

THE  
MONTHLY SUMMARY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

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Vol. VIII. No. 2.

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MEETING  
OF THE  
ARBITRATION AND SECURITY  
COMMITTEE

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# MONTHLY SUMMARY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Vol. VIII. No. 2.

Published on March 15th, 1928.

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### I. — Summary of the Month.

The principal event in February was the meeting of the Arbitration and Security Committee on the 20th, to consider memoranda prepared by its rapporteurs on arbitration, security and certain articles of the Covenant. This Committee was still in session at the end of the month.

The Preparatory Committee for the first Conference on the Codification of International Law met at the beginning of the month, and organised an international enquiry concerning laws of nationality, territorial waters and the responsibility of States as regards damages.

The Permanent Court of International Justice assembled in Extraordinary Session to give an advisory opinion as to the jurisdiction of the Danzig Courts in respect of claims made by Danzig officials in the Polish Railway Service against the latter.

The Preparatory Committee for the International Relief Union held a short meeting on February 23rd and 24th. The Advisory Committee on Communications and Transit, and the Financial Committee, met on February 27th, and were still in session at the end of the month.

The Governing Commission of the Saar Territory sent in its thirty-second quarterly report, describing the situation in the territory during the last quarter of 1927.

## II. — The Permanent Court of International Justice.

### 1. — JURISDICTION OF THE DANZIG TRIBUNALS.

The Permanent Court of International Justice met in extraordinary session on February 6th to examine the request of the Council for an advisory opinion in regard to a dispute between the Polish Government and the Senate of the Free City of Danzig as to the right of Danzig officials who had entered the Polish Railway Service to have recourse to Danzig Tribunals in cases concerning financial claims between them and the Polish Administration.

The Court was constituted as follows: M. Anzilotti (Italy) President, M. Huber (Switzerland) Former President, M. Weiss (France) Vice-President, M. Loder (Netherlands), M. Nyholm (Denmark), M. Altamira (Spain), M. Oda (Japan), M. Yovanovitch (Serb-Croat-Slovene Kingdom), M. Beichmann (Norway), M. Negulesco (Roumania), M. Wang (China), M. Ehrlich (Poland) and M. Bruns (Danzig).

The dispute in question originated in 1925. Up to that moment, according to the assertions of the Polish Government, the differences of opinion which had arisen between the Polish Railway Administration and its Danzig agents had always been settled amicably or, if necessary, through the intervention of the League High Commissioner. But, from that time, officials had brought actions before the Danzig Courts concerning their money claims against the Polish administration. These Courts had ruled that they had jurisdiction to try these actions and the Polish Government had objected to the jurisdiction.

By a note sent on January 11th, 1926, to the Danzig High Commissioner, the Polish Government announced that in future it would not take official notice of actions of this nature and could not execute any judgments rendered under those conditions by the Danzig Courts. The Danzig Government on May 27th, 1926, requested the High Commissioner to obtain by mediation the withdrawal of the Polish declaration. As negotiations did not lead to any result, the High Commissioner issued a decision, which was not entirely accepted by the Danzig Government.

The first part of the decision states that the Polish contention that Danzig Courts have no jurisdiction in regard to pecuniary claims brought against the Polish Administration by railway officials who had passed from the Danzig service into the Polish service could not be upheld. The second part adds that in respect of such claims the Danzig Courts have no jurisdiction wherever claims of this nature are based upon the agreement of October 22nd, 1921, known as the *Beamtenabkommen* and concluded between the Free City and the Polish Government for the purpose of regulating the position of Danzig officials.

The first part of this decision was accepted both by Poland and Danzig. The question referred to the Council and subsequently to the Court concerns the second part of the decision.

The Court has to decide whether the decision of the High Commissioner of April 8th, 1927, is well founded in law.

Public hearings on February 7th and 8th were devoted to the oral statements of the parties. The point of view of the Free City was expounded by M. Gilbert Gidel, Professor at the Faculty of Law of Paris, that of the Polish Government by M. J. Limburg, formerly leader of the Bar at The Hague, member of the Netherlands State Council.

## 2. — DENUNCIATION OF THE CHINESE-BELGIAN TREATY OF 1865 (1)

By an Order made on June 18th, 1927, the Court had definitely fixed February 15th as the time limit for the presentation of the Counter-Case of the Chinese Government in this suit, the whole of the written proceedings to be terminated on May 15th, that is to say, in time to enable the Court to hear the case at its ordinary session in 1928.

Nevertheless, at the expiration of the time thus allowed for the filing of the Chinese Counter-Case, the Court had received a request from the Belgian Government asking it not to declare the Chinese Government in default even if it failed to file the above-mentioned document within the time fixed, provided however that that document were filed before February 25th.

The Court having granted this request, the Belgian Government, in agreement with the Chinese Government, made an application for the extension by six months of all the times for the written proceedings in the suit.

The Court, by an Order made on February 21st, granted this application and fixed August 15th, 1928, as the time limit for the filing of the Chinese Counter-Case, the whole of the written proceedings to be terminated on November 15th.

## 3. — MINORITY SCHOOLS IN POLISH UPPER SILESIA

The judges *ad hoc* appointed by the Parties in this case, namely Germany (Applicant) and Poland (Respondent), are Professor Schücking, of the University of Kiel, and Professor Rostworowski, of the University of Cracow. The Agents are Dr. Budding, President of the Administrative District of Marienwerder, for Germany, and M. Mrozowski, President of the Supreme Court of Warsaw, for Poland.

The Polish Government having asked for an extension of the time allowed for the filing of its Counter-Case, the Court has granted the request, but has maintained March 10th as the date for the conclusion of the written proceedings, in order that it may be able to hear the Case, which it regards as urgent, in the course of the present session.

## 4. — CHORZOW FACTORY (INDEMNITIES). — MERITS

The proceedings in this Case have progressed according to arrangement, so that it will be ready for hearing on April 7th.

## 5. — JURISDICTION OF THE COURT

In addition to the Governments enumerated in previous numbers of the *Monthly Summary*, the Danish and Polish Governments have now sent to the Registrar their reply to his circular letter of March 24th, 1927. This brings up the number of replies received to twenty-five.

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(1) This and the following articles of this chapter have been written with the aid of information furnished by the Registrar of the Court.

### III. — Arbitration, Security and Reduction of Armaments.

#### 1. — SECOND SESSION OF THE ARBITRATION AND SECURITY COMMITTEE (1)

The Arbitration and Security Committee met at Geneva on February 20th, with Dr. Benes in the chair, to consider the Memoranda prepared by its rapporteurs, at Prague (2). The documents submitted included three memoranda — by M. Holsti (on Arbitration and Conciliation), M. Politis (on Security), and M. Rutgers (on Articles 10, 11 and 16 of the Covenant) — and an introduction which was the joint work of the Chairman and the rapporteurs.

