

LEAGUE
SIXTH ASSEMBLY
VERBATIM RECORD
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SEPTEMBER  
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# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, 1925, AT 11 A.M.

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#### 1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

M. Paul Painlevé, delegate of France, Acting President of the Council, took the Chair.

##### The Chairman :

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen—It is upon France that to-day the signal honour devolves of opening the great international assembly which has, every year since 1920, discussed all the questions upon which the peace of the world and the future of humanity depend.

My first duty as Chairman—an office which, even though I hold it but for a day, I shall never forget—is to extend a most cordial welcome to all the distinguished representatives of the fifty-four nations assembled in this hall to collaborate wholeheartedly in the most noble enterprise ever undertaken by man.

May I also be allowed on this occasion to express my regret at not seeing amongst us the tall figure of that great servant of humanity, M. Branting, whom, alas ! we shall never see again. You will also join with me in associating with this memory that of two other colleagues who are no more, M. Meierovics and M. Chagas. I would also like to present my respectful greeting to the lady who bears the great name of Woodrow Wilson, who is gracing this inaugural assembly with her presence.

There are certain persons who consider themselves superior to their fellows because, in their pessimism, they delight in disparaging and predicting the failure of any concerted efforts to combat the

evils from which the peoples of the world are suffering and, particularly, the worst of all evils—war. They take what theologians call a morbid delight in doing so, as if blind mistrust were not even more dangerous than blind confidence, as if—to quote the words of M. Motta, when he opened the first Assembly—hatred itself were not a curse. They mistake for exceptional clearness of vision what is really shortsightedness, which magnifies the obstacles immediately before their eyes and blinds them to the full view of the road that was trodden yesterday and the road you will tread to-morrow.

Because you can only by degrees fulfil the high hopes which the world has placed in you, and which inspire and fortify you in your task ; because you have not overcome at one blow the formidable destructive forces which are convulsing the Old World, they proclaim, with malignant joy, the death of the League of Nations. Ah ! gentlemen, how often—this every week even—have I heard them doom you to an ignoble death ! But can we not now reply to them—to quote a classic phrase—that “les gens qu'ils tuent se portent assez bien” ? In proof of this, I point not merely to the number but to the character of your delegations. Both the strongest nations and those nations which are most threatened with the possibility of conflicts are represented by Cabinet Ministers, by men who were Ministers yesterday or will be to-morrow.

It is no idle purpose that would call together an assembly such as this, and when the French Government decided that its head should, despite the many urgent calls upon his time, come and preside at your first meeting, it was not for the purpose of affording help to the French delegation ; it does not require help, as you already know, for you have seen it at work. No, to-day, when the duty of inaugurating your work falls upon France, the French Government has taken this step because it wishes solemnly to affirm before the whole world its respect for the League of Nations, its faith in the League's work and in the beneficence of the League's acts.

In point of fact, if any impartial observer were asked to give his sincere and unbiassed opinion of the work you have done in five years, he would be struck, above all, by your steadily increasing authority.

When, at the close of the great struggle, the League of Nations was born, it was, as it were, a tiny flame of hope, flickering still, as if the least breath would extinguish it; but this flame has now been fed with the enthusiastic ardour of every nation.

The League has stood firm, it has become active, it has faced and overcome formidable difficulties. But its mission is not merely to arbitrate on disputes, or to draft conventions so logical and precise as to call forth the admiration of jurists; it must also create a new international soul, a new international morality. It has fulfilled this two-fold mission courageously, knowing the exact measure of its strength, going to the extreme verge of the possible, but without making the fatal mistake of attempting the impossible. Day by day it has had to anticipate and lead public opinion, while at the same time it has had to avoid alarming this same opinion to such an extent as to alienate it. It had to oppose projects of violence, but, at the same time, it had to avoid coming into conflict with forces too great for its still undeveloped strength. This firmness, this moderation, this calm self-possession, have made of the weakling of 1920 the strong League of 1925. Emboldened by success, it has each time ventured a step further and has increased its prestige in the eyes of the world. One by one its discussions have helped to clear the atmosphere of international mistrust and have led the best elements and the youth of all nations along the path of the future. Enterprises which yesterday seemed fantastic have to-day become feasible, because you have greatly dared.

In particular, you can look back with pride to the work accomplished in the course of the past year — work which will mark an epoch in the history of the League. During this period, your activities have been so manifold and so varied that I cannot think of even enumerating, much less describing, them. In widely different fields — politics, economics, finance, health, and so on — the Council of the League, its Committees, its Secretariat and the Permanent Court of International Justice have worked together ceaselessly to bring peace to the world. With this calmness of mind and impartiality of method you have solved the most complex and embittered controversies, problems which have aroused the angry passions of neighbouring peoples, and smaller problems too — smaller, but nevertheless vital for the prosperity and welfare of the weaker nations — problems connected with customs, trade, transit, unemployment, the abolition of slavery, the white-slave traffic, the protection of women and children, and many others. I can only refer briefly to the most important of all these activities.

In the first place, there are the detailed amendments to the Covenant, that firm and unshakable basis on which the League and, indeed, the peace of the world are founded. These minor amendments do not modify any of the obligations incumbent upon Members of the League, but they define the judicial regulations governing international disputes, while maintaining intact the penalties consequent upon any failure to observe the Covenant.

Again, the last Assembly, acting in the spirit of the Covenant, decided that the task of codifying public and private international law should

be undertaken under the Presidency of M. Hammarskjöld and with the help of some of the most celebrated jurists in the world. A Committee has been formed and is to receive the able co-operation of the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law, which was founded through the generous initiative of the Italian Government.

One of the most effective methods of dispelling misunderstandings between peoples is to increase relations and intercourse in the worlds of art, literature and science, and to promote education and the spread of scientific knowledge from country to country.

The International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation, which has been founded at the instance and with the co-operation of the French Government, will pursue this noble aim in close co-operation with your Committee, the able Chairman of which is that great apostle of human thought, M. Bergson.

More difficult, and more tragic too, are the problems which the war has left us — economic problems and racial problems, all of which call for immediate settlement.

Then there are the Russian and Armenian refugees to be helped; this work has been taken in hand by Dr. Nansen and the International Labour Office, with a zeal which calls for the gratitude of the League. There are the Greek refugees, who have to be assisted by the Refugees Settlement Commission which your Council has established, and by means of a loan of £12,300,000, for which the League's Financial Committee is responsible. There is the question of the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations, which you have placed in the hands of a Mixed Commission. There are the starving Albanians whom you have fed. As a result of disasters involving whole nations — an eventuality of which the world believed it had seen the last — Senator Circolo conceived a magnificent scheme, which to-day is well on the way towards realisation, the International Federation for the Mutual Relief of Peoples Overtaken by Disaster.

It has been difficult, as you are aware, to establish the economic equilibrium of the new States, and some of them came to the very brink of disaster. Austria and Hungary appealed to the League for help. The efforts of both countries and the administration of the two Commissioners-General which the League placed at their head proved so satisfactory that the financial restoration of those countries was accomplished earlier than had been hoped. The question which faces Austria to-day is whether the supervision to which she is subject should not soon be discontinued. In view of these successes, Albania and Esthonia also appealed in different ways for the help of the League's financial organisation.

But it is the settlement of disputes arising between neighbouring States as a result of the war which has taxed the League's authority to the utmost. If proof positive of the extreme adaptability of the League's organisations were required, we need only instance the innumerable disputes between Poland and the Free City of Danzig and the happy settlement found for them, thanks to the able efforts of M. Quiñones de León. The representatives of Poland and Danzig have accepted the new procedure, and consider it so just that they have given an undertaking to the Council to refrain, in future, from direct action or even passive resistance of any kind.

The Council and the Committees of the League showed the same resourcefulness and the same complete impartiality in settling the still more difficult and dangerous disputes caused by the minorities question.

Whenever disputes liable to endanger peace have arisen in any part of the world, more particularly in the Balkans and the Near East, you have applied your impartial methods to them and have brought to bear upon them the knowledge and experience of your Technical Committees and the courage and untiring zeal of the missions you have sent, often far afield. Thus, for example, the League has found a peaceful settlement for the dispute caused by the expulsion of the Ecumenical Patriarch from Constantinople.

Among all these thorny problems there is one on which the anxious eyes of the world were, and are still, fixed. I refer to the delimitation of the frontiers of Iraq and the Mosul question. The Council is at present discussing the conclusions of its special Commission of Enquiry, which carried out its task on the spot.

But all these questions, however grave, and whatever their effect upon the world at large, pale before the supreme problem of security.

That the Covenant on which the League of Nations is based was conceived, not in the midst of a period of peace but at a time when the clash of arms was still resounding and the earth was still warm with the blood that had been shed and with all the conflagrations that had been kindled—that, gentlemen, is a fact which is unexampled in history and which peremptorily calls upon us to do our duty.

The Covenant was not imposed by the wise and far-seeing few upon the multitude drunk with carnage. It is the embodiment in legal form of the heartfelt desires of the masses and, above all, of the combatants. It was because humanity had plumbed the depths of horror that all were alike desirous of avoiding a recurrence of such a catastrophe—and most of all those who had known its lowest depths. It was this longing for a peace founded on justice, for a world no longer ruled by violence, which inspired the Covenant of the League of Nations, and, in particular, the essential parts of it, Articles 14, 15 and 16. But in order to make it possible to apply these articles effectively in every possible contingency; in order to complete a text which necessarily could be little more than an outline; in order to define the details of the general provisions and give them full executive force, supplementary Conventions had to be drawn up; and ever since the foundation of the League the constant endeavour of its most distinguished members has been to conclude such Conventions—clear, binding and consonant with national sovereignty. In 1922 we have Resolution 14, jointly drawn up by Lord Robert Cecil and M. Henry de Jouvenel; in 1923 the Pact of Mutual Guarantee, the corollary of Resolution 14; finally, in October 1924, we have the Geneva Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. Superficially minded people may compare this work to Penelope's weaving, but the comparison is false. These efforts have been cumulative, not mutually destructive; each marks a definite step along a path strewn with obstacles which are formidable, it is true, but which will be overcome one by one.

None of you can have forgotten the stirring, impassioned, lofty discussions which took place last year; the magnificent speeches of the British and French Prime Ministers, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and M. Edouard Herriot, setting forth the French and British points of view, which at first were in opposition and were finally combined in those three fundamental terms, which are severally as indispensable as is the sequence in which they come—arbitration, security, disarmament. None of you can have forgotten the careful preparation of the Protocol, in which your Legal and Disarmament Committees endeavoured to leave

no loophole for violence; nor the legal definition of the aggressor, who was declared thereby to be the enemy of the human race; nor the detailed enumeration of the duties imposed on the Members of the League; nor the economic and military sanctions to be taken in the case of failure to carry out the terms of the Covenant.

In a final speech, in which the logic of his arguments was only equalled by the beauty of his style, and which was acclaimed by the whole Assembly, M. Paul-Boncour summed up the work which had been done by stating emphatically that the Protocol was not a modification but a development of the Covenant, a living commentary on it. "The Protocol", he said, "is to the Covenant what the rules of public administration are to the law".

The authors of the Protocol counted upon obtaining the immediate approval of their Governments, but months have passed and their hopes have not been fulfilled. Unanimously adopted by the first delegates of the fifty-four nations represented, and then submitted to the various Governments for ratification, the Protocol failed to obtain the number of adhesions required to enable it to come into force.

This should neither surprise nor discourage us. A scheme so daring, so original, and so far-reaching as that laid before your Council and Assembly, a scheme destined completely to transform relations between the countries of the world, can only be carried into effect in the course of time and by patient and constant endeavour. In the history of such a scheme there are bound to be moments of enthusiasm—creative moments, without which there would be nought but stagnation and inertia—followed by less brilliant but equally useful periods of adaptation and adjustment.

Speeches and conventions may cast their glamour over a gathering of men, but, however persuasive or legally sound, they cannot immediately convince all the nations of the world and the Governments which rule those nations' destinies. The object of your discussions is not, by progressive attempts, simply to draw up the final and perfected text of a great international law; your discussions are also intended to bring into being that new international morality to which I referred at the beginning of my speech, and without which the most perfect law in the world must remain a dead letter. But, if we are to attain so noble an object, we shall need to do much more than appease hatreds, rancours and long-standing rivalries. We shall have to create among the nations a state of mutual understanding. We must do more than conciliate conflicting interests and ambitions, we must eliminate the clash of different mental outlooks.

It is to these differences of mental outlook that the resistance to the Protocol is mainly due. The Protocol's universality, the severe and unbending logic of its obligations, were framed to please the Latin mentality, which delights in starting from abstract principles and passing from generalities to details. The Anglo-Saxon mentality, on the other hand, prefers to proceed from individual concrete cases to generalisations, and is averse, when it cannot discern the facts on which they are based, to principles which are too wide in scope. Yet the Latin and Anglo-Saxon races both ardently desire, as indeed you all do, to attain the same goal, namely, peace. They will therefore meet again if only they persevere after traversing different paths which a philosopher would term respectively the analytical and the synthetical. I am not indulging in mere ready-made optimism. If we dispassionately consider the facts we shall

find that the state of affairs which the authors of the Protocol hoped to bring about this year, and the actual situation as it exists to-day, possess many essential points in common.

The grand scheme for the universal settlement of disputes has not up to the present received the force of law, and, consequently, the Council has had to adjourn the preparations for the Conference on Disarmament provided for by the Protocol. That much I admit, but at the same time negotiations have been begun and are being continued between the Powers most directly concerned in the problem of security.

The object of these negotiations is to bring about agreements or arbitration treaties in conformity with the Covenant of the League of Nations and intended to ensure the maintenance of peace. We may say, I think, that these negotiations would never have been begun—or at any rate, would never have been conducted in the present spirit—if the Assembly had not, last year, made an effort to arrive at some result.

The outcome of these negotiations, if they succeeded, would be to bind certain nations Members of the League by obligations similar to those provided for in the Protocol. They are inspired by the same spirit, and they only differ in being more restricted in character. These partial, regional agreements are of various kinds. Some are intended to ensure the maintenance of existing frontiers, and these only include States the interests of which are identical in this respect, and not those States with which disputes might possibly arise. Others, like the projected Rhine Pact, include States between which difficulties might arise. The Geneva Protocol, like the 1923 Scheme for Mutual Assistance before it, admits the existence of such partial agreements, viewed as a means of putting its provisions into force. Such agreements are not then in any way—and this point cannot be over-emphasised—at variance with the general rules laid down last year at Geneva. If the Protocol had come into force, they would merely have been corollaries thereto. In relation to the Protocol, they will be in the same peculiar condition as children born before their father's civil status has been properly established. Nevertheless, it would be of very great benefit to define the relationship of these agreements to the Covenant of the League of Nations.

What we have just said on the subject of partial agreements also applies to arbitration conventions. Up to the present, many treaties of arbitration have been concluded, but some are, in reality, only treaties of conciliation, whereas others exclude from settlement by arbitration some of the most important disputes which might arise. The arbitration treaties provided for in the Pact however, are *complete* treaties, which do not admit of any exceptions and the application of which is not solely dependent on the good faith and agreements of the signatories but on the guarantee afforded by the League.

The problem of security is therefore laid before you to-day in circumstances different from those which prevailed last year. Last year, after the rejection of the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance, the Assembly was confronted with a new and entirely distinct problem.

To-day, the question is not an entirely new one, its terms are neither so simple nor so general. You may hesitate as to the method to be followed, and on this you are free to take your own decision. To repeat an expression which I have already employed—you can adopt the synthetic method, which is the more attractive, the more logical, and the more direct; that is to say, you may

re-examine the Protocol and endeavour to amend it so as to meet the very insurmountable objections which it engendered. On the other hand, you may follow the analytical method, which is slower and less ambitious, but can be more readily adapted to the present situation; that is to say, you may only consider the application of the principles of the Protocol to partial agreements.

The objections to the Protocol, and the misgivings which it engendered, would probably disappear if there were no longer any question of immediately binding all countries in the world, wherever situated, and whatever their characteristics, by the same universal formulas. The provisions and procedure which I have in mind would only apply to States desirous of finally settling the problem of security among themselves. As regards the general obligations of Members of the League, there would be no change; nothing would be added or removed.

You would remain free either to re-examine the universal Protocol, with certain necessary modifications, or to allow a universal agreement to come about through the natural and beneficent influence, and through the increase, of partial agreements.

The considerations to which we have referred in connection with the general problem of security naturally extend to the general problem of disarmament. Undoubtedly, the second problem cannot be dealt with in all its aspects so long as the first remains unsolved. Security, then disarmament—this sequence cannot be changed; to reverse them would be highly dangerous to peace. If there is one truth which the exhaustive discussions of last year brought out, it is that one.

As you are aware, however, there are a number of special questions connected with armaments, their manufacture and employment, and the trade in them, which were studied by your special Committees, particularly in May last, in pursuance of Article 8 of the Covenant. One convention, on the trade in arms, and another, on the prohibition of chemical warfare, in pursuance of the resolution of the fifth Assembly, have already been signed by twenty-nine High Contracting Parties, including Powers such as, in particular, the United States, which are not Members of the League. Finally, the control of the armaments of certain countries, as provided by the treaties, has been most carefully discussed. The work of your committees on partial problems of this kind is by no means completed.

At the same time, it would perhaps be useful if the Assembly renewed its resolution of last year and requested the Council to prepare invitations, to a conference for the reduction of armaments, as soon as it considered that satisfactory conditions from the point of view of security were well established.

There is another aspect of the problem of security to which M. Jouhaux, Secretary of the General Confederation of Labour and representative of the working-classes at your gatherings, drew the attention of the Assembly last year with his usual energy and remarkable ability. It is a noble work to oppose the outbreak of war; it is also a noble work to remove the deep-rooted causes of war, and it is the only work which will make the prevention of warfare an enduring reality. If we permit economic forces to break loose in all their brutality, and do not check them by prudent measures based on the international spirit which prevails here, such violent upheavals may some day occur that all conventions will collapse and the spectre of war will suddenly appear. I referred just now to the economic and financial questions which you have made so magnificent an attempt to solve; it will be a fine and courageous effort on the part of your

Technical Committees to begin without delay the arduous task of regulating international economic life in a manner satisfactory to all. Those who fear that you may have no work to do have entirely miscalculated the magnitude of the effort which has yet to be made.

The President of this Assembly, so long as he occupies this chair, should forget to what nationality he belongs. Permit me to say, however, as head of the French Government, that whatever method you think it advisable to adopt, you can count on the absolute and unreserved assistance of France. France co-operated with enthusiasm in drawing up the Geneva Protocol; she remains loyal and entirely faithful to its spirit; she does not in any way disown her obligations; she repudiates resort to violence as energetically as when she was its victim. It was in her name that M. Herriot, last September, solemnly accepted compulsory arbitration for all disputes without exception.

France is not attached to a formula; her desire is peace. She is prepared to study all methods and all conventions which can secure, for small nations as well as great, the right to live and work in peace and honour, which guarantee to nations long enthralled or dismembered the freedom they have regained at so great a cost. No project of co-operation for the maintenance of peace will be effective unless it has its root in the League of Nations.

The League must therefore be in a position freely to play its part as an organisation for the safeguarding of peace. At your first Assembly in 1920, M. Motta, the President of the Swiss Confederation, earnestly desired, as we all do, to see the day when all the nations will adhere to the League of Nations and its Covenant. At that time the Assembly consisted of representatives of forty-one States; it now includes representatives of fifty-four.

On December 12th, 1924, Germany addressed a letter to the Council with regard to the conditions of her admission to the League. She expressed certain apprehensions based on Article 16 of the Covenant and the possible obligation of allowing the armies of other adhering States to cross her territory. On March 14th, 1925, the Council, in its reply, unanimously reminded Germany of the formal conditions for the admission of a State into the League of Nations, as defined by Article 1 of the Covenant. After endeavouring to dispel the German Government's misgivings, the Council expressed to Germany "its sincere wish to see her associated with its labours, and thus play, in the organisation of peace, a part corresponding to her position in the world". The wish expressed by the Council will no doubt be unanimously shared by the Assembly.

On the other side of the Atlantic there is a great democracy which stood at the cradle of the League, but has nevertheless not accepted any official connection with it. It desires to serve the cause of peace in its own way. But the ideal by which the fatherland of Washington and of Lincoln is actuated is so human and approaches so closely to your own that the League and America are impelled, by force of circumstances, to co-operate freely for the good of humanity.

The Permanent Court of International Justice, the principle of which has apparently been approved by President Coolidge, has, it is true, a separate existence; but the United States has been officially represented in all your humanitarian work, such as the protection of women and children, the Commission on the Traffic in Opium and the Conference on the Trade in Arms and Implements of War. Numerous Americans—indeed some of

the most distinguished Americans—have given the League the benefit of their exceptional capacity in difficult missions. Such points of contact will increase in the future.

But the history of the United States has already afforded our pessimists in Europe a lesson on which they cannot mediate too often. If they had reached manhood some 60 years ago, what a gloomy and sanguinary future they would have predicted for America! The United States had been rent for four years by a terrible civil war; the ground was covered with ruins; the hearts of the people were filled with hatred which the presence of former negro slaves, liberated by force, appeared to render for ever ineradicable. Nevertheless, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, these States, with a heterogeneous population and with interests so diverse and often directly opposed, live peaceably side by side under the protection of a Supreme Court, whose moral authority is such that it has never had to resort to sanctions; and the war-songs, under which the armies of Grant and Lee met in furious combat, have now become national songs, sung with equal good-will by all citizens of the United States. We must, of course, guard against too broad analogies, and no one will imagine that the history of a new continent can be repeated in our old continent of Europe, with its ancient traditions, and nationalities.

But it is true that the possibilities of a lasting peace are no less to-day on our continent than they were in 1867 on the American continent. These possibilities can be transformed into facts by good-will.

Good-will on the part of individuals, nations and leaders! The alternative is simple and tragic, for the present situation is an unstable one. Either the atmosphere of distrust in which we are plunged will vanish or this distrust will grow and inevitably cause a hideous war of self-defence which will really mean the end of our civilisation. Will the nations of Europe, the great nations to which it owes its civilisation, resemble the brothers, who fought in the legend, clasping each other at the edge of a precipice with such fierce hatred that they did not feel themselves slipping together into the abyss?

This cannot be. None of you are blind to the evil forces which threaten Europe. It was to avert this danger that the authors of the Covenant sought to bind the aggressor in so close a network of legal sanctions. It is to avert this danger that your Armaments Committee is so minutely examining precautions and guarantees before advising the peaceful nations to lay down their arms. It is to avert this danger that M. Edouard Herriot, referring to a famous saying of Pascal, urged that "justice should also be might".

The optimism of the League of Nations is not, as its opponents aver, a blind and unreasoning confidence; its eyes are wide open. We were never of the opinion that the end of the carnage would usher in an era of careless ease for all nations. The millions of young men who died in the great struggle have not, by their sacrifice, bequeathed to the new generations a ready-made peace, but the possibility of building up peace on the solid foundation of justice by a wholehearted effort of courage and generosity.

We are resolved to accomplish that effort. Nothing will prevent us. Nothing will discourage us. A great captain once wrote on the page of history the following maxim, which is so striking that it has become commonplace. "It is not necessary", said William of Orange, "to hope in order to endeavour, nor to succeed in order to persevere". Are we less determined than this soldier—we who desire peace—who find in our

hearts so many grounds for hope, and can credit the League of Nations with successes but for which the world might already have been plunged in disaster?

If I were not afraid that such a desire would exceed my short-lived powers, I might express a wish that the work of this Assembly should be guided and inspired by the unwritten epigraph: "Hope, venture, persevere."

I declare the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations open.

## 2. — ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES.

**The Chairman :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen—In accordance with Article 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Committee to report on the credentials of delegates should be elected by the Assembly in order that it may submit its report without delay.

This Committee should consist of eight members.

**M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia) :**

*Translation :* Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen—I have the honour to propose to the Assembly a list of eight members to form the Committee to report on the credentials of delegates.

I venture to make this suggestion, after discussion with some of my colleagues. By adopting the complete list now, we shall accelerate the progress of our work.

I accordingly venture to submit the following list to the Assembly :

M. PFLUGL (Austria).  
M. WANG TSENG-SZE (China).  
M. DE AGUERO Y BETHANCOURT (Cuba).  
H. H. the Maharaja DHIRAJ OF PATIALA (India).  
Baron LEHMAN (Liberia).  
M. D. ZAUNIUS (Lithuania).  
M. CABALLERO (Paraguay).  
M. P. COMNÈNE (Roumania).

