealand delegate might care to make a statement on this subject. Finally, Dr. Nansen urged that the minutes of the meetings of the Mandates Commission should not be suppressed even in the interests of economy, but that the utmost publicity should be given to them, and that the Mandates

Commission should meet as frequently as possible in public. The New Zealand delegate informed the committee that, according to the information received by his Government, the agitation in Western Samoa had been stirred up by a few white people, and the leader was a merchant who was the largest buyer of copra from the natives and who objected very strongly to the administrator's action in improving the marketing of copra in the interests of the natives. Certain of the European agitators were married to Samoan women and consequently had influence with some of the natives. However, the large majority of the white population and of the Samoans strongly approved the policy of the Administration. A commission had been appointed by the New Zealand Government to enquire into the alleged grievances and to furnish a report on the Administration. As soon as this report was ready it would be laid before the Permanent Mandates Commission. Mr. Smit (delegate of the Union of South Africa) expressed the opinion that Dr. Nansen had laid too much stress on the word "native" in his statement; he therefore reminded the committee that the mandate for South-West Africa was not given in respect of natives only but also white and half-caste inhabitants. Mr. Van Rees, the Vice-President of the Permanent Mandates Commission, who was invited to participate in the discussion, informed the committee that, as regards certain petitions which were said to have been forwarded to a mandatory Power for transmission to the League but had not reached Geneva, this matter had been taken up with the accredited representative of the Power in question and he trusted that the petitions would be laid before the commission at its session in October, together with the observations of the mandatory Power. Mr. Van Rees agreed with Dr. Nansen that the minutes of the Mandates Commission should receive full publicity; as regards admission of the public to the meetings of the commission, this must depend on the questions to be discussed. Sir Hilton Young informed the committee that His Majesty's Government had accepted the definitions of terms connected with the liquor traffic as drafted by the Mandates Commission. On the proposal of the *rapporteur* (Dr. Nansen), the Sixth Committee passed the following resolution which was adopted by the Assembly on the 23rd September :—

“ The Assembly,

“ Having taken note of the work accomplished since its last session by the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council in the execution of article 22 of the Covenant, renews the expression of confidence voted last year and adopts the following resolution on certain specific points :—

“ (1.) *Liquor Traffic.*

“ (a.) The Assembly congratulates the Permanent Mandates Commission on its success in defining the important terms concerning the liquor traffic used in the “B” and “C” mandates and in the Convention of St. Germain of

the 10th September, 1919, and expresses the hope that all the mandatory Powers will soon be able to indicate their acceptance of these definitions;

“(b.) It asks the Council to request the Permanent Mandates Commission, in collaboration with the mandatory Powers, to continue to give serious consideration to the causes of the increased importation of spirituous liquors into certain territories under “B” mandate, and to the steps which have been taken to deal with this problem.

“(2.) *Minutes of the Permanent Mandates Commission.*

“The Assembly expresses its appreciation of the value of the minutes of the meetings of the Permanent Mandates Commission, which constitute the record of the fulfilment by the commission of its duties under article 22 of the Covenant, and which are communicated at the request of several of the mandatory Powers to a considerable number of their officials in the mandated territories.”

We are, &c.

ONSLLOW.

CECIL J. B. HURST.

E. HILTON YOUNG.

WALTER ELLIOT.

EDITH LYTTTELTON.

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