The memoranda were submitted as the individual work of the rapporteurs — who assumed full responsibility for them, not as delegates of their Governments, but in their personal capacity — and as contained suggestions which might form a useful basis for discussion by the Committee.

After a general discussion, which lasted from February 20th to 22nd the Committee set up a Drafting Committee composed of its Bureau :

The Chairman (Czechoslovakia), vice-Chairmen, M. Urrutia (Colombia) (3) and M. Undén (Sweden), the three Rapporteurs M. Holsti (Finland), M. Politis (Greece) and M. Rutgers (Holland); and of the Representatives of Argentine, the British Empire, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Poland.

#### *Summary of the Reports (4).*

The introduction to the three Memoranda emphasised in the first place that the Covenant created a measure of security which needed to be appreciated at its full value. It could be applied in such a way that, in the majority of cases, it could prevent war. The common will for peace could be exercised within the framework of the Covenant—the more effectively because that instrument did not provide any rigid code of procedure for the settlement of international crises. Memoranda from the various Governments, like preceding reports, illustrated the present impossibility of drawing up a complete list of measures in advance; nevertheless there was constant evolution towards improvements in the methods employed by the Council within the ambit of the Covenant, so that resort to war without the responsibilities for such a step being manifest to the whole world, was becoming more and more difficult to imagine.

Although there was an omission in Article 15, paragraph 7, of the Covenant from a legal point of view, nevertheless from a political standpoint there was a latent influence for peace in the freedom of action which it threatened to restore to the Members of the League in circumstances upon which the public opinion of the world would be able to pass judgment. Before abandoning the attempt to produce a unanimous report, the Council would have made so many efforts to obtain a settlement that public opinion in all countries would be enlightened as to the real incidence of the responsibility in case of the failure of its efforts.

The Covenant provided Members of the League with a measure of security which it was their duty to develop still further by co-operating resolutely for the establishment of peace. This duty had indeed been observed during the last few years by a great number of States which had concluded special or collective treaties of arbitration and security. This method of special or collective treaties appeared

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(1) An account of the proceedings will be given in next number.

For composition of Committee see the January number of the *Monthly Summary*.

(2) See *Monthly Summary*, Vol. VIII, No. 1, p. 3.

(3) M. Urrutia was prevented from attending this session.

(4) This summary is necessarily very brief.

at the present moment to be the only practical means which could be recommended to States in search of more effective guarantees of security. Those nations which considered the general measure of security afforded by the Covenant as inadequate for their needs must, at the present moment, regard the conclusion of security pacts with other States in the same geographical area as the only practical or possible form of supplementary guarantees.

The introduction pointed out that the Rapporteurs had been careful to avoid the use of general and too rigid formulae. They had sought material for a solution within the framework of the Covenant and in harmony with its spirit without proposing any alteration in the text.

#### *Arbitration and Conciliation.*

The Rapporteur on Arbitration and Conciliation, M. Holsti (Finland), traced the remarkable progress in the number of treaties between pairs or small groups of States, saying that their characteristic feature was a greater readiness to accept arbitration or conciliation, if not for all possible disputes, at least for all those of a juridical nature, and the tendency to abandon traditional reservations or to restrict their scope. Methods of procedure had improved, and the procedure of conciliation in particular was largely a post-war creation.

He considered that there could be little doubt that this progress had been mainly due to the influence of the Covenant, the positive measures which the League had been able to take, and the active discussion of these subjects by the Assembly. The rapporteur then made a certain number of suggestions.

Should the Committee on Arbitration and Security consider it desirable to prepare a model general treaty of arbitration, despite the difficulties which at present stand in the way, it would perhaps be well to follow the system of the Locarno treaties; that is to say, to provide for obligatory arbitration only in the case of juridical disputes, leaving other disputes to be settled by a procedure of conciliation. The Swedish draft on this principle might be adopted as a basis for discussion, with certain latitude in the way of reservations.

It would be useful if the Committee were to prepare one or more models of special arbitration treaties.

Even if the Committee did not consider it necessary to recommend a general arbitration treaty, a general conciliation treaty might still be considered. The difficulties arising from the universality of the treaty were similar but they were probably less serious than in the case of arbitration.

M. Holsti pointed out that in the arbitration and conciliation treaties registered with the Secretariat, nine kinds of reservations might be found. Apart from reservations which appeared to have fallen into disuse (such as "Honour", "interest of third states") and very special reservations (such as questions relating to the war of 1914 and constitutional questions), the number of reservations might be reduced to four points—vital interest, territorial status, domestic jurisdiction, and prior events.

#### *Security.*

M. Politis (Greece), the Rapporteur on Security questions, considered there was only one possible way of endeavouring to increase the guarantees of security, namely, in the conclusion of separate agreements or regional pacts of non-aggression, of pacific settlement of disputes and mutual assistance, or of non-aggression only. The more logical and speedy method of a general treaty binding on all States Members must be excluded for the time being. After the two unsuccessful attempts of 1923 and 1924 it would not merely be useless from a practical point of view but dangerous for the prestige of the League to make a third attempt, for the objections raised to the earlier attempts still existed. The type of security agreement most

easily brought into line with the Covenant appeared to be a regional pact of non-aggression, arbitration and mutual assistance. Among the questions which would have to be taken account of in model security treaties, M. Politis suggested three which must always be dealt with if a security pact were to achieve its object, namely, (1) the exclusion of resort to war; (2) the organisation of pacific procedure for the settlement of all disputes; (3) the establishment of a system of mutual assistance, linked with the functions of the Council.

It would be essential to make it plain that the condemnation of war related only to aggressive war by specifying that force might still be resorted to for purposes of legitimate defence, in the application of Article 16 of the Covenant, or in execution of a decision of the League.

The formula employed in the Rhineland pact and the separate agreements modelled upon it was to be recommended, namely, the Contracting Parties "mutually undertake that they will in no case attack or invade each other or resort to war against each other",

Whenever possible the establishment of demilitarised zones might play an important part in enforcing the provisions of a regional pact.

To fill up the gap left by Article 15, paragraph 7 of the Covenant, it was suggested that the Council in the event of failure to reach unanimity, might be empowered to take a decision by a specified majority in the capacity of arbitrator. This, being equivalent to an arbitral award, would be covered by Article 16. Or it might be provided that the Council, if it failed to reach unanimity, would refer the dispute to a body of arbitrators, determining by a specified majority the constitution, procedure, and powers of such a body. In every case there would be a final decision, any violation of which, accompanied by resort to war, would come under Article 16.