**The Chairman :**

*Translation :* Are there any observations in regard to this proposal? Does any member wish to propose any other candidate? Does anyone wish to speak? If there is no opposition I declare the proposal adopted.

The Committee to report on the credentials of delegates will therefore consist of the members proposed by the delegate for Czechoslovakia.

*The list proposed by M. Veverka was adopted.*

**The Chairman :**

*Translation :* The Committee on the Credentials of Delegates which has just been elected will meet at 2.30 p.m. to-day at the offices of the Secretariat.

The next meeting of the Assembly will take place at 4 o'clock this afternoon.

*The Assembly rose at 12 o'clock noon.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## SECOND PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, 1925, AT 4 P.M.

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### 3. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES : REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

M. Painlevé, delegate of France, Acting President of the Council, in the Chair.

#### The Chairman :

*Translation* : The first item on the agenda is the report of the Committee on Credentials.

I call upon M. de Aguero y Bethancourt to read his report.

M. de Aguero y Bethancourt (Cuba), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen —The Committee entrusted by the Assembly with the duty of reporting on the credentials of delegates met to-day at 2.30 p.m. at the Secretariat of the League of Nations. I was elected Chairman and

was entrusted with the duty of drawing up the report.

The Committee examined the documents transmitted to it by the Secretary-General and found that the following States are represented by delegates who are in possession either of letters of credentials from heads of States, or letters from Ministers for Foreign Affairs, or telegrams from the same source, or letters from the representatives on the Council or from permanent representatives accredited to the League of Nations :

Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, British Empire, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Esthonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, New Zealand, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Salvador, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Siam, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela.

The Committee considers that the representatives of these States Members are duly accredited.

The Government of the Dominican Republic has notified the appointment of a delegate to the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations, but no document accrediting him has been transmitted.

The Committee also found that the following States Members have not presented any documents regarding their representation at the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations :

The Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras and Peru.

#### The Chairman :

*Translation* : Has anyone any observations to make on the conclusions of the report ?

Does anyone wish a vote to be taken ?

*The conclusions of the report were adopted.*



#### 4. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman :

*Translation.* The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the sixth Assembly.

In conformity with the Rules of Procedure, voting will be by secret ballot.

I call upon two former Presidents, M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, and M. Hymans, delegate of Belgium, to act as tellers.

*The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.*

The Chairman :

*Translation :* The result of the voting is as follows :

Number of States voting : 47.

|                                          |          |
|------------------------------------------|----------|
| M. DANDURAND (Canada) received . . . . . | 41 votes |
| M. ZAHLE (Denmark) . . . . .             | 2 votes  |
| M. ADATCI (Japan) . . . . .              | 1 vote   |
| M. PRABHA KARAWONGSE (Siam) . . . . .    | 1 vote   |
| M. PAINLEVÉ (France) . . . . .           | 1 vote   |

Blank voting paper : 1.

I have therefore the honour, according to the Rules of Procedure, to announce that M. Dandurand, first delegate of Canada, is elected President of the Assembly.

I am sure that all the delegations will be greatly pleased at the choice made by the Assembly.

All of us here know and appreciate M. Dandurand's high qualities. His profound knowledge of law and economics, his experience of national and international affairs, and, I would add, his very great courtesy, were much appreciated by the Assembly last year.

Allow me to add that the French delegation—and I am sure that our British colleagues will take no umbrage at this—is especially glad of this election.

Canada, which M. Dandurand represents, is a country where the British and French civilisations at one period of history came into dire conflict; yet to-day they live there united in a common brotherhood.

This morning I pointed to the historic example of the United States. I could also have mentioned Canada, which offers us an example of a particularly happy solution of the minorities problem.

I am sure that such a President, possessing the qualities I have mentioned and also, I may add, so profound a knowledge of the two languages used in this assembly, will prove a sure guide in our work, which, I am certain, is destined to bear good fruit. I am also glad, whilst offering him my congratulations, to pay a personal tribute to our deep and long-standing friendship.

I call upon the President, M. Dandurand, to take the Chair of the Assembly.

*M. Dandurand took the Presidential Chair.*

#### 5. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

M. Dandurand (Canada), President of the Assembly :

I have no illusions, ladies and gentlemen, as to the real meaning of your votes and of your applause. It is not my humble self, but Canada, that you desire to honour.

I have been deeply touched by the words, too kind indeed, which have been addressed to me by the statesman who is both President of the Council

of the League of Nations and Prime Minister of France. As a descendant of the heroic Frenchmen who were the pioneers of civilisation throughout the North American continent, I am profoundly moved at being received in this assembly by the representative of a country the traditions and language of which have remained those of the racial group to which I belong.

Your act has clearly shown your friendship for the young nation that I represent. May I express my feelings of pride and gratitude? Canada will not be alone in appreciating your generosity and good-will. Her sister nations, which are under the same crown, will feel justly proud.

We have only just appeared in international circles. You will understand that in our youth we are extremely glad that you have conferred so high a dignity upon us.

Our appearance in international life was hardly noticed. Our rapid development was recognised by our signature to the Treaty of Versailles. Our political status perhaps was received abroad with some surprise and possibly yet is not generally understood. History had never hitherto shown an example of six countries, equal among themselves, having autonomous political institutions, and through their respective Governments advising one and the same King, in whose name they speak and act both at home and abroad.

Within the last five years, the League of Nations has made great progress; none can deny it. The most sceptical have been forced to admit that it has achieved results of far-reaching benefit for mankind.

Every year my distinguished predecessors have reviewed the work already accomplished and have surveyed the ground still to be covered. At the close of the last session, M. Motta, the honoured President of the Assembly, gave an account of the "sublime endeavour... to substitute the moral force of right for the material force of arms".

It was in order to bring about the reign of justice that the Scheme for Mutual Assistance and the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes were conceived and studied. It was in order to establish peace through justice that the study of the problem of arbitration, security and disarmament was undertaken. It is in order to bring about the triumph of the ideal of brotherhood, moderation and good-will that we are once more met in this hospitable Helvetian Republic.

Is it not an excellent and most reassuring sight to see delegates coming regularly every year from the four corners of the earth? Does it not show that both our minds and our hearts are being directed into new channels?

I am convinced that the enlightened collaboration of statesmen and of legal and technical experts, gathered together in this atmosphere of devotion to the well-being of humanity, will contribute effectively to the establishment of peace founded on justice.

We shall doubtless experience hesitations, difficulties, misunderstandings. But these difficulties, these disappointments, which are inevitable in any work of reconstruction, will only stimulate our zeal and increase our energy. The endeavours and the experiences of the past give us faith in the successful issue of our future deliberations.

#### 6. — TRIBUTE TO THE LATE M. RENÉ VIVIANI.

The President : Ladies and gentlemen—a telegram has just reached us informing us of the death of M. René Viviani, former President of the Council of Ministers of the French Republic, who, on numerous occasions, represented his Government with

unusual ability both at the Assembly and on the Council of the League of Nations.

It is fitting, therefore, to recall with what devotion M. Viviani presided over the deliberations of the Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments. His name will long be remembered in connection with the work of the League.

I am sure that I interpret your feelings in expressing to the French delegation our deepest sympathy in its great loss.

M. Painlevé (France) :

*Translation* : Ladies and gentlemen—I have nothing to add to the moving words which you have just heard. The sad news which your President has just communicated to the Assembly goes straight to the heart of all the members of the French delegation. I merely wish in their name to thank the President and all the delegates for their kind expression of sympathy.

The President : I propose that the Assembly adjourn for a few moments.

If there is no opposition, the Assembly is adjourned.

*The Assembly was adjourned from 5 until 5.10 p.m.*

The President : The meeting is resumed.

#### 7. — AGENDA : EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION.

The President : In order to save time, and if none of the delegations ask for a vote, I propose that the Assembly adopt the agenda *en bloc*, that is to say, the questions contained in the document distributed to the Assembly. There are twenty-two of these questions.

With regard to the supplementary list of items circulated after May 1st, 1925, I propose that the Assembly should take a separate decision in each case :

I. Creation of a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice : Proposal by the Danish Government.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question, it will be entered as Item 23 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

II. Slavery : Report submitted in accordance with the Resolutions of the Fourth and Fifth Assemblies.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question, it will be entered as Item 24 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

III. Staff Provident Fund : Amendments to the Regulations provisionally made by the Council.

If there is no objection to the inclusion of this question, it will be entered as Item 25 of the agenda. (*Assent.*)

If there is no objection, I shall consider the agenda of the sixth session of the Assembly as adopted in the form proposed. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly will have seen from the note distributed by the Secretariat that the Council has decided to ask the Assembly to include the following questions on its agenda :

(1) Protection of Women and Children in the Near East.

(2) Opium : Commission of Enquiry in certain opium-producing countries : Resolution adopted by the Second Opium Conference.

(3) International Relief Union : Report of the Preparatory Committee and Draft Statute of the Union.

The Assembly will doubtless wish to refer these items to the Agenda Committee and request the Committee to report on them as soon as possible.

If there is no objection, I shall consider this procedure adopted. (*Adopted.*)

#### 8. — CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES.

The President : In accordance with precedent, the first matter to be decided by the Assembly is the constitution of its Committees. Before the General Committee of the Assembly can be established, the Committees must first have elected their Chairmen, as the Chairmen of the Committees, together with the six Vice-Presidents elected by the Assembly, form the General Committee of the Assembly.

The sixth Assembly will probably wish to follow the procedure adopted by previous Assemblies and form six Committees—the first to deal with constitutional and legal questions, the second with the work of the Technical Organisations, the third with the reduction of armaments, the fourth with budgetary and financial questions, the fifth with social questions, and the sixth with political questions.

In the light of experience gained at previous Assemblies, I would suggest that the meetings of the Committees should be arranged so as to alternate as follows : the First, Second, and Sixth Committees would meet at the same time, as would the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Committees.

If the Assembly accepts this suggestion, the Secretariat will supply the delegations with forms on which to enter the names of their delegates and substitutes to sit on each Committee. As soon as these lists have been collected, each Committee will meet to elect its Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Assembly will thus know at its next meeting the names of the Chairmen of the Committees and can proceed to elect the six Vice-Presidents.

If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider this procedure adopted. (*Adopted.*)

#### 9. — AGENDA COMMITTEE : APPOINTMENT.

The President : As was done at the last Assembly, I would suggest that a small Committee of seven members should be appointed to examine the question of the inscription of new items on the agenda. If the Assembly agrees, and if there are no proposals by delegations concerning the names of the members of this Committee, I would venture to put forward the following list :

Sir Joseph COOK (Australia) ;  
M. KALFOFF (Bulgaria) ;  
M. BELLO-CODESIDO (Chile) ;  
M. IDMAN (Finland) ;  
Count SKRZYNSKI (Poland) ;  
H. E. PRABHA KARAWONGSE (Siam) ;  
M. DE PALACIOS (Spain).

If no one has any objections to raise, I shall consider the list adopted. (*Assent.*)

#### 10. — AGENDA : DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.

The President : As regards the distribution of the items on the agenda among the Committees, I venture to make a few suggestions in order to expedite our work.

Items 7, 8 and 23 might be dealt with by the First Committee; Items 10, 11, 14, 15, 16 and 19 by the Second Committee; Items 12, 20, 21 and 25 by the Fourth Committee; Items 9, 17, and 18 by the Fifth Committee; and Item 24 by the Sixth Committee.

With regard to the Third Committee, I think I shall be interpreting the opinion of the Assembly in proposing that the allocation of such questions as might appear to be within its competence should be reserved. The Assembly will doubtless wish to await the conclusion of its debate on the report on the work of the Council before taking a decision regarding the allocation of question 13 to a Committee.

If the Assembly accepts my proposals, the various items will be distributed among the Committees as follows :

First Committee : Items 7, 8 and 23.  
Second Committee : Items 10, 11, 14, 15, 16 and 19.  
Third Committee : Reserved.  
Fourth Committee : Items 12, 20, 21 and 25.  
Fifth Committee : Items 9, 17 and 18.  
Sixth Committee : Item 24.

Do any delegations wish to make observations on the distribution of work which I have proposed? If there is no objection, the arrangement is adopted. (*Assent.*)

In order that the Committees may proceed without delay to the election of their respective Chairmen, I would propose that they should meet to-morrow morning at the Salle de la Réformation in the following order :

First Committee, 10 a.m.; Second Committee, 10.20 a.m.; Third Committee 10.40 a.m.; Fourth Committee 11 a.m.; Fifth Committee 11.20 a.m.; Sixth Committee 11.40 a.m.

We have exhausted the agenda and will adjourn the Assembly until to-morrow at noon; we will then proceed with the announcement of the Chairmen of the Committees, together with the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and the constitution of the General Committee.

*The Assembly rose at 5.30 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

## OF THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

### THIRD PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th, 1925, AT 12 NOON.

#### CONTENTS :

11. CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.  
Announcement of Chairmen.
12. VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.  
Election of six Vice-Presidents.
13. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.  
Proposals of the President regarding the Discussion of the Report.
14. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND ITS COMMITTEES.  
Communication by the President.

President : MR. DANDURAND.

#### 11. — CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES : ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHAIRMEN.

The President : The following is a list of the Chairmen elected this morning by the Committees :

| <i>Committees</i> | <i>Chairmen</i>                                            |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| No I.             | Senator SCIALOJA (Italy).                                  |
| No. II.           | M. VAN EYSINGA (Netherlands).                              |
| No. III.          | M. NINTCHITCH (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes). |
| No. IV.           | M. DA COSTA (Portugal).                                    |
| No. V.            | M. MOWINCKEL (Norway).                                     |
| No. VI.           | M. GUERRERO (Salvador).                                    |

#### 12. — ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President : Under Rule 7, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the agenda includes the election of the six Vice-Presidents.

Under Rule 21, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure, this election takes place by secret ballot.

I call upon M. Fernandez y Medina (Uruguay) and M. Osusky (Czechoslovakia) to be good enough to act as tellers.

*The votes of the delegations were taken in turn by secret ballot.*

The President : Ladies and gentlemen — The result of the ballot is as follows :

Number of States voting : 47.

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Voting papers null and void . . . | 1  |
| Voting papers valid . . . . .     | 46 |
| Majority required . . . . .       | 24 |

The analysis of the voting is as follows :

|                                                   |          |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Viscount ISHII (Japan) . . . . .                  | 45 votes |
| M. BRIAND (France) . . . . .                      | 43 votes |
| M. ZUMETA (Venezuela) . . . . .                   | 43 votes |
| Mr. Austen CHAMBERLAIN (British Empire) . . . . . | 42 votes |
| Prince ARFA (Persia) . . . . .                    | 41 votes |
| M. DUCA (Roumania) . . . . .                      | 39 votes |

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, I have the honour to declare these delegates Vice-Presidents of the Assembly.

#### 13. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : PROPOSALS OF THE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT.

The President : In accordance with the recommendations made by the Assembly last year (the printed text of which will be found at the end of the Rules of Procedure), we might open our meeting to-morrow at 11 a.m. with the consideration of the Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat. In accordance with the recommendations made by the Assembly last year, delegates who wish to speak on the

work of the Council are requested to hand in their names as soon as possible and state whether they wish to engage in the general debate on the report or to make observations on specific subjects. By this means, the President will be able to conduct the debates with greater clearness.

I suggest that the meeting should be devoted to the general discussion. Is this agreed ? (*Assent.*)

**14. — PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY AND ITS COMMITTEES :  
COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.**

In order to avoid loss of time, I propose that the Committees should meet this afternoon, at the offices of the Secretariat, in the following order :

The First, Second and Sixth Committees at 3 p.m.

The Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees at 4.30 p.m.

The Committees will thus be able to appoint their bureaux and study their agendas, so as to begin the discussion of the questions submitted to them at their next meeting.

The order we are adopting this year is the same as that of former years. Should any delegates desire, however, to sit on two Committees which, under the proposed scheme, would meet simultaneously, the General Committee will consider what can be done, in time to enable any necessary change to be made before the next meeting of the Committees.

Finally, I suggest that the General Committee should meet at 10 o'clock to-morrow morning in the President's room at the Salle de la Réformation.

As we have now come to the end of the agenda, I will close the meeting.

*The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

## SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

## LEAGUE OF NATIONS

### FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, 1925, AT 11 A.M.

#### CONTENTS :

15. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

Communication by the President.

16. TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF M. VIVIANI, M. MEIEROVICS, M. CHAGAS AND M. BRANTING.

17. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.

Speech by M. Zahle (Denmark).

President : MR. DANDURAND.

15. — APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

*Translation* : The meeting is open.

At its meeting this morning the General Committee decided to propose that the Assembly should appoint the Chairman of the Agenda Committee as a member of the General Committee.

If no one has any objection, I shall regard the proposal as approved by the Assembly.

*The proposal was adopted.*

16. — TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF M. RENÉ VIVIANI, M. MEIEROVICS, M. CHAGAS AND M. BRANTING.

The President :

*Translation* : M. de Mello-Franco, first delegate of Brazil, will address the Assembly.

M. de Mello-Franco (Brazil) :

*Translation* : Ladies and gentlemen — It is a tradition in all Assemblies that a tribute should be paid to the memory of those who have collaborated with us in our common task. It symbolises not

merely the pious tribute paid to comrades who have fallen before the journey's end but also the hope of attaining, by the union of past and future efforts, the triumphant realisation of our ideal.

The religious and mystical sentiment which gave rise to ancestor-worship, created household gods, and, thousands of years ago, brought into being the city, in no way differs from the civic sentiment of organised nations, which inculcate into the new generations respect for the memory of their great men, thereby nurturing them in their love of the mother-country.

The union of past and present is a manifestation of the fundamental principle of human co-operation — a principle which has passed beyond the territorial frontiers of individual States, has ceased to be a mere force making for internal cohesion and progress, and has become the corner-stone of the future edifice of international organisation.

The League of Nations, in which, more than anywhere, it is essential to appeal to this community of feeling between its Members, cannot but render homage to the memory of those who, faithful to its ideals and full of confidence in its future, have devoted to its work their supreme gifts of heart and intellect.

Among our collaborators of yesterday who have already passed into the mysterious shadows—the undiscovered country—whence they can exercise their enlightening influence only by the example of their virtues and qualities, are those three colleagues to whose memory M. Painlevé, interpreting the feeling of this Assembly, has already paid tribute.

It is not for me, after the poignant words uttered by the distinguished head of the French Government, to seek to give expression to your grief.

The premature and unexpected death of M. Meierovics has not only plunged his own country into mourning; it is a source of great sorrow for all of us, who thus find ourselves suddenly deprived of one from whose aid the ideals of justice and of peace had still much to hope.

As Acting President of the Council, I have already had occasion to pay the tribute of my admiration and profound respect to the noble memory of the great Swedish statesman, M. Branting. Our happy recollections of that great man are associated with another more impersonal feeling — our esteem for those high qualities of rectitude and loyalty which inspired his contemporaries with such confidence.

His example will remain with us and his great figure will always serve as a model for those engaged in the crusade for peace through justice.

Now that we are about to open the discussion on the annual report on the work of the League, reasons of racial and historic affinity lead me to turn to the noble figure of that other colleague whom we have lost, João Pinheiro Chagas, who on more than one occasion represented Portugal as first delegate to the Assembly. His participation in the work of the League looms large in the annals of this Assembly and in the Minutes of the many Committees and technical organisations on which he served.

Upon me, by every right, devolves the sad duty of interpreting the general sorrow felt at the loss of a trusty and courageous friend. Not only did João Chagas honour me with his esteem and confidence, but I could regard him as my fellow-countryman because he was born in the town of Rio de Janeiro and because Portugal and Brazil, despite the ocean which separates them, constitute, for us Brazilians, one single country.

While still quite young, João Chagas left Brazil for Portugal and settled in the town of Oporto. It was in this town, which became the cradle of the liberal traditions of the Portuguese people, that he embarked on his long journalistic campaign on behalf of democratic ideals and the establishment in his country of a new political regime more suited to the social condition of the nation and better adapted to the utilisation of its material and moral assets.

As chief editor of the paper *Republica Portuguesa*, João Chagas was one of the leaders of the first Republican Revolution in Portugal, which broke out in 1891 in the historic town of Oporto. On the suppression of this revolutionary movement, João Chagas was condemned to exile and imprisonment in Africa, from which, however, he succeeded in escaping; he then found sanctuary in the generous land of France, which sheltered him for many years as a political refugee.

His activities as a journalist and pamphleteer were wide, productive and inspired, and were successful both in Portugal and in Brazil. The vigorous pages of his *Cartas Politicas* were like so many battering-rams, helping to break down the institutions of the old Portuguese regime and to pave the way for the coming of the Republic in 1910.

He was a distinguished man of letters and belonged to the vigorous generation which produced the youthful nationalism of the third phase of Portuguese romanticism, the phase enriched by great and brilliant minds such as Ramalho Ortigão, Eça de Queiroz, Guerra Junqueiro and other writers and poets, whose work was produced between 1870 and 1890.

He was Portuguese Minister in Paris for thirteen years, after having held in the first Constitutional Republican Government of his own country the post of Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In the exercise of his important duties he was among those who, in those tragic and terrible years at the memory of which we still shudder, did most to induce his country to share in the work of fertilising and tilling the soil over which the

great tree of international peace and concord will one day spread its shady branches.

The last years of this noble life were devoted to the work of reconstructing the Old World, which had failed to find a way of preventing the dire disaster of war, and to the work of preparing a better world based on the inviolable rule of right and justice — an ideal now materialising in the great institution of which this Assembly is the guiding power.

Devoid of political fanaticism, but firmly intent upon the purpose which his sound judgment and his ideals of beauty and perfection had conceived, João Chagas was a pioneer of the new movement.

It is fitting, therefore, that our grief at his loss and the regret felt by those who had the good fortune to know him, should be recorded in the annals of this Assembly.

The President :

*Translation* : His Excellency Dr. Affonso Augusto da Costa, first delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

Dr. da Costa (Portugal) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It is with the deepest emotion, yet with the most profound gratitude, that I mount this platform.

Not having been associated with the work of the Assembly of the League of Nations for the last five years, I never thought that to me would fall the sad duty of speaking to you, as I now must, of a former companion who shared in our toil and struggles. My deep grief is not devoid of solace, however. Only when we see that our sorrows are shared do we realise how beneficent is the general sympathy felt for us in our distress. This general sympathy I find here.

I desire to express my deep gratitude to the Brazilian Ambassador for his words in memory of João Chagas. That great Brazilian citizen and friend of Portugal, M. de Mello-Franco, has interpreted in this high Assembly the feelings of his country, feelings which he himself shares, for the great loss which we have suffered. I would also express to the whole Assembly my profound gratitude for the way in which it has received those words.

I speak on behalf of my country, on behalf of the Portuguese delegation, and also on my own behalf.

In the brief but clear account which he gave, the Brazilian Ambassador dwelt upon my fellow-countryman's qualities and described the stages of his career and his activities.

It is not for me to enlarge before this world-wide Assembly upon his untiring energy, which now, alas! has been stayed for ever. This energy he devoted mainly to national problems and the strengthening of our ties with France, the country in which he so ably represented us for thirteen years. When, however, such energy is unswervingly devoted to a lofty purpose, it constitutes in itself an example worthy of note. To fight from early youth under one flag, to defend the same doctrines against all and sundry, and to suffer for them, constitute a legacy which our poet, Sá de Miranda, has so well defined as :

*"But one ideal, one thought, one heart."*

He wished to see his country powerful and respected, and he never wavered in his self-appointed task.

Inspired by a patriotic ideal, he always remembered that a country cannot remain isolated. He stepped into the arena at a time when there were two opposing schools of thought. He did not hesitate, from the outset, to proclaim his opinion and fight

for its acceptance. Events have proved that he was right, and later, when the Assembly first met in 1920, he pleaded before you for the just principle of the universality of the League of Nations, a principle which is surely essential for the complete success of our task. Guided by these principles, he set out to defend the legitimate ambitions of the nations which were proclaimed independent after the war.

I will not dwell further on my private feelings towards one who has gone from our midst; but after the condolence expressed by this Assembly, after the tributes offered to his memory, I cannot hide my emotion.

How can I respond to the heartfelt sympathy of M. de Mello-Franco, the representative of that Brazilian nation which we regard as part of the wider Portuguese motherland, where all our deepest joys and sorrows mingle! Indeed, the mighty ocean which lies between us does but intensify our mutual sympathies, which re-unite and are welded into one.

Such is the lesson we may learn from the words of the Brazilian Ambassador.

So, too, all that the great Brazilian nation has at heart forms part also of our own patrimony of ideals.

**Prince Arfa (Persia) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I desire on behalf of Persia to associate myself especially with the tribute which has just been rendered to the memory of that great man, Hjalmar Branting.

We have all had occasion, here and in the Council, to appreciate his perfect loyalty, his courage, his spirit of justice and his impartiality towards all nations, small and great.

Sweden's sorrow is deep and to that noble country we express our profound sympathy.

Hjalmar Branting was not only a good Swede but a great citizen of the world, and in him all humanity has lost a loyal friend.

With deepest sorrow also we mourn the loss of our two respected colleagues, M. Chagas and M. Meierovics, with whom we have so often worked in unison. Their memory will live for ever in our minds.

**The President :** I now call upon Viscount Cecil of Chelwood to speak.

**Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) :** Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I desire, on behalf of my Government, to occupy your attention for a very few moments by referring to the very grievous losses that the League of Nations has suffered during the past year.

As regards the deaths of M. Chagas and M. Meierovics, I will not attempt to add anything to the eloquent tributes which have already been paid to the memory of those colleagues. On behalf of the British Government, I desire to associate myself with everything that has been said by those who have already spoken, to express our deep regret at the death of our eminent colleagues and to tender our respectful sympathy to the countries which have lost their services and their citizenship.

There are two others whose loss we have to deplore, René Viviani and Hjalmar Branting. It would be impossible to say which of them is the greater loss to the Council of the League. They represented in a very remarkable way perhaps the most opposite types of human nature. M. Viviani, born under the warm sun of Algiers, preserved until the end, until his last appearance in this Assembly, the warmth, the enthusiasm, the impetuosity which

belong to the country of his birth. M. Branting was of a very different type, not less valuable, representing all that was sound and sensible and essential for the fair and just judgment of questions that came before us, typical perhaps of the climate of the country which gave him birth and presenting a contrast which only enhances the merits of such a type as M. Viviani, without detracting in any way from the great value of his own presence and his own collaboration.

Of M. Viviani's eloquence it is unnecessary to speak. Many of those present here have heard him speak from this platform. He excelled in every kind of oratory. I remember particularly three speeches of his, among many others. The first was delivered in one of our Committees when he was suddenly called upon to deal with a complicated report (I think the subject of it was armaments) which he had not, I think, seen before it was put into his hands at the meeting. He made a most logical and valuable criticism of that report, arranged in perfect artistic symmetry, each argument having its place in the general scheme. If an ordinary man had thought for a week he would not have been able to present to the Committee a more complete study of the question.

We all remember his splendid bursts of eloquence which we have heard from this platform, and there probably lingers more particularly in our minds a magnificent speech which he made, also on the spur of the moment, in defence of the position and policy of his country. I also have a very vivid recollection of another great speech in which he welcomed the reappearance of Poland amongst the independent nations of the world, when he thrilled us all with the deeply eloquent testimony which he gave to that country and its history and characteristics.

One other characteristic of M. Viviani I may perhaps venture to mention. He was, I think, one of the most ardent patriots who have ever attended this Assembly. He had a profound belief in his own country, and was deeply devoted to its prosperity. His ardent patriotism, however, in no way impaired his conviction of the value and importance of the work of the League of Nations, and he showed that a man may be, as he was, an ardent patriot and, at the same time, a convinced internationalist.

With regard to M. Branting, I will only say that he was one of the pillars of the League of Nations. His moderation, his straightforwardness, his courage, his clearness of vision were valued by every member of this Assembly. When any difficult matter arose, one of the first questions we asked was: "What is M. Branting thinking on this subject?" We referred to him as a kind of embodiment of the commonsense and judgment of the world, and when he had spoken we felt very sure that his opinion was not far from the truth as regards the question before us.

These two great figures, contrasted and yet comparable, as different as a mountain torrent from a slow-moving river, were both of great value to this Assembly; their loss is one which we all deplore, and we tender, with the greatest respect, our deep regret for their loss and our profound sympathy with their respective countries.

**The President :**

*Translation :* I call upon M. Undén, first delegate of Sweden.

**M. Undén (Sweden) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President — Permit me, on behalf of the Swedish delegation, to express our sincere thanks to the delegates of Brazil, Persia



and the British Empire for their words of sympathy in memory of Branting, that great Swedish statesman who was so convinced a partisan of the League of Nations and its deals and who took so important a part in its work.

Their words have moved us deeply and will find a grateful echo in my country.

**M. Schumans (Latvia) :**

*Translation :* On behalf of my country, I desire to thank the previous speakers for the kind and friendly words we have just heard. For a small country such as mine there is no greater honour than that the memory of one of its statesmen should be involved in a great conference such as this. I would express my heartfelt gratitude to the whole Assembly for the sympathy it has displayed towards my country, stricken as it is by the tragic death of my chief, M. Meierovics, the Latvian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

**The President :**

*Translation :* I believe that I interpret the feelings of all the members of this Assembly in associating myself with the tribute paid to the memory of those statesmen whose loss has plunged into mourning not only their own countries but also the League of Nations and the whole world.

#### 17. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.

According to the decision taken yesterday, the next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Report to the sixth Assembly on the work of the Council, on the work of the Secretariat and on the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly (Documents A. 7. and 7(a), Annexes 2, 2(a) and 2(b).

M. Zahle, first delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

**M. Zahle (Denmark) :**

*Translation :* The Danish Government has followed with the very greatest interest the work accomplished by the League of Nations during the past year.

We see in the report before us, which has been prepared by the Secretariat with its habitual care and clearness, that the Council, in conformity with the resolutions of the Assembly of 1924, has examined a number of questions of the greatest importance and that the Conferences held under the auspices of the League have attempted, and not without success, to settle various problems which concern the whole world.

We cannot, it is true, do everything at once, and in view of the extent and complexity of these problems, our wisest course is to have patience. Our League is still in its youth, and only Hercules could kill serpents in his cradle. We cannot therefore expect our youthful League already to have the strength to destroy all evils at one blow and solve problems so vast as those of disarmament, the control of the trade in and manufacture of arms, and the abuse of narcotics. Until we can solve these problems, therefore, we must, before all things, collaborate wholeheartedly in the work of the League by aiding it in its untiring efforts to attain its goal.

On one point at least I feel we shall all be in agreement: the League of Nations has left behind it the realm of dreams and fiction. It is now a political reality. It may change; it may adapt itself to diverse and complex needs; but it is not—

as I have heard it said — in the throes of death. It lives, and will continue to live. Some idea of its task and of the work accomplished by it is beginning to penetrate the minds of the masses, and — more important still — the younger generation itself seems to be taking a greater interest in the League's activities, in response to the eloquent appeal recently addressed to it here by the head of the French Government.

In this connection, I can assure you that Denmark has taken steps to acquaint the pupils of secondary schools with the work of the League, and on the very day of the opening of the Assembly at Geneva teachers in all the primary schools explained to their pupils the League's aim and mission.

After these general remarks, I will now turn to certain sections of the report submitted to us.

In 1921 the Assembly adopted several amendments to the Covenant, but up to now only those amendments which relate to Articles 6, 12, 13 and 15 have come into force. It is unfortunate that the amendments to Articles 4, 16 and 26, are not yet in force, although they have been ratified by a number of countries.

As regards Article 16, the Assembly in 1921 adopted a draft amendment 'simplifying' the application of this article and sought at the same time to mitigate its too severe effects. Denmark attaches special importance to this amendment, because she considers that Article 16 in its present form — not merely from the point of view of certain countries — is too rigid. I do not propose to go into the interesting details of the origin of this article brought out by the enquiry of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States Senate. I will simply remind you that the original draft of this article was based on the assumption that a state of war existed between the Covenant-breaking State and all other Members of the League. Mr. Wilson's advisers nevertheless pointed out to him that this rule was dangerous. Thereupon the article was so drawn up that a breach of the Covenant was considered as an act of war which might indeed authorise, but would not compel, the other Members to declare war. The application of sanctions, therefore, did not *ipso facto* pre-suppose a state of war, and they can, in principle, be quite well reconciled with the neutrality of Members. But although the main basis of the international situation referred to in Article 16 was thus modified, no modification was then made in the definite and special provisions of the article. While thus granting rights and imposing obligations on Members, as if they were in a state of war, it was nevertheless claimed that no state of war existed. That was a somewhat striking anomaly, which was further accentuated by the fact that there are great and powerful military, economic and industrial States which still remain outside the League, and would perhaps not respect the provisions of Article 16, which are contrary to the traditional rights of war and neutrality.

It was in order to obviate this difficulty and place the application of Article 16 upon a firmer basis that the 1921 Assembly adopted a series of recommendations and a number of draft amendments to this article.

I need only refer here to the speeches made in the 1921 Assembly, and I repeat that my Government still considers it of the highest importance for the future of the League that a sufficient number of States should ratify these amendments so that they may come into force.

As regards Article 4, the Danish delegation has already more than once stated its opinion that

definite rules must be laid down for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

I need not, I think, repeat our observations, for I hope it will be possible, as soon as circumstances permit, to reach a solution satisfactory to all.

As regards the question of the allocation of expenses, the competent Committee has proposed a scale which I hope this Assembly will see its way to adopt. As it is not possible to establish a final scale, we readily agree to the Committee's proposal that the new scale should be applied for three years. By adopting this scale we shall avoid the discussion of this important question every year.

I now come to the question of the codification of international law. In accordance with its instructions, the Committee has endeavoured to draw up a list of special problems which have not yet been solved, and which could with advantage be examined more thoroughly on scientific lines. Apart from this most useful work, it would perhaps be interesting to endeavour to carry out a short general codification of international law as a whole, that is to say, all the questions regarding which the rules at present in force are clear and generally recognised. We might perhaps take as our model the "American Codification of International Law", drawn up in 1925 at the instance of the Pan-American Union.

I now come to the really fundamental matter—the great and important question of the Geneva Protocol of 1924, and the problem of disarmament and arbitration. This document, the main result of our deliberations last year, has been sharply criticised in various quarters. The Danish Government is among those which desire first and foremost to maintain the great progress achieved by the Protocol, and the encouragement given by the 1924 Assembly in unanimously recommending the Members of the League of adhere to that Protocol. A Danish poet once said that a great idea cannot die until it has given birth to an even better and greater idea. Thus the sequel to our discussions of 1923 was the draft Protocol submitted to our Assembly last year, which marks considerable progress, since it declares all wars of aggression to be contrary to law, whereas the Covenant admits the possibility of legal warfare.

The Geneva Protocol introduces an almost unconditional obligation to settle international disputes by peaceful methods. The Danish Government wholeheartedly approves this noble endeavour, and we are certain that the Geneva Protocol, duly modified and adapted to the interests of the various States, will not die. On the contrary, we feel sure that the work which, in 1924, was approved in principle by every Member of this Assembly will from the basis of our efforts to bring to a successful issue the task which it is our duty to accomplish, and which the whole world expects us to accomplish.

I shall not go into details here. I wish only to emphasise that, as far as we are concerned, we are less interested in the question of responsibility for war than in knowing who, in any concrete case, is the aggressor. We consider it far more important to prevent and to combat war in general, and to see that the resolutions adopted by the Assembly in 1921 with regard to the application of the League's sanctions should remain in force.

The Danish Government regrets, as indeed we all regret, that during the past year circumstances have prevented steps being taken to prepare for a Disarmament Conference.

We were very glad to hear the head of the French Government express the hope that this Assembly would be able to adopt a resolution again inviting

the Council to make preparations for a Disarmament Conference.

As we know, certain States hold that disarmament cannot be achieved unless and until the establishment of a system of conventions has increased the national feeling of security, whereas other nations believe that they can disarm, relying upon the security already afforded by the Covenant.

We believe, however, that in the meantime we should make proper preparation for disarmament by carrying out an exhaustive study of all the concomitant problems.

I venture to remind you of the resolution on this subject passed by the Inter-Parliamentary Conference of the four countries of Northern Europe at Helsingfors in August last. We hope that the present Assembly will adopt resolutions enabling this preparatory work to be undertaken in the immediate future.

As regards the question of the pacific settlement of international disputes, Denmark has concluded various arbitration conventions in conformity with the resolution adopted by the Assembly in 1922.

That Assembly recommended the Members of the League, subject to the rights and obligations mentioned in Article 15 of the Covenant, to conclude conventions with the object of laying their disputes before Conciliation Commissions formed by themselves. It also recommended a model to serve as a basis for these conventions.

The Danish Government accordingly entered into negotiations with the Governments of Finland, Sweden, Norway and Switzerland, and these negotiations have resulted in the conclusion of the Convention of June 27th, 1924, between the Scandinavian countries, and that of June 6th, 1924, between Denmark and Switzerland. The ratifications were exchanged on May 18th and August 30th of this year respectively, and the Conventions have been published in the *Treaties Series* of the League.

Under these conventions the parties undertake to submit any dispute, without exception, to a special Conciliation Commission, unless, in virtue of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice or of any other convention concluded between the parties, such disputes are subject to judicial settlement.

The Danish Government considers it most desirable that inter-State conventions of this kind should be concluded, and is itself prepared to sign such conventions with those countries which so desire.

My Government has submitted a proposal which will form the basis of discussion regarding the formation of a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice; this proposal has been placed on the agenda of the present Assembly. It should be regarded as initiating a discussion of principles.

Such are the considerations and observations which I have to submit to you on behalf of my Government. I have given expression to these wishes because my country has placed high hopes in the League and desires to see it develop and progress from strength to strength.

We think that the League is the only organisation which will enable us to make international solidarity an accomplished fact, and all efforts directed towards this end should, as far as possible, be centralised and placed under the League's direction.

In days of old, men sought to build a tower which should reach to the heavens. But an evil day came when they found they could no longer understand each other, and had to abandon their project because they spoke different tongues.

To-day we have begun by learning the language of international understanding, and in building up the League of Nations we are taking in hand once more the erection of that gigantic edifice.

Let us work unitedly and wholeheartedly to

build up this edifice of the League until it pierces the clouds of international discord and rears its lofty pinnacles to the skies.

*The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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Continuation of the discussion. Speeches by Dr. Caballero (Paraguay), Mr. Austen Chamberlain (British Empire), and M. Undén (Sweden).

#### 20. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.

Proposal by the President concerning the continuation of the discussion.

President: MR. DANDURAND.

#### 18. — AGENDA: ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE: DISTRIBUTION OF CERTAIN ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES: REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

##### The President:

*Translation:* The Agenda Committee has met and has elected as Chairman Count Skrzynski, delegate for Poland.

The Assembly has before it the first report of the Agenda Committee, which reads as follows:

"The Committee held its first meeting in the Salle de la Réformation on September 9th, 1925, at 10.30 a.m.

##### "Present:

Sir Joseph COOK (Australia);  
M. KALFOFF (Bulgaria);  
M. BELIO-CODESIDO (Chile);  
M. E. DE PALACIOS (Spain);  
M. K. IDMAN (Finland);  
M. SKRZYNSKI (Poland);  
M. PRABHA KARAWONGSE (Siam).

"M. Skrzynski was unanimously elected Chairman.

"The following questions were on the agenda:

"1. The Protection of Women and Children in the Near East.

"2. Opium: Commission of Enquiry in certain Opium-producing Countries: Resolution adopted by the Second Opium Conference.

"3. International Relief Union: Preparatory Committee's Report and Draft Statutes of the Union.

"Reports on these three questions have been submitted to the Council at its present session, and it has decided to request the sixth Assembly to place them on its agenda.

"The Committee was of opinion that all these proposals were deserving of consideration. The reports on each subject have been carefully drawn up. Nevertheless, the short time (less than a week) that has elapsed since these reports were submitted may be considered as an exceptional circumstance which will enable the Assembly, in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 4, of its Rules of Procedure, to place these questions on its agenda and refer them to the competent Committees for consideration.

"The Committee therefore proposes that they be placed on the agenda of the Assembly and referred to Committees as follows:

"To the Second Committee :

"The question of the International Union for the Relief of Populations Overtaken by Disaster.

"To the Fifth Committee :

"(a) The question of the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East ;

"(b) The question of a Commission of Enquiry in certain Opium-producing Countries.

"These Committees may ask the advice of the Fourth Committee, should the questions before them involve financial interests.

(Signed) AL. SKRZYNSKI,  
Chairman of the Committee."

I would ask the Assembly to give an opinion on the conclusions of the report.

If no one wishes to speak, I shall regard the conclusions of the report as adopted and the questions mentioned as referred to the various Committees.

*The report was adopted.*

I should like to remind the Assembly that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee, Count Skrzynski, has been invited to sit on the General Committee of the Assembly, in accordance with the proposal approved by the Assembly at its meeting yesterday morning.

#### 19. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the report to the sixth Assembly on the work of the Council, the work of the Secretariat, and the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly.

The first speaker on the list, Dr. Caballero, delegate of Paraguay, will address the Assembly.

Dr. R. V. Caballero (Paraguay) :

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — Paraguay joined the League of Nations with full confidence in it and with an earnest desire that the new organisation, the defects of which she fully realised, should be perfected. Who, indeed, could fail at once to perceive those defects, the most serious of which was that resort to arbitration was not imposed in all cases. Certain disputes were left for Members of the League to settle according to their discretion. Last year this defect was remedied: the fifth Assembly made arbitration compulsory instead of merely optional. Whereas the Covenant admitted certain cases in which war was, as it were, authorised, we decided, in the Protocol, that war could never be tolerated except in legitimate self-defence. In future, no State would have the right both to judge and be a party to a dispute in which its interests were involved.

There was, nevertheless, another defect — the absence of sanctions which would be brought to bear in any and every contingency against a State guilty of violating the Covenant. To this end the Assembly of 1924 defined the conditions which should govern intervention by the military, naval or air forces as provided for in Article 16 of the Covenant. It made provision, among other matters, for the preparation, in advance, of a joint economic and military plan of action.

We should strive to render the principles of international law so sacred, to confer on it such active powers and far-reaching prestige, that anyone tempted to revolt against it would be forced, by the preventive action of the penalty imposed, to renounce his purpose.

Our own traditions and national temperament will not allow us to remain indifferent to any act whatever intended to reduce the sum of evil in the world. Paraguay has no reason to stand aloof in this era of universal pacifism: her Continental policy has always been governed by the desire to promote an ever-closer understanding between the peoples. Paraguay has always given her support to international institutions the object of which is mutual enlightenment, concord or conciliation. Without going further back into the past, let me remind you of the work done by the delegation sent by Paraguay to the last Pan-American Conference at Santiago in Chile in 1923.

M. Gandra, former President of the Republic of Paraguay, who was once at the head of that delegation, has endeavoured to bring about a Convention of wide scope for the prevention of all conflicts between the States of the American Continent. We are fully justified to-day in regarding this Convention as the first rough draft of a great international pact of peace. The Convention relied on international loyalty, and more particularly on the calming influence of the predetermined period which would intervene between the outbreak of a conflict and the date on which the Conciliation Commission appointed to examine the dispute would deliver its award. This Convention was ratified, in particular, by the United States, Brazil and Paraguay.

How did such a project come to be conceived in the minds of American statesmen? The explanation lies in our common political organisation, our sense of equality and fraternity. As Renan said, democracy neither desires nor understands war. The American Republics are agreed in making international law a basic law. They do not differentiate between individual and national liberty.

From our distant point of vantage we cannot discern the special questions raised by the problem of the organisation of peace; we only perceive the general and eternal questions which dominate them. The most important question for us is the reconciliation of the nations of Europe. It is essential for the progress of humanity that Europe should continue to play the part it has always hitherto played in the history of the world. Our main concern is to offer our humble aid in bringing about a pact of peace. Could we not endeavour to reach this end by means similar to those which were used in America?

It is essential not to allow ourselves to be misled by the enthusiasm to which the work of the fifth Assembly gave rise throughout the world. As has been rightly pointed out, the Protocol in itself was not sufficient to prevent all possibility of war. It offers remedies for symptoms rather than for causes. The solution it proposes for the organisation of peace is too purely political. For, although the Protocol might have imposed universal arbitration and disarmament, a nation which depended on another nation for all its necessities would still possess no means of defence, however just its cause. But, so long as respect for the basic principles of the Covenant has not been enforced, it will not be possible to deal usefully with the problem of preventing war.

We cannot make solid progress even in our work at Geneva unless we succeed in organising a world peace on an economic basis. At the present time, political problems cannot be kept apart from

technical problems. There are certain economic questions which cannot be solved unless they are treated internationally. They are so closely interconnected and inter-dependent that it is impossible to provide an individual solution for each one of them.

Salvation does not lie either in absolute protection or absolute free trade. Individual interests must necessarily give place to an international conception of economics.

The most powerful factor for the promotion of peace is public opinion. We must therefore bring public opinion in every country to realise the need for a common economic and financial policy. Indeed, a movement in this direction is already beginning. Any attempt to ignore it will be useless; we had far better take steps to prepare for it. The reign of empiricism is past.

The work accomplished by the League in Austria and Hungary gives us much ground for hope. We can therefore trust the League. It alone can establish the conditions of an economic equilibrium just to all. We must, as far as possible, ensure the independent economic existence of the small nations as well as of the nations whose general conditions of existence are often precarious. We must make it possible for every nation to work in the full light of day, without fear of perishing either by starvation or surfeit. This is the price of peace, a just peace, a peace organised and assured, the real peace of the future. As yet, it is true, peace is merely a distant glimmer; but we shall never despair of attaining it, because we shall always cling to the belief that we can attain it.

The work accomplished by the League contains an imperishable leaven which will react beneficially upon the future. There is one moral law which invariably proves to be true, and it is a source of comfort and consolation for all who have faith in the development of an international code of ethics: no effort is ever wasted; sooner or later it will bear fruit. Men are loath to yield the ground they have gained. Despite temporary and sometimes unavoidable checks, we still press on. We must desire, we must believe, before we can accomplish. We believe, then, that our efforts will not be in vain; we believe that what we have done will serve some useful purpose; we believe in our ideal. Peace is an act of faith, and we hold that if humanity does not of itself take the right road it is our duty to urge it, to strive to persuade it, to do so. Belief in the moral regeneration of the world is not so fantastic as is generally thought. The ideal often leads to and strengthens the act.

#### The President :

*Translation* : Mr. Austen Chamberlain, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

**The Rt. Hon. Austen Chamberlain** (British Empire): Mr. President, I hope that I may be permitted to offer you the congratulations of the British delegation on the high honour which this Assembly has done to you, and to you, ladies and gentlemen, may I express the thanks of the delegations of the whole British Empire for the honour which you have done to it in choosing one of our distinguished citizens to take the Chair at this Assembly.

I rejoice with other speakers who have preceded me to see not merely the growth of interest in the proceedings of the League of Nations but the growth of its authority and influence as its work proceeds. My own country has desired to mark its respect for your Council and for your Assembly by deputing me, since I have held my present office, to represent it at each session of the Council and to be a member of its delegation to this Assembly. A more practical and a more significant proof of our admiration for the Assembly, of our

confidence in the Council and in its justice, is our ready acceptance of the Council as arbitrator and judge in the unfortunate difference of opinion which has arisen between us and the Turkish Republic and which we have been unable to settle amicably without your help. No greater proof of the influence which the League has gained or of the confidence with which the Government of a great nation may justly submit its cause to the decision of the Council, can be offered than by the action which my Government has taken in connection with the difference concerning Mosul.

I have no intention of attempting to repeat the eloquent survey of the manifold activities of the League of Nations which was made by the Prime Minister of France from the Chair at our opening meeting. My theme is a more restricted one, but since it fell to me on behalf of my Government to make the first public declaration of the reasons for which it was unable to accept the Protocol, I would ask you to permit me to say a few words upon that subject to-day and to indicate to you briefly by what spirit we are inspired, what objects we are pursuing and, broadly, even the methods by which we think those objects can most readily be attained. I believe that if you will do me the honour to consider calmly what I say, you will find that though there have been, and though there yet may be, differences of opinion in this Assembly as to the best means of attaining the objects that we have in view, there is no difference of opinion here as to what those objects themselves should be.

I hope that I may assume that you are familiar with the statement that I made on behalf of my Government to the Council and which has been distributed to you. I do not propose to cover all the ground that was covered in that statement. I wish only to present to you two or three broad considerations.