As regards the determination of an aggressor, in the event of hostilities breaking out between signatories of a regional pact, the Council might order the belligerents to observe an armistice, the terms of which would be settled by a two-thirds majority, and agree that any belligerent refusing such armistice or violating it should definitely be regarded as the aggressor. The question of a Council decision by a majority vote or otherwise called for closest consideration.

The provisions of the Rhineland Pact concerning flagrant aggression might be adopted in regional pacts wherever the situation was analogous. It would be possible to insert in these definite regional pacts clauses embodying offers of military assistance, not only against a Pact-breaking State, but also against a third aggressor.

As the conclusion of such pacts should facilitate and prepare a general agreement for the reduction and limitation of armaments, they might also contain clauses connecting security with disarmament.

It was suggested that regional pacts should be examined by the Council from the point of view of their conformity with the Covenant and their connection with other regional pacts already concluded. If regional pacts in various parts of the world, and more particularly in Europe, were to constitute the elements of a general system of security, they must be linked up with one another and bear a coherent relationship in a comprehensive scheme in harmony with the Covenant. M. Politis thought that it might be expedient to consider a resolution by the next Assembly inviting the Council to study the possibility of lending its good offices to States who may desire to conclude security pacts.

#### *Provisions of the Covenant.*

M. Rutgers (Holland) in his memorandum on Articles 10, 11 and 16 of the Covenant, stated that it did not seem advisable to draw up a rigid and complete code of procedure in times of emergency. The task of the League was to maintain peace and to fulfil this task it must, above all, prevent war. The application of



repressive measures, which could not but have serious consequences, would only take place in extreme cases where preventive measures had unfortunately failed. A hard and fast definition of the expressions "aggression" and "resort to war" would not be free from danger, since it might oblige the Council and the Members of the League to pronounce on a breach of the Covenant and apply sanctions at a time when it would be preferable to refrain for the moment from measures of coercion. There would also be the risk that criteria might be taken which, in unforeseen circumstances might lead to a State which was not in reality responsible for hostilities being described as an aggressor.

In order to facilitate the application of Article 16 in case of need, M. Rutgers was of opinion that it was necessary to make a full and conscientious use of other articles, especially of Article 11, which enabled the Council to keep in touch with developments in a conflict and so to construct a basis for the decisions which it might be called upon to take under Article 16.

To ensure effective action by the Council, particularly under Articles 4, 10, 11 and 16 of the Covenant, M. Rutgers attached great importance to the technical studies for the improvement of communications affecting the League. He considered that as regards Article 16, it was desirable that the uncertainty resulting from the amendments of 1921 should be put an end either by their ratification or their final abandonment. In the event of resort to war, it would be well that the Council should declare whether a breach of the Covenant had taken place and should state which of the parties had broken it.

Apart from the recommendations provided for in paragraph 2 of Article 16 concerning participation in military sanctions, it would be desirable for the Council in some cases to make recommendations to the Members regarding the application of the measures of economic pressure mentioned in the first paragraph of Article 16. The Council could consult economic and financial experts in the countries specially concerned.

The study of the question of the financial assistance to be given to a State victim of an aggression should be pursued both from the technical and the political points of view. In carrying out this study, the possibility of providing assistance even before Article 16 is applied, should be examined.

## 2. — DRAFT DISARMAMENT CONVENTION BY THE UNION OF SOCIALIST SOVIET REPUBLICS

The Delegation of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics has addressed to the Secretary-General, for discussion at the forthcoming meeting of the Preparatory Commission of the Disarmament Conference (1), a Draft Disarmament Convention with an explanatory memorandum which has been communicated to the States Members of the League of Nations.

The Convention is in five chapters it aims at the complete and general disbandment of all armed forces within a period of four years from the entry into force of the Convention, so as to restrict the possibility of armed conflicts from the first year onwards.

Chapter I provides for the disbandment of all the effectives of the land, sea and air forces, of War Marine and Aviation Ministries, of general staffs and military schools, and for the destruction of all documents and returns relating to military trained reserves, military enlistment, and mobilisation.

Chapter II deals with material, and provides for the destruction of all types of land, naval and air armament, of fortifications and of naval and air bases, and for the transformation of arms and munitions factories.

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(1) Owing to a printing error, the name of M. Litvinoff, delegate of the U. S. S. R., was omitted from the list of the members of the Preparation Commission given in the January number of the *Monthly Summary*.

Chapter III concerns the organisation of the protection on land and at sea of State and private property, of the natural resources of the sea and of submarine cables. It contemplates the organisation of a police service for the repression of piracy and the slave trade.

Chapter IV regulates the supervision of disarmament and provides for the constitution of a permanent international commission and of central and local commissions in each State.

Chapter V deals with the conclusion of supplementary agreements on various questions relating to disarmament, the ratification of conventions and the solution of questions arising from a breach of the convention.

#### IV. — Legal and Constitutional Questions.

##### 1. — PROGRESSIVE CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. — FIRST SESSION OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE CODIFICATION CONFERENCE

The Preparatory Committee for the Codification Conference met at Geneva from February 6th to February 15th with M. Basdevant (France) in the chair.

There were further present : M. François (Pays-Bas), Sir Cecil Hurst (Grande-Bretagne), M. Pilotti (Italie), M. Carlos Ruiz (Chili).

It examined three questions,—nationality, territorial waters, responsibility of States—which the Assembly had referred to the Conference which it is proposed to convene in 1929. On each of them the Committee decided to proceed to an enquiry and to approach States Members and non-Members of the League, in order to obtain full and precise information on the following subjects :

The state of their positive law, internal and international, with as far as possible, full details as to bibliography and jurisprudence;

Information derived from their practice at home and abroad; and other views as regards possible additions to the rules in force, and how to make good existing deficiencies in international law.

The information should bear on the following points :

1. *Nationality* : the general principle of international law that the acquisition and loss of nationality fall solely within the domestic jurisdiction of each State; double nationality; effects of the naturalisation of parents on the nationality of minors; nationality of children of unknown parents; cases of double nationality or loss of nationality by a woman as the result of marriage with a foreigner; effects of adoption on the nationality of the adopted child, etc., etc.

2. *Territorial waters* : the nature of the rights possessed by a State over its territorial waters; the extent of such rights; the position as regards territorial waters around islands; straits; demarcation between inland waters and territorial waters; limitation upon the exercise of the sovereignty of coastal States as regards jurisdiction and fiscal questions, foreign warships in territorial waters.

3. *Responsibility of States for damages caused on their territory to the person or property of foreigners* : the legal basis of the international responsibility of States as resulting from acts of a legislative, judicial or executive organ; acts of individuals or mobs in riots or insurrections; pecuniary reparation or other compensation for damages, etc.

Governments will be asked to send in their replies by October 31st at the latest. The next session of the Committee will open on January 28th, 1929.

## 2. — INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENTS

### *Registration.*

Among the treaties and international engagements registered in February figure :

Agreements between the South African Union and Portugal concerning the frontier between the mandated territory of South-West Africa and Angola, and the utilisation of the Kunene waters for hydraulic plant, flooding and irrigation in South-West Africa. Both these agreements were signed at Capetown, the first on June 22nd, 1926, the second on July 1st, 1926, and presented for registration by the South African Union;

Treaties of commerce and navigation between Guatemala and Italy, Finland and Turkey, Austria and Finland, the Economic Union of Belgium and Luxembourg, and the Serb-Croat-Slovenes;

An agreement between Germany and Poland concerning the application of Article 312 of the Versailles Treaty, signed at Berlin on January 24th, 1927, presented for registration by Poland;

A Protocol concerning the opening of customs routes and frontier stations between Germany and Poland, presented for registration by Poland;

A series of agreements between Poland and Czechoslovakia concerning the distribution, exchange and loan of Acts of the former Austrian and Hungarian Authorities in those countries, presented for registration by Czechoslovakia;

An agreement between Germany and Norway concerning the suppression of the passport visa between the two countries, signed at Oslo on January 17th, 1928, presented for registration by Norway;

An agreement between Estonia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, concerning the settlement of frontier conflicts, signed at Tallinn on August 8th, 1927, presented for registration by Estonia.

## V. — The Technical Organisations.

### 1. — THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ORGANISATION

#### a) *Meeting of the Financial Committee.*

The Financial Committee met at Geneva on February 27th, with Sir Otto Niemeyer in the chair, to examine questions concerning the settlement of Greek and Bulgarian refugees and the financial reconstruction of Bulgaria and Portugal.

It will also consider questions relating to the balance of the Hungarian, Austrian and Danzig loans, and financial assistance for States attacked.

M. Gustave Ador (Swiss), Sir Otto Niemeyer (British), M. Armani (Italian), M. de Chalendar (French), M. Dubois (Swiss), M. Janssen (Belgian), M. Melchior (German), M. ter Meulen (Netherlands), M. Pospisil (Czechoslovak), Mr. Jeremiah Smith (American), Sir Henry Strakosch (South African), M. Tsushima (Japanese), M<sup>o</sup> Wallenberg (Swede) are attending this session.

An account of the proceedings will be given in the next number of the *Monthly Summary*.

#### b) *Abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions.* *Signature of the Convention.*

Up to February 1st, 1928, twenty-six States had signed the Convention for the Abolition of Import and Export Prohibitions and Restrictions (Geneva, November

8th, 1927), by which the Contracting Parties undertook to suppress, subject to certain exceptions, all prohibitions and restrictions within six months after the coming into force of the Convention.

Eighteen States signed the Convention at the moment of its conclusion, namely, Austria, Belgium, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Roumania, Siam, and Switzerland; and the United States, Estonia, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Serb-Croat-Slovene Kingdom and Sweden signed between November 8th and February 1st.

By Article 6 of the Convention certain Contracting Parties were entitled to make reservations of a temporary character <sup>(1)</sup> to the general rule for the abolition of all prohibitions and restrictions.

Among the States which signed the Convention on its conclusion, the following submitted reservations which the Conference discussed and accepted : Austria, Belgium, Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, France, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg and Roumania.

The Convention provided for the deposit of further reservations up to February 1st. The United States, Estonia, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Portugal and Sweden, who signed the Convention between November 8th and February 1st, deposited reservations which will be examined at a meeting of the signatories early in July 1928, at which the conditions and date of the coming into force of the Convention will be settled.

Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia have recently made fresh reservations which will be examined in July.

#### *Meeting of Experts on Veterinary Questions.*

The Sub-Committee of Experts on Veterinary Questions met at Geneva from January 30th to February 2nd, to give effect to a resolution of the Conference on Import and Export Prohibitions and Restrictions. This Sub-Committee was instructed by the Economic Committee to consider what guarantees might be given by cattle-exporting countries, what facilities might be granted by importing countries on the basis of these guarantees, and in general to determine the best methods for applying veterinary supervision, taking into account the economic interests of the exporting countries and without prejudice to the interests of countries desiring to take precautions against animal diseases.

The experts examined the problem as a whole and came to the conclusion that for the purpose indicated by the Conference, it was indispensable that each State should possess a veterinary organisation capable of exercising efficacious sanitary supervision over the whole of its territory. They also considered that each country should publish a regular health bulletin prepared on the standard lines adopted by the Committee of the International Office for Contagious Diseases of Animals.

Arrangements were made to obtain as promptly as possible accurate and full information on the working of the veterinary services in the principal countries most directly concerned.

The experts decided to meet in June to examine the situation in the light of these new data.

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(1) The first two paragraphs of Article 6 of the Convention read :

(a) "The High Contracting Parties, recognising that there exist in the case of certain of them situations of fact or of law which prevent the latter from immediately undertaking, as regards certain specified products, the engagements entered into under the previous articles, have deemed it equitable to authorise these High Contracting Parties to make a reservation in regard to certain temporary exceptions, which the latter undertake to withdraw as soon as the circumstances from which they arise cease to exist.

(b) Moreover, the High Contracting Parties, recognising that the abolition of certain import or export prohibitions or restrictions applied by some of them would involve the latter in grave difficulties, and that, moreover, these prohibitions or restrictions do not prejudicially affect the trade of other countries, have also deemed it equitable to authorise these High Contracting Parties to make a reservation in regard to these exceptions."

## 2. — COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT

### *Meeting of the Advisory Committee.*

The Committee on Communications and Transit met at Geneva on February 27th, and was still in session at the end of the month. It considering reports from its Committees and Sub-Committees on road traffic, combined transport, competition between railways and waterways, and unification of transport statistics, and the question of communications affecting the League in times of emergency (landing-ground for airplanes, the construction of a wireless station, identification of aircraft).

The agenda also includes consideration of certain resolutions of the third General Conference on Communications and Transit (August 1927).