I was struck by an observation made yesterday by the honourable delegate of Denmark. Speaking of the aims of the League of Nations, he said: "It is not our purpose to punish the aggressor; it is our object to prevent aggression". That seems to me to be a fundamental principle which we are always bound to keep before us. Punishment of international crime may be, and indeed is, necessary, just as punishment of individual crime is necessary. But the object which all legislators should have before them is not to punish the criminal but to prevent the commission of the offence. Now it seemed to my Government that that distinction, that principle, had been somewhat lost to view in the framing of the Protocol of last year. We felt, if I may repeat the words which I used to the Council, that the additions which the Protocol made to the Covenant in some sort changed the spirit of the Covenant and obscured the original purpose which inspired the creation of the League itself.

These additions, I said, destroy the balance of the Covenant and alter its spirit. The fresh emphasis laid upon sanctions, the new occasions discovered for their employment, the elaboration of military procedure, insensibly suggest the idea that the vital business of the League is not so much to promote friendly co-operation and reasoned harmony in the management of international affairs as to preserve peace by organising war, and it may be war upon the largest scale.

Do not let us lose sight of the fact that if the only result of our efforts is to punish war and not to prevent it we have failed in the achievement of the very purpose which we were created to pursue, and that it is only in so far as we prevent war that we can justify the hopes which humanity sets upon this great international society.

Now may I make a further general observation ? We represent here a multitude of nations scattered over the face of the whole world belonging to every race and every clime and to every creed, with every possible diversity of political institutions, of social characteristics, of domestic law and of past history. To frame an instrument precise in every detail, logical in every line, which is to deal with the multiple affairs of so vast and so diverse a conglomeration of communities, to frame it with logical precision, and so that every possible case is foreseen and provided for, may well be beyond the wits with which humanity is endowed. Indeed, ladies and gentlemen, is it not somewhat as if some enterprising but idealistic tailor undertook to fit all the personages of this great Assembly with a common suit of clothes ?

To me it seems, and to my Government it seems, that if this Assembly is to work smoothly, if the League of Nations is to exercise full authority and, above all, a healing and conciliatory influence, you must allow for this great diversity among our conditions. I can well believe that the Protocol fitted exactly the circumstances of some nations, though, as I know from communications which I have received since I made my statement to the Council in the month of March, there are not a few Governments, small as well as great, which shared the doubt and hesitation felt by the British Government itself.

Our attitude, however, is perhaps a consequence of those characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon mind upon which the Chairman at our opening meeting dwelt in an interesting and striking passage of his speech. It is, I think, natural, as he said, to the Latin mind first to fix certain abstract principles, to settle general rules, and then to proceed to apply them to detailed cases. Our history has taken a different course, and it has indelibly impressed its mark upon our outlook on public affairs. We are prone to eschew the general, we are fearful of these logical conclusions pushed to the extreme, because, in fact, human nature being what it is, logic plays but a small part in our everyday life. We are actuated by tradition, by affection, by prejudice, by moments of emotion and sentiment. In the face of any great problem we are seldom really guided by the stern logic of the philosopher or the historian who, removed from all the turmoil of daily life, works in the studious calm of his surroundings.

May I invite the Assembly for one moment to look at the history of my country ? We have had no revolutionary disturbance for 250 years. Immense changes have taken place in that period in every aspect of our life. At no single moment have we formulated large general principles with a logical precision ; on the contrary, nearly every vital decision that we have taken has been illogical, and, for that reason, all the more adapted to reconcile conflicting interests, to find the middle path, and to lead on by slow and gradual means to the desired end.

Take the relations of the various great communities of the British Empire among themselves. What was the Protocol ? Something like a single code of law, a single constitution for all the States represented in this great Assembly. More than once at the gatherings of Ministers of the British Empire we have considered whether we might not, whether we ought not, to endeavour to put into black and white the constitution of the British Empire not as it is written but as it is practised to-day, and every time, and with unanimity, representatives of those different Governments have decided that, in the very elasticity which our want of logic and our want of precise defi-

inition afforded us, lay the secret of our unity and our concord.

If these ideas be strange to other nations differently situated, at least you can see how this historical development of the British Constitution and of the British Empire must influence the outlook on these great questions of the representatives who speak to you in her name. It has been our practice, therefore, to eschew these large declarations of general principle, to avoid attempting to define exactly what should be done, and how it should be done in every possible contingency that we can contemplate, knowing, as we do, that even if we provided satisfactorily for every contingency that we could contemplate, it is quite as likely as not that the event which would actually happen would not conform to the exact detail of any of those which we had anticipated. We have proceeded from the particular to the general instead of from the general to the particular. We have been content to deal at any one moment with the evil of the day and to provide the remedy which that evil required. It is not out of a logical system proceeding from general hypotheses that our freedom, our liberties, our safety have grown. It is from the wise spirit of compromise which has inspired all British parties in critical moments and from our careful concentration upon the immediate problems which required a solution at the moment.

It is, therefore, inspired by all our history, by habits of mind that are inbred in us as a consequence of that history, that we approach the consideration of these great international problems. We were part authors of the original Covenant. We pledge again — though that, indeed, is not needed — our loyalty to the League and to the Covenant. We share your desire to see a sense of security give rest and peace to the peoples of this world, and if we think that the methods which the last Assembly chose are not best adapted to that end, if we think that, proceeding more modestly and at first attempting less, we may eventually achieve more, I beg you to believe that we act always in the spirit which inspired those who in successive years have sought to give to the Covenant a greater completeness and perfection.

Our ultimate aim, our only aim, like that of other members of the Assembly, is to promote peace, to establish peace firmly, to abolish war, if you can, and, if not, to do everything to render it difficult to make war, to give time for the friends of peace to make their influence felt, and for the moral feeling of the world to pronounce a judgment on the attitude of the disputants and to indicate where justice lies. Ah, ladies and gentlemen, much of the attention of the last Assembly and of its Committees was directed to the physical sanctions to be applied against flagrant aggressors. I do not underrate their importance. I do not deny their necessity. But I say to you with profound conviction that the moral sanctions are as influential as the sanctions of force, and that the moral sanctions act earlier, act more surely, and in the long run — and history is there to prove it — decide the issue of the combat.

Our object is not merely that there should be peace, but that all should feel that peace is secure. Disarmament through security, security through arbitration — arbitration — security, disarmament are the common platform of the whole League of Nations. But there is another disarmament which is not less important, which indeed is more urgent, for it is a necessary preliminary to the physical disarmament of nations. It is the moral disarmament of the world. It is, as the Chairman said to us in his opening speech, the need of creating a new

international soul and a new international morality. Unless we find some method to allay the distrust, to remove the suspicions, to take away those fears which now brood over not merely Government offices and Councils of Ministers but the mansions of the rich and the cottages of the poor in the lands which have been devastated by war or the populations of which have paid their toll in blood and sacrifice — unless we can do that we shall never succeed in achieving the great programme which we have set before us.

It has seemed to my Government, therefore, that the greatest contribution we could make was to seek in that region with which we are most intimately associated, a region which has too often been the origin and the theatre of war, and to secure, in the first place by mutual agreement amongst all those whose interests were immediately affected, a guarantee for the peace of that district, and that if we could achieve that, we made no small contribution to the peace of the world.

By the instructions of my Government, I put our object before the Council in words which again, I hope, you will allow me to repeat: Our object is "to supplement the Covenant by making special arrangements in order to meet special needs. That these arrangements should be purely defensive in character, that they should be framed in the spirit of the Covenant, working in close harmony with the League and under its guidance, is manifest. And, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, these objects can best be attained by knitting together the nations most immediately concerned, and whose differences might lead to a renewal of strife, by means of treaties framed with the sole object of maintaining, as between themselves, an unbroken peace."

What is the work in which some of the Governments here represented are now engaged? We seek no fresh alliance directed against some other party. We do not seek to continue the suspicions, the passions, the animosities of the past. Our object is to bring rest to our peoples and peace to the world, and if we succeed by such mutual agreements, not confined, I hope, to one narrow region, but finding, in suitable form, their application in other menaced spots, then indeed, ladies and gentlemen, I hope we shall have the sympathy and approval of the League of Nations, for we shall bring to the League great support, a great increase of its authority and influence and the largest contribution that it is in our power to make to the preservation of the peace of the world.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Undén, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, will address the Assembly.

**M. Undén (Sweden) :**

*Translation :* Several of the distinguished speakers who have already addressed you have referred to the fate of the Geneva Protocol.

The unanimous hope of the last Assembly that a complete system of arbitration, security and disarmament would be established forthwith has not been realised. Only a very small number of States have responded to the Assembly's recommendation by signing the so-called optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. We cannot, however, deny the great importance of the effort made last year to influence public opinion in favour of compulsory arbitration. The resolutions adopted by the Assembly of 1924 should therefore encourage the League of Nations to persevere along the lines indicated.

From the outset, public opinion throughout the world has shown a special interest in the principles contained in the Geneva Protocol. There have been many indications that the League is expected to pursue its untiring efforts to establish a more perfect peace organisation.

Allow me to cite, for example, the resolutions passed by the northern group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union at its meeting at Helsingfors, and those recently passed by the Socialist International at its Congress at Marseilles.

The negotiations now taking place between certain Powers concerning a pact of security, combined with arbitration treaties — negotiations which are intended to carry into effect in part the principles of the Geneva Protocol — have naturally been closely followed by the public. We are eagerly awaiting the results of these negotiations.

I venture to hope that they will soon terminate in an agreement between the Powers concerned, conceived within the terms of the Covenant, and that, at the same time, a further step towards the universality of the League will be taken by the inclusion of Germany amongst its Members. In this way, one of the essential conditions for the application of Article 8 of the Covenant concerning disarmament would be realised.

The principle of arbitration has, on the whole, made considerable progress during the past year. A large number of partial arbitration treaties have been concluded or are in course of preparation between various States.

In these circumstances, we may perhaps question the desirability of proceeding further with the idea of a general treaty and ask ourselves whether it would not be wiser to abandon it in the hope that general compulsory arbitration will be realised by means of partial treaties alone.

Although the conclusion of these partial arbitration treaties is most satisfactory, the League should not, I submit, be content to play a merely passive role and leave the initiative entirely to individual States. It is true that we cannot ignore the difficulties which stand in the way of a collective and general treaty. But would it not be desirable to strive to diminish these difficulties by "adaptation and adjustment", to cite the expression used by M. Painlevé in his very able opening speech?

Two kinds of difficulties — chiefly matters of form, it is true — occur in connection with the enforcement of the arbitration clauses of the Geneva Protocol, and both arise from the obligatory nature of these clauses. In the first place, they contemplate the possibility of amendments to the Covenant, and we have, already, alas! had sufficient experience of the difficulties which prevent the ratification of such amendments. In the second place, the Protocol requires the adherence of States without reservation. Would it not, in present circumstances, be easier to reach the desired goal if we adopted more elastic methods? Could not a general convention be drawn up, independent of the Covenant, to which countries could adhere, under reservations if they considered these necessary? They cannot do so if compulsory arbitration clauses are to form part of the Covenant. The latter already alludes to arbitration treaties which go further than its own provisions and states what measures are necessary to ensure the execution of arbitral awards given under an arbitration treaty.

Many countries, I am certain, will not make use of the facility thus provided of exempting certain kinds of disputes from compulsory arbitration, but there are other States which, for special reasons, cannot at once accept compulsory



arbitration for all legal and political questions. On the other hand, the Geneva Protocol contained important exceptions to the principle of compulsory arbitration, without, however, admitting other exceptions than those expressly mentioned.

It is in my opinion most important to examine, before the next Assembly, the possibility of carrying into effect, one by one, in the way I have just outlined, the principles of compulsory arbitration. I should like, therefore, to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

**"The Assembly :**

"Considering that it is important that the principle of compulsory arbitration for the settlement of international disputes should be accepted by all the Powers :

"Requests the Council, with a view to facilitating the realisation of this aim, to submit the provisions relating to this subject contained in the Protocol recommended by the fifth Assembly for further examination by a Committee of Experts."

**The President :**

*Translation :* A draft resolution has been laid before the Assembly by M. Undén, delegate for Sweden.

This resolution will be submitted and distributed to the Members of the Assembly, who will be invited to give their opinions after the closure of the general discussion

**20. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : PROPOSAL BY THE PRESIDENT CONCERNING THE CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.**

**The President :**

*Translation :* Before we rise, I wish to announce to the Assembly my proposals regarding the continuation of the discussion on the report on the work of the Council.

The discussion will now be adjourned until to-morrow at 10.30 a.m. There will be two plenary meetings to-morrow (Friday) and two plenary meetings on Saturday.

The President hopes that these four meetings will suffice for the conclusion of the discussion, and that it can be closed on Saturday afternoon.

My suggestions will, I trust, meet with the approval of the Assembly. If no one has any objections, I shall consider these proposals adopted. (*Assent.*)

*The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

## SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

## LEAGUE OF NATIONS

### SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

21. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

#### The President :

*Translation :* The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the report of the work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — No one can mount this platform without a certain sense of fear and some emotion, because the echo of our words spreads further from this tribune than from any other. On the one hand, we are supposed to represent the opinions of the Governments which sent us here and, on the other, to interpret public opinion in our country ; this must give us a very keen sense of our responsibilities.

Further, when we come to consider the work of the Council, a vast domain opens out before us — a domain which lies within the competence both of the Council and of the Assembly, without any very definite lines of demarcation.

The Council is not a Government nor any similar institution, nor is the Assembly a Parliament ; as an Assembly, therefore, we have no actual right of control and the legal responsibilities of the two bodies must be kept separate.

That does not prevent the Council and Assembly from being organs of the same international organisation, nor, despite the absence of any legal co-responsibility, does it preclude the existence of a certain moral solidarity between the two.

The League of Nations was born of the very war itself. If that war had not taken place, we should probably have had no League to-day. It was only natural, therefore, that the first manifestations of this great institution should bear some traces of its origin. It was a common saying that the League of Nations was an alliance of the victors against the vanquished. It was inevitable that the spirit of alliances born of the fire and blood of war should sometimes find itself, at all events to a certain extent, in opposition to the calm and magnanimous spirit of the League.

I am glad to see that the Council has on many occasions shown itself capable of rising to the highest plane of justice. I note this fact with gratitude, and I have no hesitation in expressing my confidence that this determination to attain complete impartiality, even in the application of the peace treaties, will become increasingly manifest.

Some of us here have had the honour of representing our countries since the first day on which the Assembly met, that is to say, for six years ; we have been present at every phase of the gradual progress of pacification ; and truth bids us proclaim that that progress has been considerable, I would even say immense.

The moving factor in this work of transforming mind and conscience is the League.

We sometimes hear it said that this year's Assembly will be uneventful and even dull. That, I think, is not necessarily a matter for regret. The meetings of the Council and Assembly need not always be sensational. The League must bear in mind that its most useful work in the future will consist, not in suppressing or even in settling disputes, but in creating conditions which will prevent the occurrence of disputes.

I do not propose to discuss, in detail, the question of the Geneva Protocol, which has been the principal theme of the eloquent speeches we have heard these last few days. There are two reasons for my silence. The first is that I had the signal if unmerited honour of presiding over the Assembly at which that work was brought to a conclusion; the second is based upon the peculiar position of my country as a Member of the League, a position due to its permanent neutrality recognised by international law and solemnly confirmed in the Declaration of London in 1920.

I merely desire to correct one mistake which is, I think, rather frequently made. It is often said that the Protocol was adopted by last year's Assembly because of the fact that the delegations voted unanimously in favour of all its provisions. This, however, is incorrect: the Assembly simply sent the Protocol to all the Governments, recommending them to give it their earnest attention. If, last year, the delegations had been required to bind themselves in any way beyond the terms of this recommendation, some of them would most certainly have abstained from voting, or would even have voted against the motion.

It is better, in the very interests of the future of the League, to look the facts in the face, to dispel illusions and reveal the true state of affairs.

I listened yesterday with the closest interest to the lucid and discriminating speech of the first delegate of the British Empire. Even if I cannot fully subscribe to certain of the opinions expressed by that eminent statesman, I think that no one can dispute the importance and the solemnity of the occasion when the Minister for Foreign Affairs of one of the greatest countries in the world appears before forty-seven assembled delegations to give a loyal and reasoned explanation of his attitude.

Any person who before the war had dreamt of the Minister of a great State explaining the policy of his country to an Assembly in which great and small nations met on equal terms would have been called a visionary born before his time.

We believe that the vital part of the Protocol is that which concerns compulsory arbitration, because arbitration — even unaccompanied by material sanctions, if reinforced by moral sanctions, that is, by the sovereign power of public opinion — constitutes a pledge of peace which is of incalculable value. I shall always maintain that arbitration forms the corner-stone of our edifice. This idea, even without the fuller definitions of the Protocol, already underlies the Covenant.

The creation of the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague is the most decisive event in the recent history of international law. This institution will acquire an even wider range of action when — and I most earnestly hope that the day may not be far distant — the United States of America also give their adhesion to that Court. There can be no State where there are no law courts. We are accustomed, in examining the nature of our several States and the State as an abstract, to regard law courts and State as inseparable ideas. It is impossible to conceive, within a State, a tribunal not possessing compulsory jurisdiction. The day will come, I think, when a truth that holds good for each State will be seen to hold good in international relations also. Moreover, setting aside the question of the Protocol as a whole, those chapters which refer to arbitration are already, and inevitably, producing their effect. The proof lies in the negotiations for the Security Pact between Germany and her former enemies, for arbitration is regarded in that Pact as one of the means of realising the Contracting Parties' aim.

Shall I give you a further proof of this truth which I have just enunciated? Shall I give you a proof drawn from the policy of my own country?

In 1920 Switzerland, Denmark and Portugal were the first countries to accept the optional clause in the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice providing for compulsory jurisdiction. Since then the Confederation has entered into engagements with several States which have also adhered to that clause. Let me quote by way of example the Northern European countries, the Netherlands and Austria. I might add several more. After giving our adhesion to the optional clause we concluded a number of separate treaties of arbitration and conciliation. I will only refer to one which is of special importance — the Treaty concluded by the Confederation with Germany in 1921.

Last year, on September 20th, when the Assembly was actually sitting, we signed with Italy a treaty the importance of which cannot be over-emphasised, because it is the most signal triumph of the principle of arbitration between neighbouring States, one of which is a great Power. Since that date, and since the important discussions on the Protocol — indeed to a certain extent under the influence of those discussions — the Confederation has signed further treaties with France, Belgium and Poland. The treaty with France is also an example of this type. In my view, it reflects even greater honour on the French Republic than on the Swiss Confederation, for I do not forget that the French Republic is a great Power and that Switzerland is a small State. The Swiss Confederation will shortly sign a similar treaty with Spain. Other negotiations are in progress. In all probability, but for the impulse given by the discussions on the Geneva Protocol, these arbitration treaties would never have been signed. If treaties of the same kind were concluded between groups of neighbouring States, there would soon exist a system of arbitration treaties covering the whole world, and, in particular, the whole of Europe.

Proceeding from the particular to the general, by easy but regular stages, the principle of compulsory arbitration will ultimately prevail.

The Swiss Government has authorised me to declare before this Assembly that it is prepared to renew its adhesion to the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice for a further period of ten years immediately on the expiration of the first period of five years. I trust that those other States which have already accepted the clause providing for the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice will be ready to do the same. I even intend, before the end of this Assembly, to express the hope that those States which have accepted the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court will renew their undertaking.

In principle, the Swiss delegation is in favour of any effort made in the direction I have just indicated. It heartily welcomes, though with reservations as regards the drafting, the proposal submitted yesterday by the Swedish delegation.

I should be happy if, when I left this platform, I had succeeded in showing you that Switzerland — the seat of the League of Nations — has remained faithful to its origins, its history and its political ideals and has ceaselessly endeavoured to strengthen — as far as a small country can — not only the foundations of its own security but those of universal peace.

M. Skrzynski (Poland):

*Translation*: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — When I last had the honour of addressing this Assembly, a year ago, I stated from this platform

that I was about to sign, on my Government's behalf, the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. Never have I experienced a more profound emotion than when signing that document, because I realised that through that instrument, which corresponds with all her wants and needs and with her ideal of peace, Poland associated herself with the common and universal desire for peace voiced by so many countries throughout the world.

That document was not destined to become the common charter of international law. Was this because it was too complete, too precise, too absolute in its conception, too rigid in its application, too inflexible in its logic? It would seem so.

Life, political life, which, like all other forms of life, demands variety and abhors uniformity, has rejected that document. In that very feature which is its inherent evil lies also its majesty and strength — its superabundance of lofty ideas, which, invoking the one principle of common right and justice, place all laws and all duties alike upon a single plane.

The Protocol, though it has not become law, nevertheless remains the noblest and purest manifestation of the spirit which animates, guides and dominates, which inspires and vivifies this Assembly — the spirit of the League.

Before the great war the world was based upon the balance of power; but history has taught us that the greater the weight and counter-weight of power the more surely the merest trembling of the scales suffices to upset that balance and bring about disaster.

Thus the new world has come to seek its security in the balance not of material but of moral forces. It is greatly to the honour of the Powers that, though they come to this Assembly possessing, and conscious of possessing, vast material resources, they yet join with us all in seeking for security by a common and united effort. They add to the wealth of their resources a dignity which is new to history, for it requires great moral courage to discover and determine the limits of our strength, above all when we know that it is very great, feel that it is all-powerful, and believe it inexhaustible.

This Assembly is a striking proof, an instance unique in history, of the common will calling into being a common organisation in face of a common danger.

We still have to evolve our methods of work, and this will be a complex and difficult task: if it is true, in the world of science, that an invention has to be made several times, it is even more true in political life.

We have, however, reached the essential point on the path of progress. That essential is this: we know that security — and I mean the security which can bring moral disarmament and render material disarmament possible — can only be attained here, and that the world cannot safely revert to pre-war usages, whereby stability lay but in rivalry, balance of power was but tension, and security lay only in defiance.

What point have we reached to-day, what turning, what milestone? It is clearly useless to talk dogma, or to indulge in barren recriminations.

It is useless to look back; we must look forward. We must talk politics. Politics is nothing but the art of creation; otherwise it would not even be a profession. We have before us a carefully prepared plan; we are on fairly clear ground; and we are already unanimously agreed upon the main outlines of the edifice we are to build.

Now is the time for each State, in accordance with its size and strength and responsibilities, to bring its wrought stone, which, joined and cemented to the others, will form the future edifice. In order

that the finished work may be harmonious, that there should be no departure from the general plan, the part contributed by each nation must be clear and recognisable. This is our contribution: The fifth Assembly recommended the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes "to the earnest attention of all the Members of the League". My Government has given it its earnest attention, since it has signed it, and that with conviction. Our efforts will now be directed towards carrying out, in our relations with other countries, the great principles which are embodied in it. My Government accepted these in the belief that they would become the common weal of us all, but, since this is not to be, it declares that it still remains faithful to them.

I think I may express the hope that the Protocol will remain, for all, the authoritative interpretation of the Covenant of the League. I understand it to mean that those States which, for important reasons, cannot see their way to bind themselves by the Protocol, will at least recognise that it will form the sole solid basis for future relations and individual agreements between other countries and the sole means of supplying what was omitted — and intentionally omitted — from the Covenant.

Agreements concluded under these terms can never be suspect as regards an intentional transgression or distortion of the real meaning of the Covenant. In other words, I take it that the supplementary agreements which already, in virtue of Resolution 14 adopted by the Assembly in 1922, come within the four corners of the Covenant must in future be made to accord with the principles of the Protocol.

It is thus that I regard the continuity of all our past work up to the present time. It is thus that I interpret the moral engagements which devolve upon us through the signing of the Protocol even though the Protocol itself is not to become our law; it is thus that I understand that the problem of security, though it cannot be solved by means of one uniform and binding instrument, has nevertheless, in its main principles, been brought to maturity here in the League, and the proposed solution has been submitted to the judgment of the nations.

More especially do I desire to say that we regard war as a crime, that we desire to conclude arbitration treaties and to submit to arbitration all disputes, without, however, infringing treaties which constitute the immovable and changeless law of nations. We desire justice based upon lawful right, for to seek justice in despite of it — and this I said last year — is revolution.

Arbitration involves the definition of the aggressor. This definition must be simple, clear, automatic as far as possible and devoid of ambiguity, for ambiguity in such a matter gives an advantage to the aggressor.

Along this path, in this direction, on these lines, we shall collaborate with all our strength, convinced that in serving our own interests we are serving the great common cause of peace.

What I have said is no empty phrase: it is not a mere deduction, a metaphysical speculation, but a truth that can be proved by experiment from any of the events of the past ten years. Had we been a free country in 1914, the terrible storm which devastated the world and shook it to its foundations would never have arisen or would never have lasted so long. In 1914 there was one guarantee of peace missing — Poland.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Chao-Hsin Chu, delegate for China, will address the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China): First of all, in the name of the Chinese delegation and on behalf of the Chinese Government, I wish to express our appreciation and admiration of the work accomplished by the Council and the Secretariat during the past year. The League deserves to be congratulated upon its progress and success.

Owing to the non-observance of the geographical principle in the election of non-permanent Members to the Council, China has not yet been able to re-obtain her seat on the Council since 1923, and the Chinese people have not known whether the League still has its eye on the continent of Asia. But I can assure you that the attitude of the Chinese Government as a supporter of the League remains unchanged. Moreover, there are in China many warm well-wishers of the League. Chinese public opinion on matters of international interest runs very high to-day. What China most expects from the League is that her international position and the privileges to which she is entitled shall be fully recognised.

In view of her ancient civilisation, her large population and her magnificent land with unlimited natural resources, China regards her membership of the League as an important contribution towards the attainment of the object for which the League has been created.

We Chinese have full confidence in the Covenant of the League as an effective instrument in bringing about close relations and a better understanding between the nations. The League, though in its infancy, has indeed justified its existence as an international organisation which is able from year to year to settle international disputes. It has become an indispensable part of the new order of international life.

For these reasons, permit me to call your attention to China's appeal for the reconsideration of her Treaty relations with other Powers. I bring this question before the Assembly because it falls within the letter and spirit of the Covenant of the League, particularly Article 19. Let me read that article to you.

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

It has been generally admitted that the treaties now in force between China and other Powers which were entered into in the old days are regarded as having become inapplicable and as not being in harmony with international conditions in respect of China's position in the family of nations. It is therefore the opinion of the Chinese people that, in justice to China, as well as in the interests of the foreign Powers concerned, there should be a readjustment of the existing treaties in order to bring them more into line with the generally accepted conceptions of international law and equity and more in conformity with the present conditions in China.

As a matter of fact, many of these treaties were negotiated in circumstances which hardly permitted the formulation, by full and free discussion, of principles which should permanently regulate normal intercourse between China and the foreign Powers.

These treaties were really concluded in the old days as *modus operandi*, but, unfortunately, they have been allowed to remain in force till now, when, the situation having greatly changed, the further indefinite continuance of extraordinary political and economic privileges and immunities conferred by those treaties upon foreigners seem

hardly warranted by circumstances. As a result, mutual inconveniences and disadvantages have been experienced. So long as these inequalities exist, there will always remain causes of dissatisfaction which are apt to produce friction and disturb cordial relations and good understanding between China and the foreign Powers.

Allow me to point out that, as a result of the great war, all the defeated nations have given up their old treaty rights, but those Powers with whom China associated herself in the war are still enjoying extraordinary privileges and immunities in China. China has ground to complain that her international status is in some respects even inferior to that of the defeated nations, for in none of them do we find extra-territorial courts, foreign concessions, leased territories, and externally imposed conventional tariffs.

Perhaps some of the members of the audience would not know or would not even believe that, according to the existing treaties, China's tariff is limited to 5 per cent. only; in other words, China cannot raise her import duty on foreign goods higher than 5 per cent. This limitation is applied not only to necessities but to luxuries as well. You can smoke the very best cigars and drink the finest champagne in Chinese territory at a very low price because of the treaty rights. The tariff limitation has been regarded as being responsible for financial difficulties in China, and therefore China can by no means reorganise her national finances on a sound basis without insisting upon the restoration of tariff autonomy. Moreover, foreigners of those Powers having old treaty relations with China are not at all subjected to Chinese jurisdiction. Extra-territoriality in China has therefore caused great obstacles to the governmental machinery and interfered with the sovereignty and integrity of the country.

In view of these facts, the Chinese Government has, on repeated occasions, approached the foreign Powers concerned for a re-adjustment of her treaty relations. Questions requiring re-adjustment were submitted by China to the Paris Peace Conference, which, while fully recognising the importance of the questions raised, did not consider that such questions came within its province. A similar effort was made by the Chinese Government at the time of the Washington Conference, which, though more disposed to consider China's request, could not agree to effect a fundamental re-adjustment, so that, so far as substantial results are concerned, very little progress has yet been made.

More recently, the Chinese Government, in obedience to public opinion, has addressed notes to the foreign Powers concerned asking for a revision of the existing treaties on an equitable basis. There has been a general manifestation by the Nationalist movement against the inequalities provided in the treaties. This movement has been misunderstood and has been considered by some foreign observers as anti-foreign. But in fact this is not the case. Some even thought that the elements of young China had gone to the extreme.

The Chinese have been historically known as the most conservative people in the world. We possess nothing in common with the extremists. We have been patient enough to allow the unequal treaties to remain for many decades. If you study the Chinese mentality, you will feel that the stipulations against China contained in the existing treaties are almost intolerable to the Chinese as a whole. We are now appealing for an amicable re-adjustment. The Chinese Government and the Chinese people have great faith in the Covenant of the League. It will interest you to know that the Powers concerned have already given China an encouraging response to her proposal as to the

reconsideration of the treaties which have become inapplicable. The League should be congratulated upon this, since Article 19 of the Covenant is for the first time being carried out in respect of China.

We Chinese are looking forward to the creation of a new international morality. I admire the inspiring speech made by the French Premier, M. Painlevé, who said: "Without a new international morality, the most perfect law in the world must remain a dead letter".

I am laying stress on these points to-day, but I am not asking for a passage of any resolution. But I do ask, however, that the members of the Assembly will bear in mind the appeal of China and do what they can to assist in liberating China from the yoke and in placing her upon an equal footing with any sovereign Power in the world. A sympathetic atmosphere created towards China on this subject at this great international gathering will certainly give a good impression and inspiration to the Powers concerned and pave the way towards a satisfactory solution of the questions at the forthcoming Tariff Conference at Peking on October 26th, or at a subsequent time when the whole question of revising the treaties is to be brought up for reconsideration.

I heard yesterday with great admiration the eloquent remarks made by the British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Chamberlain, who advocated the principle of preventing war. We are taught by history that war has been generally created by inequality. The most influential weapon, therefore, for preventing war is to change inequality into equality. That is the reason why China has asked for immediate revision of these unequal treaties.

We can be well assured that re-adjustment of the unequal treaties will not only make international relations more cordial on the part of China, but foreign trade and commerce will be more rapidly and greatly developed to mutual advantage. Moreover, it will bring about an assurance of the permanent peace of the Far East, in particular, and of the world in general, which will be an outcome of the great aims of the League of Nations.

**M. Mowinckel (Norway):**

*Translation:* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Speaking to-day for the first time in this Assembly in my capacity as Head of the Norwegian delegation, I desire first to express my sincere admiration for the noble work so zealously undertaken by the League, and for the remarkable results obtained during its short period of existence.

The Norwegian Government is of opinion that the steadfast purpose displayed by the League and the whole spirit underlying its activities are most encouraging auguries of its future success.

There is one question on the agenda of the Assembly with regard to which I desire to say a few words to-day. It is a question of supreme importance from the point of view of world peace; I refer to the question of arbitration, security and disarmament.

I will not disguise the fact that the Protocol of October 2nd, 1924, caused my Government and public opinion in Norway some anxiety, particularly those provisions which concern the possible obligation upon Members of the League to participate in military sanctions. I do not propose to refer in detail to the causes of that anxiety, or the legal objections which could be made to certain provisions of the Protocol. The Norwegian Government has not yet defined its attitude towards the Geneva Protocol as it now exists, and in view of the situation created by the decisions taken by the Council on March 13th, 1925, the question is not one which calls for immediate solution.

Norway, however, heartily approves the aims of the Protocol. In my Government's opinion, it is of primary importance that as many States as possible shall undertake, so far as is feasible, to submit all disputes between them and other States to pacific settlement by judicial or other means.

In this connection, I heartily support the Swiss Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Motta, in his admirable speech to-day, when he expressed the hope that more and more States would adhere to the optional clause in the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. Norway, it goes without saying, will renew her adherence to that clause.

It was with the greatest satisfaction that I listened to the remarks made a few days ago by M. Painlevé, Prime Minister of France, on the question of arbitration in his very notable speech at the opening of this Assembly. M. Painlevé's declaration that M. Herriot spoke in the name of France when, last September, he solemnly agreed to compulsory arbitration for all disputes without distinction should still further strengthen our confidence in the future.

Clearly, then, if the problem of arbitration is to be conceived as I have just defined it, Norway will heartily approve the draft resolution submitted to the Assembly yesterday by our able colleague M. Undén, Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and will support this proposal.

The Norwegian Government fully understands the efforts which certain countries are making to obtain greater security, and takes a keen interest in the international negotiations now being conducted with a view to fulfilling the ideals of arbitration and security.

The Norwegian Government is of opinion that the agreements which will be concluded in this connection might be so drawn up as not to contravene either the letter or the spirit of the Covenant; I was therefore very glad to hear the British Foreign Minister, the Rt. Hon. Austen Chamberlain, declare that the agreements to be concluded will be framed in the spirit of the Covenant and carried out in complete harmony with, and under the auspices of, the League of Nations.

In my opinion, the question of disarmament is of particular importance, and it should be the desire and endeavour of all friends of peace to make some practical progress in the near future towards transferring this problem from the realm of visions to that of facts. I hope, indeed, that the present Assembly will help to do so. In this connection, it would, of course, be a very great step forward if the efforts now being made to obtain increased security could be brought to a successful conclusion.

The important, even leading, part which the League of Nations is taking in international affairs, and which is continually increasing, serves to show, in the opinion of my Government, how necessary it is to give all the Members of the League an opportunity of participating in turn in the important work of the Council. It is therefore most desirable that the unanimous recommendation made by the Assembly of 1922 concerning the adoption of organic rules for the election of non-permanent Members to the Council should be borne in mind.

To this recommendation that rules, which would be satisfactory to all the Members of the League, should be laid down for the election of the Members of the Council, I would add a further wish, which is, I think, shared by us all, namely, that the League should become truly indispensable and that, in the near future, it will be able to make some real progress towards the attainment of this ideal.

The Norwegian people are undoubtedly among the most ardent and loyal supporters of the League. Norway desires that the internal administration of the League may be organised on so sound and universal a basis that Members will realise how advantageous and profitable it is to collaborate in its work. Norway confidently hopes that, by the policy which it adopts, the League will redouble its force and prestige, so that it may become an insuperable barrier between peace and war.

The League of Nations is in truth, as President Wilson said, the only hope for the future of humanity

and civilisation. It is the surest and perhaps the only means at our disposal for dispelling the clouds of doubt, mistrust and fear which still, unfortunately, darken the relations between States, and which, if not dispersed, will lead to world-wide catastrophe.

When all the States and all the peoples of the world collaborate in mutual confidence for the maintenance of international peace and friendship, then success is as certain as the fact that mankind is not falling back but progressing.

*The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th, 1925, AT 3.45 P.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

22. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

*Translation :* Our agenda to-day is the continuation of the discussion of the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat, and the steps taken to carry out the decisions of the Assembly.

I call upon Jonkheer Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, to address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands) :

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I desire, first of all, to associate myself with the praise rightly bestowed upon the Council for the manner in which it has once again carried out its ever-growing task. The report we are discussing is proof of this increasing activity, and, as delegate of a State not represented on the Council, I am glad to take this opportunity of paying a public tribute to that "Areopagus", and also to the great ability and indefatigable zeal shown by the Secretariat, the Committees and the various organisations of the League.

The Council's task bristles with difficulties. We need only take note of such delicate problems as those of Mosul or Danzig, or the Minorities questions, to perceive that, in dealing with all of these

problems, the Council has acted with undeniable tact.

One item in the report which I especially note is the mandates question, and, in particular, the work of the Permanent Mandates Commission. The Council has very rightly expressed once more its satisfaction in finding that the mandated territories are being administered in conformity with the spirit and letter of Article 22 of the Covenant and in conformity with the terms of the mandates.

The Permanent Mandates Commission is one of the most praiseworthy organisations of the League. Its reports and the Minutes of its meetings clearly show the care with which its very able members supervise the execution of the mandates.

Its work is public, and even when, occasionally, as at its last session, it meets in private in order to settle questions of detail, the Minutes are published. The Commission's reports are evidence of the zeal and good faith of the mandatory Powers. It goes without saying that neither the mandatory Powers, however conscientious their efforts, nor the Commission, however careful its supervision, is infallible, and an old colonial Power, such as that which I represent, fully recognises this. Nevertheless, I think I may say that the criticisms which have recently appeared in the Press are for the most part devoid of all foundation.

It is unfortunate, of course, that in many of the mandated territories there are not enough qualified teachers and doctors, and that the mandatory Powers should not allow foreigners to fill these vacancies. In connection with these two professions, however, the reports hardly mention the large amount of work done by the numerous religious missions with their well-known and praiseworthy zeal.

It is true that the development of several of the mandated territories suffers from lack of financial resources; but, in the opinion of the Permanent Mandates Commission, there is an undoubted desire to promote the economic development of these territories and the well-being of the native populations, and, although the amounts



shown in the Customs returns are smaller than in pre-war days, the fault lies not with the administration but with the general disorganisation caused by the war.

On the whole, the League can certainly congratulate itself upon the institution of territorial mandates. They fulfil the aim of the Covenant and are by no means, as has been alleged, "camouflaged annexations".

The report of the Council contains the welcome news of the coming into force of the amendments to Articles 12, 13 and 15 of the Covenant with reference to the additions necessitated by the establishment of the Permanent Court of International Justice. I am sorry, however, that we are told nothing yet of a much more important matter—the ratification of several amendments unanimously adopted four years ago. The first delegate for Denmark called our attention the day before yesterday to this deplorable state of affairs, and I must endorse his remarks. We have reached the year 1925, but no rule has yet been laid down, despite the unanimous vote of 1921 regarding the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council. The same remark applies to the amendments to Articles 16 and 26 of the Covenant. What, in these circumstances, is the value of discussion and of the unanimous vote on the amendments of the Covenant?

The report of the Council cannot be discussed without touching upon the all-important question of the Protocol. The *Journal de Genève* said recently: "We do not expect a Parliament to perform miracles every session". The unanimous agreement reached last year regarding the Protocol was a wonderful thing and, despite the sceptics, undoubtedly electrified the whole civilised world. Nevertheless, speaking from this very platform, I at the time said: "We must be ready for disappointments; we must prepare the world for them, and, above all, we must not let the world believe that the ideal to which we aspire is attained. We are still only at the first stage. In the question of principle, however, what has been done cannot be undone."

M. Painlevé's brilliant speech confirmed my view. The Protocol is not dead; it is most certainly not buried; it but slumbers. It need not necessarily be adopted in its present form. Do not let us seek now to remodel or to perfect it; rather let it rest. Its essential principles remain, as M. Paul-Boncour has so well said, but the Protocol itself, being a work of man, is susceptible of improvement.

We now know from M. Painlevé's words that our work of last year was not in vain.

We know that the Powers most interested in the establishment of peace are seeking to conclude an agreement upon the basis of the Covenant, and that negotiations would not have been begun in this spirit but for the work done last year in this very place. This work has been a powerful factor in convincing Governments that it is their duty to settle international disputes by pacific means. It has contributed, as, for that matter, all the work accomplished in Geneva has contributed, to prepare the moral disarmament of which the first delegate of the British Empire spoke so well.

Let this suffice for us, while we await the day—which I hope is at hand—when we shall all realise that, if we are to attain world peace, regional interests must be merged in the general interest.

If we agree not to deal with the Protocol, it does not follow that the work begun should be laid aside. The first delegate for Sweden, in his interesting proposal yesterday regarding compulsory arbitration, has pointed out to us one of the paths to follow.

If, on the one hand, the paramount problem of

the reduction of armaments, is to remain under examination, the proposal for a Disarmament Conference stands and the preparations for the Conference must on no account be neglected, however difficult they may appear. The possible delay in calling this Conference—to which the first delegate of France referred—must in no way prevent these immediate preparations.

I shall therefore venture to submit to you a draft resolution on this subject.

A special body of a permanent character is indispensable for the preparatory work, which will probably be lengthy. The Third Committee could at once begin to consider the composition of that special body.

As regards disarmament in the wider sense, new and far-reaching ideas are growing up, and they deserve our most careful attention. I have in mind the suggestions put forward by Professor Shotwell, that distinguished American savant, to whom we are chiefly indebted for the definition of the aggressor contained in the Protocol, and who, in the *Journal de Genève* of September 7th, pointed out that, besides the problem of armaments itself, there was the problem of war-time supplies—a problem which, during the great war, gave rise to such considerable difficulties for neutral countries—and also the problem of the dangers of chemical and scientific warfare.

The League of Nations will further have to study the economic factors, the importance of which was so strikingly pointed out by M. Jouhaux last year. It will probably have to make provision for an economic organisation like that which M. Painlevé recommended. I am very glad to learn that M. Loucheur declared yesterday in the Second Committee that the French delegation intended to submit a definite proposal to this effect.

It cannot be stated too often that we have no reason to be discouraged, either as regards the fate of the trilogy: arbitration, security, disarmament—Mr. Chamberlain showed this in his admirable speech yesterday—or as regards the work of the League in general.

Is it not true that the League has aroused the Governments in an unprecedented degree to a feeling of their responsibilities towards mankind as a whole? Are not Governments, as I pointed out just now, becoming more and more drawn to settle their differences by peaceful means? Does not the feeling grow that no peaceful settlement can be reached without compromise and mutual concessions?

You may say that these are imponderable factors; and yet are not the factors which we call imponderable the main factors in human activity, whether it be the activity of individuals, Governments or nations?

Nothing this year has struck me so profoundly as the increasing number of countries represented by their Prime Ministers or their Foreign Ministers. There could be no greater proof of their confidence in the future of the League. Personal contact plays a most important part in the relations between Governments, and never in all history has so favourable an opportunity been offered for meeting and discussing the various questions which concern them, in an atmosphere of calm, without any danger of public opinion becoming alarmed. Were it only by reason of this meeting together, the gathering at Geneva would be of benefit to our countries.

I will conclude by reiterating once more my faith in the great work undertaken at the instance of President Wilson. Whether sceptics recognise the fact or not, the League of Nations is acquiring added vitality every day. Its influence is gradually

increasing, and, the more unostentatious its work, the more it will accomplish.

May I venture to read the draft resolution to which I have already referred :

“Considering the importance of proceeding without delay with the preparation of a general programme covering the whole question of the reduction and limitation of armaments, with a view to convening, at an opportune moment, a general and international Conference :

“The Assembly begs the Council to study this problem, particularly with the object of setting up a special organism entrusted with the duty of preparing a draft for the above-mentioned programme.”

**The President :**

*Translation :* The Assembly has before it a new draft resolution, submitted by Jonkheer Loudon, first delegate of the Netherlands. This resolution will be printed and distributed without delay to the members of the Assembly.

The Assembly will be asked to give its opinion as to the action to be taken on the draft resolution at the conclusion of the discussion on the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

Dr. Urrutia, first delegate of Colombia, will address the Assembly.

**Dr. Urrutia (Colombia) :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — The report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat, which we are now considering, reveals the variety and intensity of the activities undertaken by the League since the fifth Assembly, more particularly in connection with the work of its technical organisations.

As regards international politics, the action taken by the League, although still very limited by reason of circumstances beyond its control, has nevertheless been valuable from the point of view of the general interests of justice and peace throughout the world.

The report on the work of the Council will certainly be examined closely both by the Assembly and by the Committees, and will be of great assistance in our present work.

There are, however, questions with which the report, being an administrative document, cannot deal, and these questions, which concern the vital interests of the League, cannot be omitted from our present discussions. Among them, the following are, in my opinion, the most important :

What is the opinion of the civilised world as a whole, and, more particularly, of the nations Members of the League, regarding the League itself ?

What tendencies are most marked within the League and outside it ?

What reforms does the world expect the League to undertake ?

The work actually done by the League during the six years which have elapsed since its foundation is enough to show what it is and what it is capable of becoming. The expressions of world opinion, particularly during the present year, may therefore be regarded as having been given with full knowledge of the facts. That the League has won itself a position in the world's regard is incontestable. That its existence either in its present or in some other form is almost universally held to be essential to the maintenance of peace, also admits of no dispute.

It is equally clear that the League, like the International Labour Office, is pursuing a work of peace and justice in the field of international and social problems. The fact that the League is

taking a leading part in the affairs which have occupied the world's attention ever since the war is proved by the interest — I may even say, the enthusiasm — which this institution arouses and with which the problems are discussed. It occupies the attention not only of public speakers and the Press, of Parliaments, learned institutions, political, social and scientific associations, but even — and rightly so — of religious associations and conferences. Moreover, special associations have been and are still being formed, the object of which is to support the League and to promote the acceptance of the principles for which it stands.

The League came into being devoid of material force : it has always been, and probably will always be, first and foremost a great moral force. Requiring as it does the moral support of the Governments, and more particularly of the peoples themselves, it is destined primarily to accomplish work of a moral character.

I venture to say that the fact that the majority of mankind has already rallied to the League is due less to its work in the domain of international politics or its technical activities — extensive though they may be — than to the work it has accomplished in fortifying the conscience of the world and the principles of justice and peace. The results already achieved are not, perhaps, the outcome of positive acts, world-wide in effect, since such acts always require long and laborious preparation, but they are none the less beneficial. Positive acts will doubtless follow in the wake of the moral evolution now taking place in the conscience of peoples and of individuals. The chief stages laid down in the Covenant for the development of the League — the constitution of the Permanent Court of International Justice, arbitration, the reduction of armaments, and so on — cannot be completed in a day, and can only come with the progressive transformation of men's minds and the gradual evolution of ideas. The progress of thought is slow, difficult and sometimes painful, and the development of international life cannot escape this law, which governs all efforts towards the advancement of mankind.

Yet each stage along this road represents a splendid achievement, above all, if it includes a closer application of the principles of guardianship exercised by the League. The League has taken a big step forward and has undoubtedly made progress in the moral domain. Beside the old maxim, *Si vis pacem para bellum*, the League has inscribed, in the international spirit, the new principle which is in itself evidence of progress along the right lines, *Si vis pacem para justitiam*.

The declaration made in the fifth Assembly by the representatives of over fifty States, who proclaimed the principle of compulsory arbitration as the keystone of international law, is one of the outstanding features of contemporary history.

What matter the future vicissitudes in store for the instrument in which this proclamation was formulated ? It has left so deep a mark on the spirit of the peoples that it would be morally impossible for any nation to-day to abjure the principles that have thus been adopted, and to refuse arbitration in the case of an international dispute.

The Geneva Protocol, which, on account of its legal perfection, was perhaps ahead of its day, may or may not live; but there will remain indelibly graven in the heart of man the words : “A war of aggression is an international crime, and every State which rejects arbitration in a dispute liable to lead to war must be branded as the aggressor and incur the moral stigma of the civilised world”.

This unanimous and solemn declaration in favour of compulsory arbitration has been cast like fertile

seed upon the conscience of the world. Since its adoption by the fifth Assembly and, above all, since that day when Switzerland and Italy consecrated it in a pact which may worthily serve as a model and an example, the conception of the scope of arbitration has been considerably enlarged, and it may now be said that the lofty aspiration of the Assembly of 1924 is being realised by the very force of circumstances.

Amongst the promoters of this movement, a place of honour must be reserved for Switzerland, which has succeeded, as the natural outcome of her age-long and democratic policy of justice and peace, in placing the principle of arbitration upon a height as lofty and as crystal-pure as the snow-peaks of her mountains.

But, although world opinion is already practically unanimous in recognising the necessity of the League's existence as the great organ of international peace, there are divided counsels as to its actual methods of work. Even within the associations founded in its support, certain movements and aspirations have been revealed which cannot be ignored, particularly where they reflect the national sentiments of the States Members of the League.

In order to satisfy these aspirations it is not even necessary to amend the Covenant. All that is needed is to apply it in its broad and liberal spirit, since it was so drawn up that the very flexibility of some of its articles makes it possible to set down in black and white sound and wise interpretations of it which will keep it always a living thing.

This remark applies, above all, to the necessity, so often urged in the most authoritative quarters, of introducing into the life and development of the League a wide and democratic spirit.

You are, of course, aware of the results of the competition called "The European Peace Competition", organised by an eminent philanthropist of Boston, and of the peace competition instituted in the United States by Senator Bok.

The importance of these two competitions as an expression of world opinion on the great international questions of to-day can be judged by the fact that, for the European competition, 37,000 manuscripts were sent in, which were examined by special juries and were the work of men of recognised authority.

In glancing through the conclusions of the French juries after they had examined the 5,319 essays submitted to them, we may observe that the passage referring to the question of the League of Nations, and which is in practical agreement with that of the other juries, is summed up as follows: "French opinion desires that the League of Nations should be made universal and democratic".