This meeting is attended by M. Reinhard (Austria), M. Enciso (Argentine), M. Restrepo (Colombia), M. Dreyfus (France), Mr. J. C. Baldwin (Great Britain), M. Seeliger (Germany), M. Athanase Politis (Greece), M. Sinigalia (Italy), M. Ito (Japan), M. Duzmans (Latvia), M. Schlingemann (Netherlands), M. Vasconcellos (Portugal), M. Djouritchitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), M. Phya Sanpakitch Preecha (Siam), M. Hansen (Sweden), and M. Herold (Switzerland).

Mr. Roper (International Air Traffic Commission), M. Hostie (Secretary-General of the Central Rhine Commission), M. Pourcel (International Railway Union), M. de Ronsier (International Chamber of Commerce), M. van der Berch van Heemstede (International Air Traffic Association) are also taking part in the work of this session.

An account of the proceedings will be given in the next number of the *Monthly Summary*.

## 3. — INTELLECTUAL COOPERATION

### *a) Education of Young People in the Aims and Existence of the League.*

The Department of External Affairs of the South African Union has informed the Secretary-General of the arrangements made by the states and provinces of the Union to give effect to the recommendations of the Eighth Assembly with regard to the instruction of young people in the existence and aims of the League.

The Departments of Education of the various states have organised such instruction in the training colleges for teachers and have included in school books chapters on the League.

Most of the universities of the Union have organised lectures on the League.

\* \* \*

The Danish Government has also informed the Secretary-General of the measures it has adopted for this purpose.

It draws attention to the fact that, since 1925, arrangements had been made for history lessons in primary and secondary schools, in teachers' training colleges and popular universities to include courses on the work of the League. On the first Monday in September—the opening day of the Assembly—a special lesson is given in all schools on the League.

### *b) Preservation of Documents.*

A Committee of Experts met on February 1st at the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation to study measures for the preservation of the ink and paper used in printing important documents.

The experts examined the technical aspects of the problem. They recommended that all newspapers should follow the example of English and American papers have a special edition of each number printed on linen paper.

They drew attention to the fact that permanent exhibition had most injurious effects upon documents of historical value and should be replaced by temporary exhibitions.

These recommendations will be submitted to the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation at its July meeting.

The meeting was attended by Professor Fruin, Director of the State Archives, chairman (Netherlands); M. Roland-Marcel, General Manager of the *Bibliothèque nationale* (French); Professor Arribert, of the *Ecole de Papeterie* of Grenoble University (French); Professor Herzberg, Director of the *Staatliches Materialprüfungsamt*, Berlin; Dr. Holwech, Statsgardein, Oslo (Norwegian); Mr. Hilary Jenkinson, Officer in charge of Repairs at the Public Records Office (British); M. Ojetti (Italian); and Professor Pirenne, Member of The Belgian Royal Academy, professor of History at Ghent University (Belgium).

## VI. — Administrative Questions.

### THIRTY-SECOND REPORT OF THE SAAR GOVERNING COMMISSION

The Governing Commission of the Saar Territory has addressed to the Secretary-General its thirty-second report describing its work and the situation in the Territory during the last quarter of 1927.

#### *Economic and Social situation.*

The Franco-German negotiations on the customs regime of the Saar basin are continuing. The agreements of August 5th and November 6th, 1926, have been prolonged.

Two strikes broke out during the quarter, one in the metal industry and the other among the railway workers. In each case the Commission intervened and succeeded in bringing the strike to an end.

The difficulties of the coal mines in marketing their products continued. There were a few "unemployment days" in October and December. In order to compensate in some measure the resulting fall in wages, the Mining Administration continued to pay family allowances for the unemployment days. It also granted each worker a special allowance of 100 francs at the end of the year and increased considerably the amount of coal stocked in order to reduce to a minimum the number of unemployment days. During the quarter the gross production of the mines was, 3,662,633 tons. The total production during the year was 14,874,820 tons compared with 15,103,135 tons in 1926. The persons employed at the end of 1927 numbered 67,345 compared with 73,807 at the end of 1926.

#### *Political Situation.*

The Advisory Council held plenary meetings on October 11th and December 5th, in the course of which its members gave their opinion on draft decrees concerning housing, bills of exchange, civil and penal procedure, and conciliation offices for questions concerning farming hunting and fishing leases.

The Technical Committee met six times, giving its opinion on the above draft decrees and also on others concerning air traffic, young people's welfare free employment agencies the amendment of the law on the bar, electricity and gas supplies.

As the mandate of the members of the Advisory Council expired on December 31st, the Governing Commission decided that elections should be held on March 25th. The members elected will remain in office until March 31st, 1931.

The mandate of the members of the Technical Committee, which also expired on December 31st, 1927, has been prolonged until December 31st, 1928.

#### *Administration.*

• A new housing decree was promulgated. In 188 of the 290 *communes* of the territory, normal circumstances have been re-established as regards housing legislation.

Since 1920, the Governing Commission has encouraged house-building by the creation of an office for the construction of cheap dwellings; by the construction of houses belonging to the State, by adapting barracks for dwelling purposes, and by financing building from the pension fund for civil servants. At the end of 1927, 3,084 new dwellings had been made available.

The Social Insurance Agreement of 1923 between the Governing Commission and the German Government has been revised.

The Governing Commission and the French Government have signed two declarations settling certain questions regarding bail and legal assistance.

As regards education, the Commission considered that the time had come to give effect to the decisions of the Assembly and to organise in the Saar schools courses on the aims and existence of the League. In order to interest all teachers in the question, the Department of Education placed it on the agenda of all teachers' meetings in December, and asked them to submit practical proposals.

## VII. — Social and Humanitarian Questions.

### INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION

The Preparatory Committee of the International Relief Union met at Geneva, on February 23rd and 24th, to consider what measures should be taken to further the definite establishment of the Union.

• The Committee drew the attention of the Council to the fact that only seventeen countries had so far signed the Convention, founding the Union namely : Belgium, Bulgaria, Colombia, Cuba, Danzig, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Guatemala, Italy, Monaco, Poland, Roumania, Spain, Turkey and Uruguay.

It considered that it would be desirable that the greatest possible number of States should sign the convention, which would be open for signature until April 30th, 1928. After that date States could only accede to it.

The Committee thanked the Red Cross Organisations for the assistance they had promised.

It appointed a Permanent Committee composed of M. Kuelz, Senator Ciruolo and Senator François, to take all necessary steps, possibly with the cooperation of other members, to enable the work to begin.