The desire thus evinced, together with the resolutions adopted by the Peace Congress, by the League of Nations Associations and by other authoritative bodies corresponds, I am certain, to the desire of many of the countries represented here.

With regard to the country which I have the honour to represent, I can assure you that its attachment and devotion to the League will be strengthened by every step the League takes to conform more closely with the liberal and democratic spirit which presided over its birth.

It is only natural, indeed, that countries which are profoundly democratic in spirit and in their laws, and which observe the principle of the absolute legal equality of States in their councils and international meetings, should follow with profound interest all that may tend to render the League more democratic.

And now, what are the most practical means of attaining this desired democratisation without overstepping the bounds of the Covenant or disturbing the smooth working of its machinery?

One suggestion is the election of delegates by the Parliaments of each country and by electoral bodies constituted *ad hoc*; but such a system, though it possesses certain advantages, is also open to serious objections, and would, nevertheless, always be subject to the sovereign right of each State to appoint its delegates according to its constitutional laws.

But the Covenant itself provides effective means for the democratisation of the League. The chief of these, in my opinion, consists in giving the League powers, as wide as the Covenant will permit, to enable it to express its desires by real resolutions and not by mere recommendations or requests addressed to the Council.

Once invested with these powers, the Assembly would itself enact the Statutes of the principal technical bodies of the League — such as the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, for example — according to the procedure adopted by the Barcelona Conference in regard to the organisation of communications and transit.

In the same way, the Assembly would in future possess the right to nominate the members of these bodies, which would then have the weight of its authority, and the Council would be relieved of a very complex part of its work, which, however, it carries out most conscientiously.

By a practical and liberal application — I might even say a more equitable application — of certain other articles of the Covenant, by the more constant and real participation of all States Members in the conduct of business of common interest to all Members, the League would best show its desire not to depart from the principles of the Covenant; and by so doing it would develop along more distinctly liberal lines than it has ever yet followed since the first Assembly.

One of the most valuable results of the democratisation of the League would be to hasten the day when it will include all the nations of the world and particularly those American States whose absence we still deplore.

At the last Conference of Santiago, these States made a unanimous effort, which was crowned with success, for the more complete democratisation of the Pan-American Union. Thus, while once again proclaiming their devotion to liberty and peace, they have become a powerful moral force for the defence of democracy and of justice, and for the maintenance of peace throughout the whole world.

I fear that I should be taxing your patience too much were I to dwell longer on these questions, but I hope you will give kind consideration to my words, and that you will see in them no more than the expression of my sincere and convinced attachment to the League of Nations, as witnessed by my presence here for the sixth time.

Allow me, before I conclude, to join in the tribute already paid to the memory of those four eminent fellow-workers who have died since the last Assembly, MM. Branting, Chagas, Meirovics and Viviani. The words of Grotius might be applied to these illustrious dead: *Veri pacis sacerdotes*, in memory of their zealous love of peace and justice.

Just as on the field of battle warriors surround the fallen heroes, let us who fight for the right join hands around our dead comrades. The common gratitude of all to those who have rendered signal service to the cause of humanity is one of the noblest forms of international co-operation.

M. Paul-Boncour (France):

*Translation*: M. Motta, the first delegate of the noble country now giving us hospitality, made a very sound remark this morning which reminded me of a French proverb that must, I am sure, have its counterpart in every language, since it expresses an everyday thought. It is this: "Les jours se suivent et ne se ressemblent pas". The same is true of the Assemblies, and because we no longer hear the echoes of the impassioned debates of last year's Assembly — debates which leave to those who took part in them an indelible memory of the cordiality uniting even those who were opponents — because of this, I say, lovers of the sensational are dissatisfied with a session at which we simply deal with Austria and Mosul. Superficial minds which cannot realise the amount and the difficulty of the work we are doing here, and even the powers of evil, the forces of war that still haunt the League, rejoice to think that we may yet fail the nations whose eyes are still upon us.

And yet I am here to say, not lightly, but from the bottom of my heart, not merely on my own behalf, but on behalf of that great country whose name I am honoured by the first French delegate to speak to-day — I am here to say that France still has the fullest and the most implicit confidence in the League of Nations, and not merely in its future destiny but in its present work.

This confidence I do not derive from our own wishes or ideas, but from a dispassionate examination of the international political situation of the moment.

Even if, as its detractors state, the League of Nations has been only a debating society expressing platonic desires, the best proof that it has become the mainspring, the controlling spirit, of international politics is that it is necessarily affected by the delays, the pauses and also the decisions of that policy. But the League has never been a mere debating society. The French Prime Minister, in his inaugural speech which opened this Assembly, said so in unmistakable terms. The League of Nations, he said, was not the dream-child of a few idealists — a vision dwelling in a sphere far removed from the living world. It was founded in a land shaken with the tread of armies, still smoking with the ruins of war, still red with the blood of its sons.

The only wishes we must strive to fulfil here are the wishes of the dead — of those who have fallen in the war to end war. These wishes the League has interpreted to the last letter, in a treaty of the new kind, a treaty of the new alliance, but a treaty which differs from the rest only in that it is wider in scope and which, like all other treaties, binds in honour those who have signed it. I refer to the Covenant, the basis of the League, to which, therefore, all who enter by its door — and that door stands wide open — have bound themselves.

The Covenant already contains all the obligations which we have endeavoured — though, of course, it was a most difficult task — to define in detail, and, let me add, only to define. These efforts, which were necessary because the Covenant applied to, and linked together, all the nations of the world, and because the formulas adopted had to remain elastic and somewhat vague, necessary, too, in order to arrive at that definition of the provisions of the Covenant which make it possible to apply them — these efforts have, as you know, always received the warm support of France.

At the third Assembly Resolution XIV was adopted, which was the happy result of an agreement between Viscount Cecil and Henry de Jouvenel. This resolution already attempts to connect two parts of the problem which still lies before us

unsolved; and makes the reduction of armaments, which, under the terms of Article 8 of the Covenant, is the fundamental basis of the League, conditional upon the establishment of a state of security necessary to enable this disarmament to become an accomplished fact.

Then there is the work of the Temporary Mixed Commission, based on Resolution XIV, and the drafting of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance, in which work a leading part was taken on behalf of our country by that most eminent representative of labour organisations, M. Jouhaux, and by the former Prime Minister who held office in the tragic moments of August 1914 — that colleague to whose memory we paid a sorrowful tribute at the opening of our Assembly, in which his voice has so often been heard.

France gave her full adhesion to the Treaty of Mutual Assistance. Not only her intellectuals, not only her politicians, but also her military leaders, her Chiefs of the Military and Naval staffs, meeting in the Commission d'Etudes of the Supreme Council for National Defence, realised that here was the new formula for mutual defence which was necessary to all States.

There were grave objections, however, the full weight of which was felt by our country, which prevented any possibility of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance coming into force. Two objections were advanced against it, each of which increased the importance of the other factor of the problem — arbitration.

It was said, on the one hand, by concentrating unduly on penalties, we have lost sight of the moral and legal elements of the problem. The material elements had, as it were, upset the balance of the scheme; what was wanted was to develop the idea of arbitration which already existed in the Covenant.

On the other hand, it was said, the terrible system of penalties, which become more serious as they become more precise, can only be brought into play if the aggressor is ascertained beyond all possibility of doubt; and the fact that, for purely material and practical reasons, it is often impossible to determine the aggressor, revealed the necessity for arbitration; and arbitration was, I repeat, at the very basis of the League. The Covenant defines it in Articles 12, 13, 14 and 15, and the League, during its first Assembly in 1920, made its meaning still clearer by instituting the Permanent Court of International Justice and inviting the States to adhere to Article 36 of the Statute of the Court, whereby they agree to submit their disputes to arbitration.

Such was the position last year, at the opening of the fifth Assembly, the memory of which is still fresh in our minds and hearts. Some of us are bent on founding international peace on general and compulsory arbitration, amending, completing and defining that which may still be incomplete, imperfect, or vague in the articles of the Covenant. Others remind us that an arbitral award, like any other judicial decision, is valueless unless there is a binding force attached to it. They tell us that arbitration would be fatally imperilled if we risked calling it into play in vain, since the defaulting State which had agreed to arbitration would not, after all, suffer the full penalties laid down by the Contracting States, and would accordingly place in a position of inferiority the State which, in view of its international undertakings, had submitted to arbitration.

Arbitration, security and disarmament, then, become the three terms of the formula defined last year by M. Herriot, and repeated this year by M. Painlevé, who insisted that these three terms are inseparable and form a logical sequence

—first, arbitration; next, penalties ensuring security; and, last of all, the final goal — disarmament.

It was upon this basis that slowly, minutely, yet fervently — for there was not one of us but realised the interests involved — we built up the Protocol of 1924.

This Protocol introduces nothing that does not already exist in the Covenant: it simply defines the provisions of the Covenant so as to bring them in touch with the realities of international life. The Protocol is to the Covenant—to quote an expression which I once used upon this platform and which has frequently been repeated since — what the rules of public administration are to the law. These rules possess in themselves no binding force other than that derived from the law for which they serve as a commentary and which they interpret and help to apply; but without these regulations the law would be merely a statement of principle that would often remain outside the field of practical reality.

This Protocol imposes no obligation or penalty not already laid down in the Covenant. In Articles 10 and 11 it provides that all the Contracting States shall come to the assistance of the State attacked and place their resources at its disposal as against the aggressor. Article 16, which forms the fundamental basis of the Covenant, defines and determines the various categories of sanctions. It defines those that are compulsory and uniform for all States, irrespective of their geographical position, their place in history or their military power. These are the economic and financial penalties, and there is no State, whatever its place in the world, whatever its standing, whatever its geographical position, which cannot offer its economic and financial support to a State which is the victim of aggression and withdraw all such support from the State responsible for the act of aggression.

Military, naval and air sanctions cannot be put into uniform operation or constitute a uniform obligation, because certain States, whether on account of their geographical situation or the scale of their armaments, or because their history has long since removed the difficulties with which other States still have to cope, cannot be compelled to substitute, for the relative degree of disarmament they have already attained, an armament which would be contrary and paradoxical to and, as it were, the negation of the very aims which the League of Nations pursues.

Article 16 of the Covenant, therefore, judiciously notifies the compulsory nature of some of the sanctions, while as regards the others it makes recommendations.

Study the Protocol, study Articles 11, 12 and 13, which define these sanctions, and I defy anyone to find in them anything which adds to the obligations imposed by the Covenant or makes compulsory anything not already contained in Article 16 of the Covenant.

These articles of the Protocol, with their great practical flexibility, simply make the operation of these sanctions more definite, more easy, more practical and more rapid; they certainly add nothing to them.

As regards economic and financial sanctions, which, under Article 16 of the Covenant, are compulsory for all, obligations which all present or future Members of the League have accepted or will accept, it adds nothing, but prepares them, solely on the basis of preconceived plans, in such a way that, when the time comes, as little as possible shall be left to chance, and in such a way that chance, which in itself creates a feeling of insecurity, will not prevent States from yielding

to the atmosphere of peace which we desire should reign throughout the world.

As regards the military, naval and air sanctions, the Protocol maintains their optional character, but particularly lays down that, in order to remain within the spirit of the Covenant, assistance must be measured according to capacity, each State giving what it has, all that it has, and only what it has, and — in Article 11 — making provisions for those nations which, through their geographical situation or the state of their armaments, cannot assist in the application of military sanctions.

Then, as in the case of economic and financial sanctions, the Protocol has been planned with due allowance for practical realities. Article 13 lays down that States must determine in advance the effective forces which, if necessary, and in certain concrete cases, they could bring to the assistance of the victim of aggression. And, to carry this elasticity and flexibility further, Article 13 makes provision for partial and regional agreements between nations which find themselves faced with more definite and pressing problems, and desire to obtain a clearer definition of the forces they would place at the service of the Contracting State attacked. The Assembly has certainly not forgotten that these regional agreements were very keenly discussed by the Third Committee, and I can at least assure the first delegate for the British Empire that, even at that time, the French delegation had already adopted all the practical advice he gave us yesterday.

I will not labour this point. The whole of this text is still fresh in your memory. As you see, it is not based on any theoretical or symmetrical idea. Its aim was rather to bring the somewhat theoretical provisions of the corresponding articles of the Covenant into line with the realities, the variety and the many-sidedness of life.

The Protocol is here; it is ever-present. Only an Assembly has the right to destroy what a preceding Assembly has built up. The register is open. On its empty page the first delegate of France, M. Briand, placed his country's signature. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the French Chamber unanimously ratified it. I merely point to this fact to prove, by this unanimous agreement, my country's desire for peace.

Other nations have not seen their way to give their adhesion. The Protocol has not received the necessary number of signatures. I will not say that neither has it received signatures of sufficient weight, because I hold that there are no great or small nations but only nations equal in the eyes of justice. What I mean is that it did not receive the signature of nations which by their importance, by the part they play in the world as well as by their devotion to the cause of peace, ought to have a decisive influence upon the application of the Protocol. And why did these States not sign? I think it would not be suitable for me to analyse their reasons; it would be, as it were, an encroachment upon the sovereignty of States, a principle which lies at the very foundation of the League. I simply note the fact and deplore it. For, indeed, if it stood alone, it would be a very serious setback to the work to this session.

If it stood alone! But note the facts of international politics. Side by side, parallel with us, on planes which must remain separate but which are in the immediate vicinity, in the very atmosphere of the League, partial agreements are in course of negotiation. I speak of them freely, because I know no more about them than you yourselves. But there is something which, in my opinion, tells us more than any document. It is the word of the first delegate of the British Empire; it is his solemn affirmation that nothing

in these pacts is contrary to the spirit of the League. And then the Press, as you know, is so wide awake — for it shares the aversion of the people to secret diplomacy — that negotiations, however discreet, inevitably become all but public in the end.

Let us think over the facts we already possess.

Are these treaties of the old kind? Outworn formulas of the old diplomacy, which in the course of centuries has, I admit, given us periods of transient security? Security, yes, but, with group constantly opposed to group, always containing a hidden venom and a menace of war! This is so true that the peoples of the world have held these treaties responsible in part for all the blood which has been shed.

From the fragmentary rumours that reach us from the hushed precincts of the chancelleries, we perceive the fundamental difference between these old treaties and the pacts that have been negotiated since last year. Against what enemies are these pacts directed? They bear no ethnical or geographical name. It is the future enemy, whoever he may be, who will provide the name, and that name will be held up to the reprobation of the world.

The enemy in these pacts is the aggressor.

But who is to determine the aggressor if the act of aggression itself does not do so as, for instance, if one of the demilitarised zones referred to in Article 13 of the Protocol were violated? Will it be one of the Contracting Parties? Or a group of Contracting Parties?

No; it will be arbitration.

And who is to be the arbiter if, finally, the arbitration provided for in these pacts proves inadequate to settle a dispute?

It will be the League of Nations. And not until the aggressor is revealed, either through the act itself — which will, of course, be determined by the League — or by arbitration, will the guarantees provided in these pacts be brought into play in the form of military sanctions.

Aggressor? Arbitration? League of Nations? Control, in consequence, by the League? Responsibility of the League for the operation of these pacts?

Surely we have heard of these before. These are the very words we used in our discussions last September.

Arbitration? And security also, I think, which is to be the final term, the product of the first two. But — I speak in hushed tones, or, at any rate, in tones as hushed as can be used on this world-wide platform — these three terms constitute the very principles of the Protocol itself, and of the Protocol undismembered, unmutilated, just as if we were yielding to the — as I think — reprehensible temptation of removing from it some of its terms, instead of leaving it as it should be — an undivided whole. Each of the pacts now under discussion is in itself a partial Protocol, yet consistent with each other, and the essential principles of the Protocol have been retained.

To be exact, this is the application of the principles of the Protocol to concrete and definite cases, cases for which the States concerned felt urgently bound to make provision; but, although they are limited as regards application, although they apply to concrete cases, the principles involved are still those of the Protocol that you drew up last September. You may well be proud of your work, therefore; you may well be confident.

Arbitration, definition of the aggressor, security! Surely these are your own ideas which are penetrating the hushed precincts of the chancelleries.

And yet, must the League of Nations, robbed of its offspring by reason of its very success, look

on inactive, unconcerned, while such great events are passing? Surely not. And so I find myself unavoidably drawn into a controversy, courteous indeed — nay, more, fraternal, since it is taking place between States which are pursuing the same ends, though by different means — and I must call into question some of the statements made from this platform by the first delegate of the British Empire.

Mr. Chamberlain gave us a most eloquent and stirring account of the history of his own country; his analysis revealed both his own cultured mind and the strong political tradition to which he is attached. His account glowed with that pride which is shared by all of us here; even when we are working to create a wider organisation, we still cling to the deep-rooted traditions of our own past.

Mr. Chamberlain cited the history of his own country as example. He showed us that the British Empire, which was the first to establish the institutions of freedom and parliamentary institutions, has for 250 years been free from any violent upheaval. He showed us how, as a result of this settled condition and the solidity of its institutions, the British Empire has extended its power to the four corners of the earth. He said to us: "Let the League remember that all this has been accomplished without a previous plan, by empirical methods, and by an endeavour to reach a suitable solution in each particular case". He pushed his illustration to a logical extreme, if I may say so, in his endeavour to prove the fundamental illogicality underlying these particular cases.

There we cannot follow him, for where the British statesman who spoke on this platform sees illogicality we ourselves see only the splendid continuity of English history. Yes, there is a profound sense of reality, a sound experience, a methodical desire always to solve on its own merits any problem which arises; but the solutions reached form a regular sequence of events when viewed in the light of the underlying basis of the British Empire's institutions and its requirements. All that is a story which the great British author, Kipling, has rightly called "the finest story in the world".

And for the League of Nations, this other great fatherland that we are establishing by bringing to it, each of us, some of the wealth of our own nations, by endowing it with all the experience acquired from our national temperaments and our national histories — for the League of Nations we ask the same continuity. We do not want it, year after year, to have to return to the same old problem by putting forward solutions which are merely rejected on the morrow.

We remember that Penelope herself, at long last, saw the prow of Ulysses' vessel approaching her over the glittering sea, and I really think that in his wanderings around the Mediterranean, Ulysses is the prototype of the great maritime Powers.

Since we are all bringing to the League the fruit of our experience, the wealth of our national histories, let us draw from this object-lesson and from English history all the truths that they convey. Let us seek to solve each problem as it is laid before us, inspired by vast idealistic conceptions and taking due account of the setbacks we shall inevitably encounter. Above all, we must on no account be discouraged if it happens that, as a result of these setbacks, events take a different course from that which we had intended. But, despite this, we must also link each problem to the next. We must follow up each agreement by another agreement if it is by a system of individual agreements that we are to erect an edifice which, if you will allow me to say so, will be uncommonly

like the Protocol which the first British delegate has condemned. In spite of this, however, let us try to keep before us the aim of universality, which, I assure you, is not a mere arbitrary concept of our minds, but is simply an accurate reflection of what happens in a world-war — in the late war as well as the war which will break out to-morrow if we do not succeed in the work we have come here to do.

We have seen — and Europe cannot forget the lessons it has learnt — that the first shell fired in a world which has not thought upon the morrow produces effects which are felt to the uttermost bounds of that world. How do we know that in this Europe of ours, this small continent to which ultimately all the nations in the world came and fought in its quarrels, peace may not be overthrown by a gun fired on some distant ocean!

Universality, alas! is not a mere arbitrary concept of the mind. Through the very interdependence of all nations, and through the fact that modern warfare must inevitably be waged on a large scale, it has become an inescapable reality for us in our endeavour to abolish war.

We still believe — we should be insincere were we to say otherwise, and I wish to be as frank as was the British delegate the other day — that, in view of the world-wide extent of the danger, we must surely employ world-wide measures of prevention. We believe that some day it will be found that the Protocol was a vital necessity for the peace of the world.

But since, for the time being, events have taken another turn, since the States which are most immediately menaced have adopted the method of partial agreements — which, as I have shown, are in accordance with the principles of the Protocol itself — the League should at any rate exert every means in its power to increase the number of these agreements, at the same time taking care to see that they are in accordance with the essential principles of the Covenant and the Protocol.

A single pact is not enough. Already we have learnt through the investigations of the Press that there is more than one pact, or, at any rate, that the signature of one particular pact in Western Europe is conditional upon the signing of a similar pact in Eastern Europe. The inevitable interdependence of Western and Eastern Europe has already become an accomplished fact through these partial agreements.

Do you think, does the League think, that these two pacts will suffice? If this is to be the path chosen by our diplomats, do you imagine that, both in view of the experience gained through these partial agreements — and this is the great lesson which I wish to draw from what the first delegate of the British Empire said — and also because there will necessarily be other agreements arising out of these — since it will be dangerous for any nation to remain outside these pacts without concluding others to meet its own needs — do you imagine that we shall not find these agreements concluded in large numbers in order to meet equally numerous requirements? It must be so; the League of Nations must exert its influence to this end. Then, when there are a large number of these agreements, when they cover, in every part of the world, the risk of the conflicts which each group of nations considers to be most imminent, do you imagine that these agreements will not require to be adjusted and co-ordinated?

And, then, what body will be qualified to do so but the League of Nations?

Moreover, these pacts will ultimately bring into

action all the machinery of the League. They are — I ask your pardon for repeating the expression, but it adequately expresses my idea — they are pervaded by the atmosphere of the League, they apply its principles unaltered, they are only limited in time and space, and they are therefore experiments which may lead to others.

What, then, is the League's immediate duty in regard to these pacts? The League has asked for work; its energies demand some outlet. Do you not think that through its technical organisations and committees the League ought at once to prepare for the great and multifarious duties which it may have to fulfil to-morrow?

To take only two examples: From what we hear, these agreements will organise arbitration, apart, of course, from clear cases of aggression, such as the violation of a demilitarised zone, and, in many cases, arbitration will ultimately lead to arbitration by the League itself.

Yet remember that last year, when we sought to strengthen arbitration in order to ensure a clear definition of the aggressor — and I know that my colleagues on the First Committee will have a particularly vivid recollection of this — we found that the articles of the Covenant which provide for arbitration were incomplete. In the first place, the Council's decision must be unanimous, and, in the second, one of the disputant States may take refuge behind its domestic laws. We saw that there were gaps through which some day, under the pressure of the forces let loose by war — popular passion, economic needs and so on — the whole flood of war might pour forth once more.

It was one of the most difficult and complex, and one of the most essential, tasks of the First Committee to draw up in detail those articles of the Protocol which were intended to fill the existing gaps.

Do you not think that, if it is called upon one day — as we have every reason to suppose it will be — to intervene in cases of arbitration arising under these pacts, the League should consider how the gaps we found last year can be filled? And as there cannot be two practical solutions for one and the same problem, I think that the only possible solution is one which is remarkably like the first part of the Protocol.

But the idea of arbitration contains something more — it has its dangers. The idea fascinates us, and rightly so. It is the right basis on which to found peace, because it is the only means of determining the aggressor which all nations accept without demur. But unorganised arbitration involves great dangers. As we know only too well from the difficulties which in recent years — indeed even this year, and even now — the Council of the League has had to solve, arbitration is bound to entail lengthy investigations and researches and there are moments of hesitation and uncertainty; meanwhile the time passes.

Remember that the Covenant even prescribes a period of nine months. Nine months! That is much longer than thoroughly equipped nations require to prepare for war if they secretly intend not to submit to arbitration. That is why the Protocol contains a passage — and a vital passage — referring to measures to preserve the *status quo* in the case of arbitration. No provision, however, is made for these measures in the general Covenant of the League. I do not know whether such a stipulation exists in the partial agreements, for we are building upon texts we have never seen. But, whatever the stipulations of the pacts, when

the time comes to impose measures of this nature, involving investigations, upon States between which the spectre of war has arisen, I know of only one institution of such high standing and such impartiality as to be acceptable to both parties, and that is the League of Nations.

Do you imagine there is no immediate need to lay down a procedure for measures to preserve the *status quo*, as is done in the Protocol?

I might give many more instances, but I have already kept you longer than I intended, and I must thank you for your kindness in listening to me. I will not burden you with more examples. I will stop here.

One last word, however. What is the third term of the problem, the third aim that we have inscribed above the portal of our edifice—or rather which we have laid down as a part of the foundation on which to build up the texts that are to define the Covenant? This third term has perhaps, more than any other, awakened hope in the soul of the nations. It is perhaps principally for the sake of this word that the peoples have fixed their hopes upon us, and as we know how infinitely difficult and complex a problem it is, as we know that it can only be an end and not a beginning, it is for us to tranquillise, if I may say so, the hopes that the peoples are placing in us. None the less it was for the sake of this ultimately inevitable third term that the League was founded. It is the message which gleamed in the eyes of the dying, as the eye of a murdered man reflects the image of his murderer—that third term is “disarmament”.

Until we have achieved this, we have achieved nothing.

Can we have disarmament before security? Impossible! France says so, for she will enter into no engagement which she cannot keep.

Can we have disarmament after security? Can we summon a Disarmament Conference, a Conference for the reduction of armaments, as soon as the League has ascertained that a state of security exists? After M. Painlevé's speech I think I am not exceeding my Government's intentions in saying that, when that day comes, France will answer the call.

Through its very universality the Protocol has made it possible for our aim to be attained. It linked up that aim closely with the general body of its provisions. It was laid down that the Conference for the reduction of armaments could not be held until the Protocol had received a number of signatures sufficient to render it operative, and at the same time, in order to ensure that the contracting nations would submit to such provisions as the Conference might agree upon, it was laid down that the Protocol itself should become inoperative in respect of any Powers that refused to stand by the undertakings given at the Conference on the reduction of armaments.

The terms of the problem were firmly welded together, and formed a solid structure. And now, what is to take its place?

In view of the turn which events have taken, in view of these separate pacts inspired by the principles of the Protocol, each of which represents a partial and limited fulfilment of the Protocol idea, is the great hope of reducing armaments destined to perish?

It is the duty of the League to grapple with this problem. If, by concluding more of these pacts, and by concluding them in harmony with the principles of the Protocol — if, by this devious

and broken road, we really succeed in establishing a state of security approximating to that which the Protocol would have established, then I think it would be the duty of the Council, when it is convinced that such a state of security exists, to exercise the powers assigned to it in the Protocol by summoning a Conference on the reduction of armaments.

But if you wish all to be in readiness for this Conference when the time comes, it is necessary to make immediately the technical preparations. It would surely be well to instruct the technical bodies to begin this work, for we cannot but realise — and the world which is watching us must also be made to realise — that this is a highly delicate, difficult and complex task; the weapons will not fall from the hands of men or nations at the first sound of the magic word.

These reductions of armaments will have to be measured by the needs of each country, and those needs must be weighed not only against the extent of the country's territory, but against what we may call — since modern warfare is waged as much by means of industry as by armies — its “potential mobilisation strength”. It is essential that our technical organisations should go to the root of the problem, lest when the time comes, if it does come — and come it must — this Conference on the reduction of armaments should dash our hopes, and prove the death-blow of the League of Nations.

I have said my say, and I must crave your pardon for the length at which I have spoken. By brief examples — some inadequately sketched, since the problems at issue are so vast — I have endeavoured, not only for myself but for my country, to express before this Assembly my profound convictions. My earnest hope is either that, some day, custom, aided by the operation of the separate pacts which are now in course of negotiation, will show us that these incomplete experiments justify the wider and more comprehensive experiment of the Protocol, or else that, by the very multiplication of these pacts applying the principles of the Protocol, we shall reach a position approximating to that which the Protocol itself would have created. However that may be, we must link this year's problems with last year's work, which was itself but the culmination of a series of earlier efforts — continuous, as I have tried to show, since all were alike inspired by the desire not to add to, but to explain, the Covenant.

The time has not yet come, then, for us to fling over the Protocol that gold and purple pall beneath which the dead gods sleep. The structure we once built on the shore of this lake is still there, firm and unshaken. The passing wave may distort and dim its image, but its essential features form once again in the passing river. The fragmentary structures in which diplomacies must perforce put their faith can only be built upon the plan which we have drawn.

The President: I turn at this moment to the English-speaking delegations and I draw their attention to the fact that this brilliant speech to which we have listened is hardly translatable, and that it is much beyond the force and strength and ingenuity of any interpreter to translate that speech on the spur of the moment. I therefore suggest — but it is for you to say — that the speech should not be interpreted. It will of course be carefully translated and in due time distributed to the members of the English-speaking delegations. If it is agreeable to you we might dispense with the oral translation. But should any protest be raised



against this procedure, and if any English-speaking member insists on the translation being made now, it will of course be done.

**The Rt. Hon. Austen Chamberlain** (British Empire): I do not raise any objection to the suggestion which you have made, Sir. It would be doubly ungracious to do so because I had the good fortune to understand and enjoy the speech in the

language in which it was delivered. But, in accepting the proposition on this occasion I must assert the claim of the English language to equality in this Assembly and must ask that the course which you have proposed should be treated as wholly exceptional and not as a precedent on future occasions.

*The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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23. OPTIONAL CLAUSE OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE.  
Draft resolution proposed by the Swiss delegation.
24. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.  
Speeches by Prince Arfa (Persia), M. Bello-Codesido (Chile), Viscount Ishii (Japan), M. Hymans (Belgium), M. Quiñones de León (Spain).

President : MR. DANDURAND.

23. — OPTIONAL CLAUSE OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE : DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SWISS DELEGATION.

The President :

*Translation* : The Swiss delegation has submitted the following draft resolution :

“The Assembly,

“Noting with satisfaction the fact that seventeen States have accepted, up to the present, the optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice concerning the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court,

“Recommends that those States which have assumed this obligation for a period which will shortly terminate should take the necessary steps in order to renew, in due course, their undertakings.”

This resolution will be printed and distributed to the members of the Assembly, and at the end of the present discussion the Assembly will be invited to give its opinion upon that resolution.

24. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

*Translation* : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat, and the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly.

Prince Arfa, first delegate for Persia, will address the Assembly.

Prince Arfa (Persia) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It is my pleasant duty publicly to express my thanks to the Council and the Secretariat for their activities of the past year. The Conferences of the League of Nations have become so frequent that many of us have passed the greater part of the winter here at Geneva, and have been able to appreciate anew the great abilities and devotion of the Secretary-General and his loyal collaborators.

Persia was specially interested in the Conference on the Trade in Arms which met in the spring. She sincerely hoped that she would be able to co-operate in the necessary control over an illegal traffic, the dangers of which she well knows. She deeply regrets her inability to adhere to the Convention, on account of a clause which made the Persian Gulf a prohibited zone and which, if we had accepted it, would have placed Persian vessels upon the same basis as the native boats of colonies or mandated territories.

She was prepared herself to exercise, in collaboration with the other contracting parties, the most stringent supervision, and even to organise later a special maritime police. But it is of course clear that Persia cannot, any more than any other Member of the League, allow the warships of another Power to stop, on the high seas, vessels flying her flag and to treat them as if they were craft belonging to a colonial or mandated people.

The Covenant does not allow any special group of Members of the League to decree measures

affecting the sovereignty of another Member without that Member's formal consent. I am therefore quite certain that none of the nations represented here would wish to depart from that principle of justice, which is the very foundation of international law as recognised by us all.

In our ardent desire to maintain the best possible relations with our powerful neighbour, the British Empire, we have left the door open for an agreement.

Seeing that genuine good-will exists on both sides, I hope the two Governments will soon discover a solution capable of safeguarding the rights and equality of both countries, a condition which is indispensable to every agreement, whether general or partial.

The great difference between the old international relations and the new, the latter being based on the League of Nations, should lie precisely in respect for the equality of all States, great and small. If the prestige of the League has somewhat increased in the East during the last two years, it is in direct proportion to the increase in the influence of the smaller countries.

The election of six non-permanent Members of the Council instead of four has made a good impression. We must continue along that path. Popular confidence in the real value of the League will depend more and more upon such a policy. The confidence of the masses will be won if we prove to them that the mighty are no longer supreme, and that the voice of the weakest receives equal consideration in the Councils and Assemblies at Geneva.

During the five years of its existence, the League of Nations has rendered splendid service to the peace of the world and to humanity.

From the creation of the world down to the present time, force has often held right in thrall; the stronger has attacked the weaker and the latter's voice was never heard. The weak had to tolerate every kind of injustice, without even the consolation of making their complaints heard.

The League has already provided the weak and oppressed with the means of bringing their grievances and complaints before the tribunal of the nations. This is progress indeed.

We must press steadfastly on. With courage and tenacity there is nothing we cannot do. If the League is given the real support it requires, there will be no more oppressed peoples in the world to come here and lay their grievances before you.

The Persian delegation has heard the Swedish proposal regarding compulsory arbitration with the deepest interest, and requests the Assembly to instruct the First and Third Committees to examine it next week.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Bello-Codesido, first delegate for Chile, will address the Assembly.

**M. Bello-Codesido (Chile) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The interest with which the countries of Latin America, and more especially Chile, regard the activities of the League increases every day. After having crowned its work of peaceful development at home with a new political constitution inspired by the highest ideals of democracy, after having settled our sole remaining international problem by arbitration and of our own accord, my country now proposes to collaborate with ever-renewed enthusiasm and constant loyalty in the splendid peace work undertaken by the League.

The League's power for securing the peace of the world is greater than is generally admitted.

Its supporters, and particularly its adversaries, are often inclined to ignore all but its more essentially political activities. But the economic and intellectual ties which the League is endeavouring to strengthen, the care of the world's health, the encouragement by the League of contact between the younger generation of different countries, the improvement of travelling facilities for these young people, the total or gradual removal of the scourges which threaten them, and also the activities of the International Labour Organisation, are as effective a contribution to world peace as direct political action, because they create the state of mind and the material well-being essential to real peace.

Chile therefore takes an enthusiastic interest in the success of the League's present and future work for the realisation of these aims. It attaches great value to the work of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, the scope of which has been greatly enlarged thanks to the generous help given by the French Government in founding in Paris an important International Institute. The increase in the number of national committees on intellectual co-operation and the satisfactory progress of the Committee's work for the development of inter-university relations, the instruction of youth in the ideals of the League and the exchange of professors and students — all these are most hopeful signs. The reform of education, the aim of which is to draw the peoples of the world closer together, is a question to which special attention should be given. The Assembly knows of the great progress already made in Latin America in this connection, and it is the South American members of the Committee who are responsible for the increased activity in this field and the new orientation given to this work.

There is no need for me to emphasise the importance of the League's economic and financial work, in which Chile co-operates with very keen interest. By its work in connection with the financial reconstruction of two European countries — work which at first sight seems of only restricted importance but is really of world-wide concern, and, which, too, is a model of organisation and foresight — and by its general efforts to improve economic conditions, to bring about uniformity in legislation, to simplify formalities, and to encourage fairness in the world of commerce, the League of Nations is undoubtedly preparing the advent of an era of peace which can only be reached by setting the whole economy of the world in order.

As regards the direct political action taken by the League, the triple peace formula : "Arbitration, security, reduction of armaments", adopted by the fifth Assembly, combines a wide application of the principle of compulsory arbitration with the factors of guarantee and disarmament, which complete the system of organising peace by common and united action on the part of all Members of the League. The Protocol, the further examination of which is included in the agenda of this Assembly, has given concrete form to the fundamental principle of a general agreement for the creation of an active force which will compel respect, ensure the execution of international engagements, eliminate the causes of war, inaugurate the triumph of right over violence, and establish the ideal of justice.

Although objections to this agreement have been raised, on account of the difficulty of applying the methods provided for with a view to attaining the desired end, these objections do not refer to the groundwork of the peace organisation conceived by the Protocol.

Arbitration, security and disarmament have not and cannot be replaced by other means or by better or more effective methods. Their scope must, however, be strictly defined, and their characteristics in the different parts of the world must be examined in order that their general and compulsory application may be made acceptable to all States.

The nature of the objections which the examination of the Protocol has suggested to some Powers has not merely thrown light upon the problem; it has led to preparatory action, including international negotiations of the highest importance for the rapid settlement of urgent outstanding questions between the countries which took part in the great war. Nay, more, the way is being cleared for the general agreements which will contribute, within the League, to the establishment of universal peace.

Great Britain's point of view is in keeping with this new aspect of the problem. Her declarations show that if the League is called upon to settle disputes which concern certain nations or groups of nations more directly than others, the best solution is to supplement the Covenant by special agreements designed to meet special needs. These agreements, which would be purely defensive and would be concluded in the spirit of the Covenant and under the auspices of the League, would bind together the nations more directly concerned, whose differences might give rise to further conflict.

This system of partial agreements has reached the stage of practical application and will have a predominant influence on the further action taken by this Assembly with regard to the various points and, indeed, the fundamental principles of the Protocol which have again come up for consideration on account of the objections and criticisms which have been made.

The Chilean delegation, on behalf of its Government, signed the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes adopted by the fifth Assembly. It gave its adhesion to the principles of international peace and the policy of co-operation on which the Protocol is based — principles fully in accordance with those which my country has constantly advocated. We were all the more anxious to sign that document, because the Report, which is inseparable from the Protocol, lays down the maxim, which my country also upholds, that the pacific procedure shall only be applied to disputes relating to the revision of existing treaties or involving the present territorial integrity of the signatory States. Chile, however, fully recognises the weight and importance of the objections to final acceptance of the Protocol, and the difficulties which stand in the way of a general agreement.

Arbitration and guarantees are necessary factors in any plan for the organisation of peace, and are inseparable from any system designed to prevent the risk of war, but they cannot be introduced without taking into account the limitations and the differentiation which are unavoidable in order to respect the sovereignty of States, their means and powers of co-operation, and their more or less direct interest in the settlement of such disputes as may arise.

As regards arbitration, Chile is proud of having employed this peaceful and equitable means for the settlement of all her international difficulties. She cannot fail to recognise the supreme importance of arbitration in the international life of nations, or the expediency, nay, the necessity, of extending, by means of special pacts, its compulsory application in the pacific settlement of questions relating to specific countries. A world pact of arbitration is an entirely different matter. By reason of its very

comprehensiveness, it cannot be made compulsory in every case. Even if the principle were generally accepted, it could only be made workable in practice by admitting certain reservations enabling every country to adopt it.

Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice provides for the jurisdiction of the Court in four cases of compulsory arbitration covering legal disputes concerning: (a) The interpretation of a treaty; (b) any question of International Law; (c) the existence of any fact which, if established, would constitute a breach of an international obligation; and (d) the nature or extent of the reparation to be made for the breach of an international obligation.

A general pact of compulsory arbitration might, in our opinion, conform to the provisions of the Statute of the Court in this respect, omitting the clause providing for arbitration on any question of international law — a formula which is too wide and too vague. The revision of treaties actually in force would, it need hardly be said, be excluded.

Compulsory arbitration, thus rendered consonant with national sovereignty and existing treaties, would play a large and essential part in the proposed system with a view to achieving the noble purpose of consolidating peace in international relations.

The American continent has taken an important step, of which it may be useful to remind you, with the object of resorting to all possible means for the pacific settlement of international disputes, by first obtaining the moral disarmament referred to by the eminent representative of the British Empire on this very platform, when he declared that this purpose must take precedence of the fixing of penalties.

The Convention approved by the Pan-American Conference at Santiago, at the proposal of the representative of Paraguay, lays down the obligation to submit to Commissions of Enquiry all controversies between the signatory Powers which have not already been submitted to arbitration in accordance with existing Treaties. These Commissions are required to make a preliminary report on the causes and nature of the dispute; the parties to the case undertake, in the meantime, not to mobilise, not to begin concentration of their forces, nor to engage in any hostile acts or preparations for hostilities. Even after the report has been presented, a period of six months must elapse, during which negotiations are to be re-opened in order to bring about a settlement of the difficulty in view of the findings of this report.

This pacific procedure, which is supplementary to arbitration, is already embodied in one continental agreement, and should, in our opinion, be taken into consideration by the League as a contribution from the American continent to the world work of peace, which is the foremost object of the League's activities.

As regards the system of guarantees laid down in the Geneva Protocol for the benefit of certain States, it should be noted that it applies more particularly to European countries. This aspect of the peace problem does not directly affect the American countries, since none of them has reason to fear the loss of its independence or needs to have it guaranteed by any other State. These countries therefore cannot undertake, on equal terms, the obligations and responsibilities involved by guarantees to safeguard the security and territorial integrity of countries in another continent.

Logically, the guarantee and the security required in view of the particular position of certain States should be established beforehand, as was proposed in the British Government's declaration, by means of partial defensive agreements

to be concluded between the countries directly concerned and to be placed under the control of the League.

If a dispute threatens the peace of the world and is so serious as to require the intervention of all the signatory Powers, the obligations and burdens involved by the guarantee should fall primarily on the countries directly concerned and bound by special pacts, next upon the countries of the continent in which the dispute has arisen and, lastly, upon all the other countries bound by a general pact of security.

This system of guarantees, which is both logical and equitable, would be in keeping with the historical facts of the great war and corresponds with the manner in which the various countries successively entered the war. It would also be adapted to the powers and resources of countries situated far from the centre of military operations and having no direct and immediate interest in the dispute.

In view of these general considerations, the Chilean delegation feels that the work hitherto accomplished by the League has not been unfruitful, and that an examination of the methods to be employed for consolidating, supplementing and reinforcing it by means of fresh agreements, engaging the loyal and unconditional support of every State in its turn, will create, in the near future, a great moral body of international opinion definitely bent upon the attainment of peace, concord and solidarity.

**The President :**

*Translation :* I call upon Viscount Ishii, first delegate of Japan, to address the Assembly.

**Viscount Ishii (Japan) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Since the great discussions of the fifth Assembly, the Government of Japan, inspired by the peaceful sentiments which actuated the Japanese delegation when the Protocol was being discussed, has examined that important document not only with the sympathy it merits by reason of its lofty aims, but also with a profound sense of the political responsibility it involves. My Government has closely studied the details as well as the basic principles of the problem; it has taken into consideration not only the official documents but also the powerful currents of public opinion which exist in the various countries. It finds that, after all its vicissitudes, the Protocol has failed to obtain the unanimous approval of the Members of the League. Such unanimity, however, is the basis of the decisions of the League, which is a free association of free nations. It is the essential condition for the effective working and practical application of the Protocol.

All Governments are, of course, in agreement as to the principles of the Protocol. They disagree only as regards the method of applying those principles. They are not opposed to the noble ideals which inspired last year's agreement, but they have found that the world is not yet ready for its application, which has accordingly been postponed. We therefore think it would be wiser for the present not to press for it to be put into force.

The experience we have gained from the Protocol shows us that at present it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to strengthen the Covenant in such a way as to ensure its general application in all parts of the world. Indeed, every community, every nation is subject to its own special conditions. The Covenant itself had had to take account of geographical situations and special political

circumstances. From the point of view of security and disarmament the requirements of each continent are different.

For some years now, efforts have been made to elaborate a general system of arbitration, security and disarmament. These efforts led last year to the preparation of the Protocol, which received the unanimous approval of all the delegations. But when it was no longer a question of discussion at Geneva, but within the individual States, this general scheme encountered serious obstacles. Governments, Parliaments and public opinion in every country are inevitably influenced by the situation in their own country. They see things from their own angle and shape their work accordingly. Reason as well as experience seem, therefore, to prove that the best method is to start from the individual case and work gradually and methodically towards the general.

If we are to accomplish something practical and enduring we must, while conforming to the spirit of the Covenant, base our work on the historical, political and geographical conditions obtaining in the various parts of the world. In this field there is an urgent need for regional agreements corresponding to the desire of neighbouring nations for security and peace.

The legitimacy of regional agreements has sometimes been contested on the ground that they are likely to lead to the creation of antagonistic groups within the League itself, thus restoring the pre-war system of unstable and uncertain balances of power. But if these agreements are devoid of hostile intent and are not directed against anyone, if their fundamental object is to prevent an armed conflict between the Contracting Parties and to forestall, as far as possible, the outbreak of war between them; if, moreover, with this end in view, provision is made for arbitration and conciliation procedure calculated to facilitate the peaceful settlement of any disputes which may arise, the objections formerly raised to partial agreements disappear.

The new partial agreements, so drawn up, will be in conformity with the letter and the spirit of the Covenant. They will leave the Covenant unchanged, but they will come within its general framework. They will thus strengthen the League's work and will make it easier to apply the Covenant, when the need is felt to strengthen the guarantees of security and peace.

If the number of such agreements is increased throughout the world, we shall finally obtain a result similar to that aimed at by the general Protocol.

I am quite convinced that since the League of Nations heralded to the suffering world the dawn of a new era of peace, an evolution has taken place in the mentality of the various peoples of the world. This has been crystallised, as it were, in the formula, "arbitration, security, disarmament". It has been duly noted not only by Governments but also by public opinion, which sees in these words a trinity of inseparable terms. No one of these conditions can be fulfilled unless the others are also fulfilled; but no solid or lasting progress can be made except through the slow evolution of ideas and a steady adaptation to facts. If the question of the Protocol cannot as yet be solved at a stroke, we may place our hopes, above all, in conciliation. The idea, long upheld by the Scandinavian nations, of setting up a special organisation to deal with conciliation, may very profitably be applied here.

Doubtless the system of conciliation will not entirely meet the desires of all nations for justice. But until the ideal of arbitration, security and disarmament has become an accomplished fact,

we think that conciliation constitutes the most appropriate method for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. This does not mean that we desire to belittle the high authority of the Permanent Court of International Justice or of arbitration tribunals. It merely marks our belief that many international disputes might be satisfactorily settled by conciliatory procedure applied by wise and experienced men fully acquainted with the facts of present-day politics.

My colleagues will doubtless remember that at the third Assembly a recommendation in favour of conciliation commissions was adopted. Since that date the world has been able to judge the advantages of this system, and many States have embodied it in their special agreements. It is for us, then, to perfect it in the light of recent developments both of theory and practice. We must begin our work, and continue it methodically. Japan will be the first to give her whole-hearted support to all efforts in favour of peace and concord.

The President: I call upon M. Hymans, first delegate of Belgium, to address the Assembly.

M. Hymans (Belgium):

*Translation:* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — After this lengthy and brilliant discussion, and after listening to such remarkable speeches, I must apologise for mounting this platform. I have really nothing new to tell you nor to reveal, but I thought it my duty to say a few words. It would be inconceivable indeed that, in a discussion on the question of security, the voice of Belgium should not be heard; but it is also my duty to be brief, and I shall endeavour to fulfil this duty to the letter.

First of all, however, may I re-assert my confidence in the future of the League of Nations and its spirit? I am one of the oldest collaborators in its work. This is the sixth Assembly at which I have been present. I have always been optimistic, and at the opening of this sixth Assembly there are many signs which confirm my optimism.

In the first place, I should like to observe that, in the whole course of this lengthy discussion, I have never heard — and I, personally, am rather proud of it — a single criticism of the Council's work, despite the fact that this work has been constantly increasing and deals with ever more numerous and complex questions. International life grows in volume and continually flows on, while we strive to direct, encourage and organise it.

A second reason for confidence is the way in which the public is attracted towards this Assembly, which has become a rallying-ground for thinkers, and gives an impression of calm strength and unity of thought.

Then, again, speeches are shorter than they used to be. There is a gradual tendency to abandon general formulas and what I venture to call "the metaphysics of peace", and to seek more for concrete and positive solutions.

In this connection may I refer — and M. Paul-Boncour spoke of the matter yesterday — to two important decisions, taken three days ago by the Council of the League, which may possibly have escaped the notice of the public, namely, its confirmation of the admirable work that has culminated in the financial and economic restoration of Austria and of Hungary?

This is the League's own work. The League initiated it. We have saved two nations and brought back to them life and hope. Such a success should not be allowed to pass unobserved. It is a positive proof of our power, and shows that the

League can, whenever it wishes, accomplish great things in the economic sphere.

And now, since I am to be as brief as possible, I will pass at once to the question of security, the Protocol and regional agreements.

Last year the Assembly made a great and noble effort to establish a general system for the pacific settlement of international disputes.

At the 1924 Assembly the Belgian delegation voted for the Protocol, and three months later I signed it on behalf of my Government. But our hope of seeing it put into force has not been realised. We ourselves remain faithful to its principles, which, we believe, fulfil the aspirations of mankind.

Wars of aggression are a crime, disputes must be settled by justice and not by violence.

The expression "Arbitration, security, disarmament", in which the system of the Protocol has been summed up, still holds good. It is graven on our minds.

The idea of arbitration is making steady progress; the Assembly and all the peoples of the world approve it. The day has not yet come when the political situation and the public mind and conscience make it possible to apply the Protocol in full, but in the meantime partial treaties of arbitration increase and multiply. We are very glad to see this, and I thank M. Motta for his reference to the treaty which Belgium recently concluded with Switzerland.

But now that I am on the subject of arbitration I should like to give expression to a thought which constitutes a reply to the various arguments advanced by some of the distinguished delegates who have spoken from this platform.