The meeting was attended by : M. Kuelz, former German Minister, Senator Ciruolo, Honorary President of the Committee and of the Italian Red Cross; Senator François, General Manager of the Belgian Red Cross; Lt. Colonel Draudt, Vice-President of the German Red Cross; Mr. Kittredge, Secretary-General of the League of Red Cross Societies; M. Laurin, Director-General of the Royal Swedish Administration of Compulsory Life Insurance; M. Matter, Barrister at the Paris Court of Appeal; M. Werner, Professor of Law at Geneva University, Member of the International Red Cross Committee.

## VIII. — Other Questions.

### 1. — SZENT-GOTTHARD INCIDENT

The Roumanian, Serb-Croat-Slovene and Czechoslovak Governments have addressed to the Secretary-General requests for the Council to examine the incident which occurred on January 1st, 1928, at the St. Gotthard station on the Austro-Hungarian frontier.

The three requests are based on the decision of the Council of December 11th, 1926, and on the rules adopted on September 27th, 1924, with regard to the exercise of the right of investigation.

The question has been placed on the agenda of the March meeting of the Council.

### 2. — OBITUARY

#### a) *Death of Professor Lorentz.*

Professor Lorentz, Chairman of the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, died on February 4th.

The Secretary-General expressed the sincere sympathy of the League Secretariat with the Netherlands Government and the family of the deceased.

M. Destrée represented the Committee of Intellectual Cooperation at the funeral.

#### b) *Death of Madame Bugge-Wicksell.*

Madame Bugge-Wicksell, Member of the Permanent Mandates Commission since the beginning, died on February 20th.

The Secretary-General addressed to the Swedish Government a telegram expressing the sympathy of the League Secretariat.

## IX. — Forthcoming Events.

March 15th : Committee of Experts on the Question of Translations, Paris.

March 15th : Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, Geneva.

March 19th : Child Welfare Committee, Geneva.

March 19th : Preparatory Committee for Conference of Government Statisticians, Geneva.

March 23rd : Economic Committee, Geneva.

April 10th : Eleventh Session of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs, Geneva.

April 11th : Committee of Experts on Bills of Exchange, Geneva.

April 25th : Permanent Committee for the Standardisation of Sera and Biological Products, Frankfurt-on-Main.

April 30th : Supervisory Commission, Geneva.

April 30th : Health Committee, Geneva.



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# MONTHLY SUMMARY

## OF THE

# INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

1928. No. 3.

March.

*This Summary is published on the responsibility of the International Labour Office, to which all observations or requests for information as to its contents should be addressed. It is published for general information, and is not an official record.*

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### THE RATIFICATION OF CONVENTIONS

On 29 February 1928, the total number of ratifications of Draft Conventions registered with the Secretary-General of the League of Nations was 256.

At the same time the number of Draft Conventions of which ratification had been authorised by the competent authority in the country concerned, but had not yet been registered with the Secretary-General, was 35.

The International Labour Office was informed during the month of the formal ratification by Belgium of the International Convention concerning the Simplification of the Inspection of Emigrants on Board Ship.

### THE THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

The Governing Body of the International Labour Office held its Thirty-Eighth Session at Geneva from 1 to 4 February 1928, under the chairmanship of Mr. Arthur Fontaine.

Sir James Lithgow, British employers' representative, having resigned, the employers' group had appointed Mr. Forbes Watson to take his place. The German Government had announced that, in consequence of internal rearrangements in the German Ministry of Labour, the place of its representative, Mr. Feig, would be taken as from the Thirty-Ninth Session by Mr. Weigert.

In announcing these changes, the Chairman expressed the regret which the Governing Body felt at the decision of Sir James Lithgow and the departure of Mr. Feig. He paid a tribute to the personal qualities of both these members, and said how much their collaboration had been appreciated by their colleagues. He extended a welcome to their successors, Mr. Forbes Watson and Mr. Weigert. Representatives of the three groups on the Governing Body associated themselves with the remarks of the Chairman.

### THE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Governing Body, passing to the discussion of the Report which the Director submits at each Session on the work of the International Labour Office, noted with satisfaction the progress made in the ratification of Conventions. The number of ratifications officially registered amounted to 255 on 31 January, and there was ground to hope that the increase in ratifications would continue to improve up to the next Session of the

Conference. The Director drew attention to the delicate situation which might be created by an extension of the practice of conditional ratification.

On behalf of the Workers' Group, Mr. Poulton emphasised the danger of this policy of conditional ratification which, if it became general, would lead Governments to wait for each other to take action and would thus impede ratifications. He expressed the hope that the movement in favour of ratification to which the Director had drawn attention would soon become more pronounced, and he expressed his personal disappointment that Great Britain had not yet ratified the Hours Convention. "If industrial peace is desired", he added "the best way of obtaining it would be to secure the application of the Washington Convention."

The question of the eight-hour day, thus introduced during the discussion of the Director's Report, was to become the subject of a special debate which, because of its importance, was soon seen to be the dominant event of the Session.

#### THE EIGHT-HOUR DAY AND THE PROCEDURE FOR THE REVISION OF CONVENTIONS

Mr. Betterton, Parliamentary Secretary to the British Ministry of Labour, having to reply to Mr. Poulton on the attitude of the British Government to the ratification of the Washington Convention, asked to deal with this question at the same time as the question, on the agenda of the Session, of the procedure to be followed in connection with proposals for the possible revision of Conventions.

In the name of the Workers' Group, Mr. Jouhaux stated that there was no connection between the question of the eight-hour day and the general question of the procedure for the revision of Conventions. But having made this reserve on the question of principle, he did not raise any objection to Mr. Betterton's proposal to make a statement.

In these circumstances, the Chairman opened the discussion of the Report prepared by the Office on the general problem of the possible revision of Conventions. This problem exists for all the Conventions adopted by the International Labour Conference, because they all include a clause providing for the submission by the Governing Body to the Conference of a Report on the application of the Convention, and the decision by it whether the question of revision should be placed on the Agenda of the Conference.

To this general problem the Report of the Office proposed that a general solution should be found susceptible of application to the various special cases that may arise. It did not envisage the possibility of starting the procedure of revision for any Convention until after the general rules for this procedure had been established.

Mr. Betterton, on the other hand, on behalf of the British Government, requested the Governing Body to put in hand immediately the procedure for the revision of the Washington Convention on the Eight-Hour Day. He pointed out that the difficulties which had been encountered in securing ratifications, and which had led to the Conferences at Berne and London for the purpose of interpreting the Convention, showed that it was not generally acceptable in its present form. The question of its revision would have to be considered within the next two or three years, and the British Government therefore considered it preferable that this revision should be undertaken as soon as possible, in order that a workable Convention might be produced which would be generally accepted. Their intention was to work towards the framing of a Convention which, while adhering to the principles of the Washington Draft Convention, would be free from the difficulties encountered in that Draft. If such a Convention was obtained, they would be prepared to stand in line with other industrial States by ratifying it and putting it into operation.

In conclusion, Mr. Betterton made two definite proposals to the Governing Body :

(1) The Governing Body should decide to place the question of the revision of the Hours Convention on the Agenda of the Ordinary Session of the Conference to be held in 1929;

(2) The Office should be at once instructed to prepare a draft Report on the working of the Convention, to be submitted to the Governing Body at its next Session. After having been examined and adopted by the Governing Body, this Report would be communicated to all the States Members of the Organisation in order that they might express their opinion on the matter and submit such proposals for revision as might seem to them necessary.

Mr. Jouhaux stated that the Workers' Group was unanimous in its opposition to the point of view of Mr. Betterton. That was why he had emphasised that there could be no question of connecting the ratification of the Eight-Hour Convention with the revision of the Convention. The Workers' Group did not agree that the special problem of the Washington Convention should be substituted for the general problem of the procedure for the revision of Conventions. Mr. Jouhaux added that, as representative of the French workers, he had to express the profound disappointment occasioned by the British

proposal. The French workers, he stated, had agreed that the ratification by France of the Hours Convention should be made conditionally on ratification by the British Government and by the German Government, because they were convinced that the British Government, which had called the London Conference, would not hesitate to ratify the Convention. He also emphasised that the Convention had already been ratified by a certain number of countries which were confronted by economic difficulties at least as great as those confronting the great industrial countries, in particular Great Britain. They had surmounted these difficulties in order to ratify and apply a Convention that Great Britain had contributed to draw up and to have adopted. What would now be their position if faced by the refusal of England to ratify? Mr. Jouhaux quoted official texts which he maintained there was reason for considering as successive undertakings on the part of the authorised representatives of Great Britain. He concluded by asking that the British Government should honour its signature.

Mr. Lambert-Ribot, French employers' representative, who had raised at the previous Session of the Governing Body the question of the possible revision of the Washington Hours Convention, stated that the principle of the eight-hour day could not be questioned. The only points to be considered were the adjustments required as regards the methods of application of the Convention. These adjustments should take account of an experience of nearly ten years of the working of the Convention and their adoption would be calculated to facilitate ratifications. Mr. Lambert-Ribot observed that the eight-hour question could not be left out of account, but he added that there was also the general question of the procedure for the possible revision of the various Conventions. He requested the Governing Body not to take a hasty decision on these matters and to weigh the *pros* and *cons* with care.

Mr. Mahaim, representative of the Belgian Government, expressed the anxiety which the unexpected British proposals caused him. Belgium was one of the countries which had unconditionally ratified the Washington Convention, and it would not envisage without anxiety the situation that would result from the refusal of Great Britain to ratify prior to revision. He emphasised the fact that Belgium had experienced and had overcome the difficulties advanced in support of the refusal to ratify the Convention. It would experience a sense of bitterness in seeing that others would not agree to make the same endeavours. Mr. Mahaim added that no international social legislation was possible if there were no guarantee that its provisions would not constantly be discussed afresh. If the question of possible revision was, in fact, raised in respect of all the Conventions, it would be necessary to secure that the procedure established would not throw to the ground the legislative monument set up by the Organisation.

After a discussion in which various members of the Governing Body took part, the representative of the British Government stated that he had appreciated the arguments submitted against his proposals, particularly by Mr. Mahaim, and that he did not press for an immediate decision by the Governing Body concerning the inclusion in the Agenda of the 1929 Conference of the question of the revision of the Hours Convention. While maintaining his opinion as to the advantages of revising the Convention in the very near future, and reserving the freedom of the British Government to submit again its proposal for revision to the next Session of the Governing Body, he agreed that the matter should be postponed to the next Session of the Governing Body, in agreement with the proposal of Mr. Picquenard, French Government delegate. (The texts of Mr. Picquenard's proposal are given below.)

The Director drew the following conclusions from the discussion. He emphasised the fact that the principle of the eight-hour day was not touched by the discussion which had taken place. The eight-hour day was almost universally recognised, and no State existed which could adopt a negative attitude to it. On the contrary, all Governments were seeking the possibility of securing the ratification of the Washington Convention.

In his opinion, however, the British Government's proposal was premature. It was premature because it was impossible for the International Labour Organisation to proceed to revision before having previously defined the general rules to be observed in the procedure for revision. The general rules must first be fixed, apart from preoccupation with any particular Convention. After these general rules had been determined, they could be applied to such and such particular proposals for revision. The British proposal was also premature in that it did not indicate the precise points on which modification was requested. There could be no question of a general revision which would cause the whole Convention to be discussed afresh. If revision was to be envisaged, it could only be upon particular points clearly specified. It was important that this principle should be clearly indicated in the general rules of the procedure to be followed in the possible revision of Conventions.

Before the close of the discussion, Mr. Jouhaux stated that the Workers' Group was unanimous in maintaining its attitude of absolute opposition to any revision of the Eight-

Hour Convention and to any action which might directly or indirectly lead to its revision. "Thousands of workers throughout the world", he said, "have the will to maintain in its integrity the eight-hour day. If difficulties of application exist, let us see them. We will try to assist in solving them, but without entering upon the path of revision."

Finally, the Governing Body adopted two Resolutions submitted by Mr. Picquenard, French Government delegate.

The first of these Resolutions, which was adopted by 15 votes to 6 (those of the Workers' Group), with one declared abstention (that of the representative of the Polish Government), is as follows :

The Governing Body instructs the Standing Orders Committee to submit to it, at its next Session, a Report on the procedure to be adopted with regard to proposals for the possible revision of Conventions, taking into account the terms both of the Conventions themselves and of the constitution of the International Labour Organisation.

The second Resolution is as follows :

The Governing Body decides to place on the Agenda of its next Session, after the consideration of the general procedure for revision, the question whether the revision of the Hours Convention, proposed by the British Government, should be placed on the Agenda of the 1929 Conference.

The words "proposed by the British Government" were introduced in the text at the request of Mr. de Michelis, representative of the Italian Government.

Mr. Arthur Fontaine pointed out that this second Resolution was simply intended to specify the order in which the questions would be considered, and left members of the Governing Body quite free to vote either for or against revision of the Hours Convention.

The second Resolution was adopted by 13 votes to 7, with 4 abstentions. The 6 members of the Workers' Group and the representative of the Norwegian Government voted against. The 4 abstentions are those of the representatives of the Governments of Belgium, Germany, Japan, and Poland.

#### THE AGENDA OF THE 1929 CONFERENCE

The Governing Body had various decisions to take with regard to the programme of work of the 1929 International Labour Conference. It will be remembered that the 1928 Session of the Conference will open on 30 May and that its Agenda includes two questions : (1) Methods of Fixing Minimum Wages (2nd discussion); and (2) Prevention of Industrial Accidents, including Accidents due to Coupling on Railways (1st discussion).

In 1929 the Conference will hold two Sessions : (1) a session specially devoted to questions of maritime labour (the Agenda had been previously determined; it embraces the regulation of hours of work on board ship, the protection of seamen in case of sickness, including the treatment of seamen injured on board ship, and the promotion of seamen's welfare in ports); (2) a Session of a general character (the Governing Body in October in Berlin had decided to place on the Agenda of this General Session of 1929 the question of Forced Labour; it reserved the possibility of completing this Agenda at its following Session by adding to it either the question of Unemployment Insurance or one or two questions concerning Salaried Employees).

During the discussion on the subject, the Governing Body had to consider a proposal that no other questions should be added to the Agenda. This proposal obtained 12 votes to 12 and was not adopted. By 13 votes to 11, the Governing Body then decided to add a question to its Agenda. After a series of votes on the various questions that might be included, it chose, by 12 votes to 9, the question of Hours of Work of Salaried Employees. As some difficulties had arisen in connection with the interpretation of some of these successive votes, the Governing Body unanimously adopted the following Resolution :

The Governing Body, considering that the drawing up of the Agenda of the Conference is one of its most important duties, and that it is essential that every possible step should be taken with a view to ensuring that its opinions in regard to every proposed item should be clearly expressed, requests the Standing Orders Committee to introduce such provisions into the Standing Orders as may be necessary to this end.

The decision of the Governing Body with regard to the question of Hours of Work of Salaried Employees is particularly interesting, because this will be the first time that the International Labour Conference will directly approach with a view to international



regulation a problem concerning salaried employees. This will, therefore, constitute an initial satisfaction of the wishes expressed by this important category of workers.

The Agenda of the General Session of the 1929 Conference will therefore include the following questions : the Prevention of Industrial Accidents (final discussion); Forced Labour (first discussion); Hours of Work of Salaried Employees (first discussion). A General Report of the Director on the question of Unemployment will also be submitted to this Session.

The Governing Body decided that the Maritime Session of the Conference would follow immediately upon the General Session.

#### REFUGEES

For the organisation of the programme of the Refugee Service, the Governing Body adopted the recommendations of its Sub-Committee for Refugees, on the basis of which the Office will submit in April a draft budget for this work. The Governing Body decided to transform its Refugee Sub-Committee into a permanent Committee.

#### THE "LOTUS" INCIDENT

The Governing Body considered a request which had been made to it by the International Association of Mercantile Marine Officers, in consequence of the collision which occurred at sea between the French vessel *Lotus* and the Turkish vessel *Boz Kourt*. The request was to the effect that the Governing Body should submit to the International Maritime Conference in 1929 the question of the laying down of international rules for the penalties to be imposed and the competent courts to deal with offences of an occupational character committed at sea and the certificates of occupational capacity required for officers of the watch. The object of the proposal was not to question the decision given by the Permanent Court of International Justice, but to remedy by international provisions certain gaps in international law which had been found to exist on the occasion of the *Lotus* incident.

The Governing Body took note of the request of the Mercantile Marine Officers. The Director was invited to study the problems of competence which arise out of the request and will confer with the Secretariat of the League of Nations on the procedure to be adopted.

#### OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The Governing Body referred to its Standing Orders Committee a proposal submitted by the Workers' Group to the effect that the German language should be recognised as an official language in the Governing Body and at the International Labour Conference, in view of the large number of workers who knew German.

#### ADVISORY LABOUR COMMITTEE FOR UPPER SILESIA

The Governing Body was called upon to appoint for a further period of three years the Chairman and two of the assessors on the Advisory Labour Committee for Upper Silesia set up by the German-Polish Convention of 16 May 1922. On the proposal of the Polish and German Governments, the Governing Body unanimously re-elected as Chairman of this Committee Mr. Albert Thomas, Director of the International Labour Office. It re-elected as German assessor Mr. Sitzler, Director in the German Ministry of Labour, and as Polish assessor Mr. Sokal, Polish Government representative on the Governing Body.

#### COLLABORATION OF THE OFFICE IN THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE FOR INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN AGRICULTURE

The Governing Body accepted the invitation addressed to it by the President of the International Institute of Agriculture at Rome for the participation of the International Labour Office in the work of an international "co-operation" committee, to be entrusted with the co-ordination of the work of the various official and unofficial institutions dealing wholly or partly with agricultural questions. Under the Standing Orders of this committee, the delegate of the Office is assigned the position of vice-chairman. Mr. Arthur Fontaine, Chairman of the Governing Body and representative of the French Government, was appointed as the delegate of the Office.

The Governing Body adjourned to its next Session a certain number of questions, in particular the question of the relation of the Office to the economic organs of the League,

the question of the meeting of a Conference of Experts on War Pensions, and the consideration of the report of the preparatory meeting held in December in Brussels with a view to the final constitution of the Advisory Committee of Intellectual Workers.

The Governing Body decided to hold its next Session in Geneva in the week 23 to 29 April 1928.

## RUSSIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES

At its last meeting the Governing Body of the International Labour Office decided to make its Sub-Committee on Refugees into a Permanent Committee which would meet periodically and keep the Governing Body informed as to progress made in the finding of employment for refugees. This new Committee met for the first time at Geneva on 27-28 February.

In the first place, though the Committee agreed that the finding of employment for Russian and Armenian refugees is of a temporary character and should end as soon as possible in the course of the next few years, it did not agree to accept the proposal that had been made to transfer back the Refugees Service to the League of Nations. It felt that the right course was to proceed prudently on the lines already laid down for dealing with the refugee problem, and draw up the 1929 budget in accordance with the plans approved.

The Committee adopted several recommendations dealing with the distinction that should be made between refugees in general and those who for special reasons require the assistance of the Refugees Service. In order to reach a progressive reduction in the numbers to be dealt with, refugees who obtain employment of a permanent character will be considered as no longer having any claim to help from the International Labour Office except in cases where they are affected by some general refugee problem. The Committee examined in detail the possibilities of finding employment for refugees in Bolivia, France, Peru, and Tunis. They also investigated the steps that had been taken for the settlement of Armenian refugees in Syria.