The system of arbitration can only provide real security if it is strengthened by a series of practical sanctions and guarantees of execution ensuring respect for justice. Moral sanctions are powerful, but human history and experience show that they are not enough.

M. Politis last year brought us convincing evidence of the fact in the eloquent speech which he made at the beginning of the session. He concluded with this striking illustration: "It is not sufficient that the splendid tower of peace which we are one and all working with eager hearts to erect should be given the good and solid foundations of justice. It is necessary, in order that it may bear the weight of that burden of armaments which one day we shall place upon the summit, that the walls should be strongly built of the granite stone of security".

The impossibility at present of putting the Protocol into force is bound to lead nations to seek by regional agreements and partial arrangements to guarantee their security and to maintain and safeguard peace.

The pacts of mutual security which are at present being negotiated, and to which various speakers have alluded, are not military alliances organised by certain nations against others. They are not weapons pointed against a definite enemy. The enemy, as M. Paul-Boncour said yesterday, will be the aggressor. These treaties are protective alliances founded on mutual obligations. They closely associate arbitration and guarantees. They are destined to become forces making for general security and will contribute to the peace of the world.

The germ of these regional arrangements is to be found in the Covenant of the League. It will also be found in the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1923 and the Protocol of 1924. Special agreements would, in my opinion, be indispensable even under the universal system of the Protocol. They would constitute the pillars

upon which a universal system of arbitration and security would repose.

A few months ago M. Benes, Rapporteur for the Protocol, directed the Council's attention to the practical value of regional agreements, and pointed out that if these agreements were increased and were gradually combined and co-ordinated, a system would be evolved which would be remarkably similar to that of the Protocol itself.

The pacts under preparation which fall within the framework of the League are imbued with the spirit of the Protocol; it may be said, in fact, that they actually form a partial application of its principles. They help to create an atmosphere favourable to the growth of the ideal of peace.

Such is the character of the schemes now being carried into effect. My brief account of them is taken from the statements made by Mr. Austen Chamberlain to the Council last March, and of M. Paul Painlevé in his opening speech, and also from the brilliant account of them given us yesterday by M. Paul-Boncour.

What they have told us shows that they have a common idea, and with that idea my Government associates itself; it is evidence of a close understanding — which Belgium welcomes — between two great peoples whose friendship is vital for the safety of the world and of civilisation.

We have always held that disarmament will be the natural consequence of security. It cannot precede; it must follow. Nations cannot neglect the precautions which self-preservation impels them to take until they have acquired confidence and feel themselves protected. But Belgium is prepared forthwith to take her share in the preliminary work of collecting the material required for a Conference on disarmament, to be convened by the League of Nations as soon as circumstances make it possible and desirable.

I have felt it my duty to say these few words on behalf of the Belgian Government, and in the name of Belgium, whose independence is essential to the political stability of Western Europe. All of us, to whatever party we belong, believe in Right, and in international affairs we have no other ambition than to collaborate in the pacification of the world, and to place our country beyond the machinations of violence and the agony and suffering of war.

It was in order to give expression to this thought, which the whole Belgian nation shares, that I desired to address this Assembly, in which Belgium, after the terrible trials which she bore with such stoicism, has found so cordial and so fraternal a sympathy.

I conclude, as I began, with an affirmation of confidence and hope. The work of the League goes on. There is no stopping, no going back. We move forward slowly, step by step, towards justice and peace. Let us endure to the end.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Quiñones de León, first delegate for Spain, will address the Assembly.

**M. Quiñones de León (Spain) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It was in any case my intention to be brief, but, in view of the lateness of the hour, I shall be even briefer. I could repeat to-day, without altering a single word, all that I had the honour to say last year, on behalf of my country, during the solemn discussion of the Protocol which was to maintain and develop the constitutional principles inscribed in the Covenant of the League of Nations.

Since then, Spain has in no way changed her opinions regarding either the ideal of universal peace which we all share, or the means of realising

this ideal so far as the limits of human nature allow.

Inspired by the glorious traditions of her jurists in the past, who foresaw the problems of international law before that branch of the legal encyclopædia had even been defined; inspired also by the efforts of the League itself in affirming, by its acts, the principle of arbitration and the definition of aggression, Spain still favours the solutions set out in the Protocol.

We therefore voted for the recommendations which it contained and, conscious of their importance and of the benefits they would bring, we have come to affix our signature thereto.

I therefore repeat, in the name of Spain, all that I said last year.

I said then that my country's long history had fully convinced it that institutions, whether national or international, require time to reach maturity and must take into account the realities of life.

The partial agreements which the League has been offered this year are not, I feel, so wide in character as the scheme of settlement formulated last year; but they are pregnant with the ideas embodied in the Protocol, and in essence they correspond to the principles — born of a sincere desire for peace — which underlie the Covenant of the League.

We must often perforce abandon the immediate attainment of an ideal and reach it only by gradual stages.

We know now what the problem is, and it is, I submit, the Assembly's duty to take up the partial solutions proposed and apply their benefits to the whole world; it must work ceaselessly and untiringly for universal peace.

Faithful to Spain's ideal, but recognising nature's law that ideals can only be attained slowly and gradually, I venture to submit for the consideration of the Assembly certain proposals which, I think, combine the ideas expressed by the majority of the delegates who have already spoken, and which, without departing from the spirit and intention of the admirable proposal submitted by M. Loudon, widen that proposal in such a way as to cover the whole problem.

I have therefore the honour to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly, profoundly attached to the cause of peace, and convinced that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations,

"Declaring afresh that a war of aggression constitutes an international crime,

"Taking note of the declarations submitted to the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations in respect of the Protocol for the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes and of the fact that the said Protocol has not up to the present received the ratifications necessary for putting it into operation immediately,

"Regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to advance these questions by concluding treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Protocol (arbitration, security, disarmament),

"Records the fact that such agreements need not be restricted to a limited area but may be applied to the whole world,

"Recommends that, after these agreements have been deposited with the League of Nations, the Council should examine them in order to

report to the seventh Assembly on the progress in general security brought about by such agreements,

"Undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security and disarmament,

"And requests the Council to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the reduction of armaments as soon as, in its opinion, satisfactory conditions have been achieved from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the third Assembly."

The President :

*Translation :* The Assembly has before it a new draft resolution, submitted by the first delegate of Spain. This draft will be printed and communicated to members without delay.

At the conclusion of this discussion, the Assembly will be called upon to vote on this draft and on the other draft resolutions which have been submitted to it.

*The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.*



# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## NINTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 1925, AT 3.30 P.M.

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26. ELECTION OF THE SIX NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

Draft resolution submitted by the Chinese delegation.

President : MR. DANDURAND.

25. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

#### The President :

*Translation* : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the debate on the report of the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

Dr. Nansen, delegate for Norway, will address the Assembly.

**Dr. Nansen (Norway)** : Mr. President, I desire on the present occasion to confine my remarks on the report made by the Secretary-General almost exclusively to one single item, namely, the action of the League and the International Labour Office on behalf of refugees.

Before I take up that subject, however, I may in a few words bring some other points before the Assembly. First of all, I desire to move, without elaborate comment, a resolution referring to the Sixth Committee for consideration the report of the Permanent Mandates Commission and the annual reports of the various mandatory Powers which that Commission has received this year. This item, as you may have noticed, does not yet appear on the agenda, but in moving my resolution

— in conformity with what has been done on several previous occasions — I know that I am only giving expression to a sentiment shared by the whole of the Assembly as to the importance of the annual discussions on the mandates system. Anyone who follows the current of international affairs cannot fail to be aware that the relations between the advanced and the backward peoples of the world are assuming every year a greater and greater importance. There are many in the Assembly who believe that in this mandates system there will be found the means by which perhaps the gravest of the problems resulting from the contact of civilised and primitive peoples may in the long run be solved.

I therefore beg to move the following resolution :

“The Assembly, following the precedent already established in previous years, decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other relevant documents on the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the fifth Assembly.”

Secondly, I desire to move another resolution referring to the Fifth Committee the report of the International Labour Office and the High Commissioner on the work on behalf of the Russian refugees. This report contains a new and hopeful proposal which may lead to a great development in the near future, as any member of the Assembly who has read Colonel Proctor's valuable report will agree.

I therefore move the following resolution :

“The Assembly decides to place on its agenda the question of Russian refugees and to refer to the Fifth Committee for consideration the reports of the International Labour Office and of the High Commissioner on this subject.”

The third matter on which I may say a word relates to the question of the protection of

minorities. I do not desire to enter into any general consideration on the working of the system of protection of minority rights — a system which is being gradually built up under the auspices of the League. I have always been one of those who believe that the peaceful settlement of minority problems is of vital importance to the welfare and progress of Europe, and it is only by the cautious, persistent and courageous development of the system of protection that acute problems can be dealt with.

To-day I only want just to mention once more a detailed question which I understand has been brought to the attention of the Secretary-General. Some months ago a petition was made to him by certain Armenian refugees alleging that European banks had withheld from them bank deposits which they had made before their departure from Smyrna in 1922, and their legal claim to which they believed to be properly established. My Government, in accordance with the rules of procedure, received at its request a copy of this petition, which has been considered in a Council Committee of Three, but which has not yet been formally laid before the Council of the League itself.

As this petition has an obvious connection with the wider subject on which I will speak in a moment, I venture to suggest that the facts put forward in that petition are sufficiently well established to justify its formal consideration by the Council. I therefore express the hope that the Council may without delay be seized of the matter by one of its members and that it will take whatever measures it may deem to be just or necessary, whether by seeking an advisory opinion from the Permanent Court or in other ways, to secure a right settlement of this important question.

I now come to the main business with which I desire to detain the Assembly to-day, the proposal of a definite scheme for the settlement in agricultural enterprise of a large number of Armenian refugees. It is a scheme which, if it is to succeed, must involve a loan made by those who control capital in Europe to the new Republic of Armenia. It is a scheme similar in nature, though less in scale, to that which has been successfully carried through for the settlement of Greek refugees on the vacant lands of Greece. Some members of the Assembly have already expressed to me their amazement that I should come before you to-day with what they hold to be an impracticable if not a fantastic scheme.

It is almost three years since I went on behalf of the Assembly to Greece and Turkey to examine the situation created by the great influx of refugees from Asia Minor into the lands of ancient Greece. Within a few weeks of leaving Geneva I came to the conclusion that the only possible solution for the vital problem raised in the Balkan Peninsula by the influx of those refugees lay in the floating of an international loan for their settlement in the new homes in the mother-country to which they had returned.

At that time, when I first put forward the proposal, although it received the immediate and ardent support of the Government of Greece, there were a few persons who considered that there was one chance in a thousand of its being carried into practical effect. It required a year — a year of patient endeavour, of careful investigation and persistent effort — before the Council and the Financial Committee of the League were able to evolve a scheme which could command the confidence of the world. Yet that scheme was evolved: the great loan for which we then asked was raised, and the reports which are now before you show that the results have surpassed our most hopeful expectations.

There may be some who think that the proposal that I make to-day is less hopeful and has less chance of practical success than the proposal for the Greek loan. I do not share that view. I have no hesitation in saying that the proposition that I make to-day is far more hopeful from every point of view than any proposal which could have been made in 1922 on behalf of the refugees of Greece. I have no doubt in my own mind that the difficulties of the scheme which I ask the Assembly to consider, whether they be economic or financial or, I will add, political, are far less than the difficulties which the Greek Government and the Council and the Financial Committee had to meet three years ago.

I make this proposal therefore, not only with confidence strengthened by the success of the League in all the great reconstruction schemes which it has carried through, but also with confidence founded on the facts of the situation such as I know them to be from my investigation this year. I do not doubt that in the coming weeks we shall have days of difficulty and it may be of discouragement, but I am certain that sooner or later — and I believe sooner rather than later — we shall carry this thing through to the successful conclusion which has attended every other effort of this character which the League has made.

I make no apology for laying this matter before the Assembly to-day. It is nothing less than my duty to do so. I need hardly remind you of the resolution of the last Assembly which invited the International Labour Office in collaboration with myself to institute an enquiry. These are the words of the resolution :

“To institute an enquiry with a view to studying the possibility of settling a substantial number of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus or elsewhere.”

In carrying out the enquiry which we have made, we were therefore fulfilling the instructions of the fifth Assembly, and in view of that fact I beg to lay before the Assembly the following resolution :

“The Assembly, bearing in mind the resolution concerning Armenian refugees adopted by the fifth Assembly on September 25th and 29th, 1924, and, in particular, the invitation which was then addressed to the International Labour Office to institute an enquiry with a view to studying the possibility of settling a substantial number of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus or elsewhere,

“Decides to place on the agenda of the Assembly the question of Armenian refugees and to refer to the Fifth Committee for consideration the report submitted by the High Commissioner on the results of the said enquiry.”

I ask the members of the different delegations here assembled to note the words of the resolution adopted a year ago. Our task was to discover some means which would permit of the settlement of “a substantial number of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus or elsewhere”. The first problem which we had to consider, therefore, was to find a place where such an establishment might be carried through, where there were possibilities of economic development which would permit an imported population to support itself by its own work.

We examined all the possibilities and we came to the conclusion, unanimously and without any doubt that we were right, that the only place where a large body — I emphasise a *large* body — of the destitute Armenian refugees now in Europe can be settled is in the Armenian Republic of Erivan.

If the Assembly reflects on the matter for a moment, I think it will agree that we are right. Where else can room be found for a large body of refugees? Ask any Government if it can take a great new body of refugees. Ask the Government of Greece, whose generosity to the Armenians is one of the bright spots in the history of recent years. Ask the Government of Egypt; ask the Government of Turkey; ask the Government of Syria; ask the Government of Palestine if they can receive thousands upon thousands of destitute men, women and children seeking new homes and the means to live.

There is this other important fact to consider, namely, that the Armenian refugees themselves wish to go to Armenia and to go nowhere else. They wish to go and make a national home. There can be no doubt that if the scheme which the fifth Assembly recommended is to be carried through, it must be done in the Republic of Erivan or nowhere.

The enquiries were made by a Commission formed by the International Labour Office and myself. This Commission consisted of three experts, namely, M. Carle, an agricultural expert of French nationality recommended for his expert knowledge and high personal position by the French Minister of Agriculture; M. Dupuis, an Englishman until lately a Counsellor of the Ministry of Public Works of the Egyptian Government, and a distinguished expert on irrigation and agricultural work; and M. Lo Savio, proposed by the Italian Government, a Commissioner for emigration and an expert on agriculture and emigration. M. Quisling, a Norwegian who has spent a long time in Russia, acted as secretary of the Commission, of which I was the fifth member.

Some months ago we went to Armenia and spent there a prolonged period examining the whole question. We went there, all of us — myself no less than the experts who accompanied me — full of doubt as to whether anything practical could be carried through. We came away unanimously convinced of the fact that there was an opening for a new economic venture of great importance, for a work of irrigation and drainage which would open up means of absorbing not only some of the many refugees already present on the soil of Armenia but also a great number of those who are still wandering over the face of the earth.

We examined on the spot, and in great detail, a number of different schemes proposed to us by the Armenian Government and by other persons acquainted with the country, and our detailed conclusions on these various schemes will be found in the report which I have made to the Assembly. We have chosen from them those which seemed to us to be the easiest to carry through for the expenditure of a small sum of money. We have chosen, as a modest beginning, two works of irrigation and drainage, in part, which will open up for settlement an area amounting to 33,000 desyatins, or practically 34,000 hectares, or very nearly 90,000 acres. We calculate that on this land there can be settled, and settled within a period of two or three years, not less than 25,000 or 30,000 people, and ultimately it may be many more. Of those 30,000 people, the Armenian Government has agreed that at least 15,000 shall be refugees from Europe.

The number of 15,000 may seem trivial compared with the vast number of Armenians who are still poverty-stricken or living with great difficulty in different places, but, after careful investigations made in Greece and in Constantinople and in other places, I came to the conclusion that if we could send 15,000 refugees to Armenia we should be able to solve the most urgent problems of Armenian

suffering and destitution which still confront us in Europe. Much would still remain to be done, but I for one am firmly convinced that, if this beginning is successfully carried through, much more can be done. However this may be, the settlement of 15,000 refugees would, in itself, solve the problems which now most urgently demand solution.

I will not trouble the Assembly with the details of the proposal. My Commission has suggested in its report that money should be provided by means of which irrigation and drainage works could be carried out for the watering and, in parts, draining of land which is at present unfit for cultivation.

My Commission proposes that in this work, which it believes would take from one to two years, a great number of the refugees in Europe would find employment. When the work has been done, the refugees could be given houses, ploughs, oxen and seed; within a few months, or at most a year or two, they would become self-supporting, and more than that they would be able to contribute what is needed for the repayment of the loan within a reasonable time.

My technical experts had no hesitation whatever in making this prediction. They were able to observe the successful results of other similar irrigation works in Armenia which have been carried through in the last few years. They were able to observe that the irrigation of this land gives an agricultural return which is absolutely certain, because it makes the cultivator practically independent of the weather. They were able to observe that, among the crops which could be successfully raised, cotton stood pre-eminent, that cotton of very good quality, now in immense demand for all the markets of the world, could be produced in quantities per acre that promises a certain and high return. They had, therefore, no hesitation in saying that any loan raised for the carrying out of this scheme could be financed from the revenues of the land thus brought into cultivation, that a considerable rate of interest could be paid, and that, in a short period of years — ten or fifteen years at the most — the capital debt could be paid off.

The Commission is able, therefore, to present the Assembly with a scheme which, in the opinion of highly qualified experts, is economically sound and financially feasible. We lay before you this definite proposal, together with the definite promise of the Armenian Government to receive and settle at least 15,000 refugees from Greece and Constantinople, and to make the arrangements which may be required for the raising of the loan. For of course, as the Assembly by now cannot have failed to perceive, the essence of this scheme is the proposal for a loan of the same kind which was raised under the auspices of the League for the refugees in Greece.

This is not the time nor is it the place to explain the details of the financial arrangements which I believe could be made for raising such a loan. I was in no position, even if I had had the competence, to enter into detailed negotiations with the Armenian Government on this subject. But this I can say, that, so far as I discussed the matter with that Government, I have every reason to believe that a scheme could be prepared which would give to European investors in the loan which we propose all the material guarantees which they require. So strongly am I convinced of this that I believe that the loan can be made and carried through on the same basis as the loan for Greece, that is to say, without the guarantee of any European Government behind it. If, however, this hope should be deceived, if it were necessary to give a guarantee by European Governments for

this loan, I should not hesitate to make a confident appeal to them to give that guarantee, and, if it should be necessary to do so, my hopes would be strengthened by the proposal made by the present Prime Minister of Great Britain barely a year ago on behalf of this very scheme which I now propose.

Writing to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, then Prime Minister of Great Britain, Mr. Baldwin, together with Mr. Asquith, made this appeal to the Government of the British Empire, and I beg my colleagues of the British Empire to weigh every word of that appeal. It is the "Proposal of a Grant for the Final Liquidation of Armenian Questions arising out of the War". It says, "What can be done? We recognise with deep regret that it is impossible now to fulfil our pledges to the Armenians; for these pledges involved political and territorial rearrangements now beyond our power to achieve. But there is open to us another method of expressing our sense of responsibility and of relieving the desperate plight of the scattered remnants of the Turkish Armenians. The most appropriate territory for their settlement would be surely in Russian Armenia. Facilities are offered by the local government. In September 1923 the Council of the League of Nations approved a scheme for the land settlement of 50,000 Armenian refugees in the little Republic of (Soviet) Armenia in the Russian Caucasus. The Armenian leaders in Europe approve this plan. The Council passed a resolution that an appeal should be made to its members to give financial support to this constructive scheme, and the Council would be prepared to give assistance through its technical organisations. This resolution was distributed to the fifty-four States Members of the League with an invitation for assistance as stated above.

It is, in our opinion, the duty of Great Britain to give substantial support to this scheme. We desire to express our view that, as some compensation for unfulfilled pledges is morally due to the Armenians, the British Government should forthwith make an important grant."

That letter is signed by H. H. Asquith and Stanley Baldwin.

I believe that with such support we should not appeal in vain if Government guarantees were required for the scheme which we propose; but again I say that I hope that when the Financial Committee comes to deal with the matter it will find that its task can be carried through without such complications.

Mr. President, I will not say more of the details of the scheme which I propose. I will wait for an opportunity before the Fifth Committee of the Assembly to clear up the doubts and misunderstandings which I suspect some delegates may entertain. I will ask the experts who went with me to give to that Committee any technical information which it may require.

I will there endeavour, with the assistance of these experts, to make plain to the Committee that the present Government of the Armenian Republic is a good Government, a Government which has brought peace and order and a measure of prosperity to a country where, three or four years ago, there was chaos and misery and famine. I will endeavour to make plain that this Government, whatever its relations with the other parts of the political union to which it belongs may be, is financially entirely independent and is in a position to make loans, to grant concessions, to carry out in full freedom both now and for the future whatever economic or financial arrangements it may desire to make. I will endeavour to convince the Committee that the Government

of the Armenian Republic is a Government which lives in peace and security, which is not threatened by military attack from without; those therefore who lend it money have not to fear a great or present risk of international war.

I will endeavour to convince the Committee that the Armenian people — which has been so badly treated, and has suffered so much, that certainly no people in modern history has experienced anything to be compared with it — that this people is highly cultivated, gifted, and exceptionally clever, that it is an industrious and hard-working people, which really, during the last three years, has done marvels in developing their country from the misery of only a few years ago, when every day cartloads of dead children and adults were brought in from the streets of their towns.

Lastly, I will endeavour to convince the Committee that the Republic of Erivan is a real Armenia, that its population is 95 per cent Armenians, that its Government and its Government departments are exclusively Armenian in personnel, and that the only official language used or tolerated is Armenian, that its technical services, agricultural and otherwise — the work of which we have seen and know to be of value — are likewise Armenian from top to bottom.

There is, in fact, in this little Republic a national home for the Armenians at last, and I ask the members of the Assembly to put to their consciences the question whether they sincerely and earnestly believe that any other national home can be hoped for. I believe that I know the answer which their consciences will give, and I appeal to the Assembly to approve this one effort to carry out all the promises which have been made in the past concerning a national home for the Armenian nation.

If this sixth Assembly could launch this scheme, I believe that, by that alone, it would live in history, for it would have made a first move to right what everyone in this Chamber believes to be a great international wrong.

Let us cast back our minds to our debates in previous Assemblies. Year by year we have made promises of a national home; year by year we have recognised the pledges of our Governments to secure justice for a maltreated and abandoned people, and year by year with sympathetic words upon our lips we have watched the slow history of a long martyrdom. Now there opens before us an opportunity to act. Now there is a scheme which we know to be economically sound, financially practicable and politically desirable. If we can but carry it out we shall alleviate the sufferings of countless refugees. We shall help to build up and strengthen the only stable Armenian Government there has been in recent history, and, above all, we shall forge another link in the fabric of peace which the League is creating throughout the world.

Let me remind you of the fact that recently a big battleship was launched in a great European country, and, according to the statements of the Ministry of Marine, the cost of that battleship was £7,000,000 sterling, and the cost of the annual upkeep is close upon half a million pounds sterling. Two years of that battleship is more than sufficient to cover the loan we are asking for. The money spent on this engine of war disappears, leaving no betterment behind it. The loan is reproductive, builds up human homes and happiness, and adds to the general prosperity of the world. The battleship is an insurance against the risks of war and at this moment it may be inevitable, but is not a great work of peace likewise an insurance against war? Are we sure that it is not a better and a cheaper insurance by such a scheme as this to

remove misunderstandings between peoples and create new bonds between them?

If we can but carry through this small beginning, it will inevitably lead to greater things. Other schemes independent and self-contained but similar in kind and leading to even greater results will be adopted. I appeal to the Assembly not to lose this chance. Too often in our day the Armenian tragedy is forgotten or passed off with some indifferent or cruel jest.

I appeal to the members of every delegation to think again what this tragedy has been. But, still more urgently, I appeal to the Governments of the three great nations of Europe for their support. England, France and Italy have played a great part in shaping the course of history and the destiny of peoples in these latter years. Indirectly they have played their part in the tragedy of the Armenian people. I beg them now to take a hand once more and to create on the ruins of the failure of the past a brighter future for a stricken nation.

I speak to the delegations of the British Empire, of France and of Italy and I say that the name of Armenia has, here and elsewhere, been often on the lips of your leaders, that the sorrows of Armenia have for long been in the hearts of your peoples, that the remnants of the Armenian nation look now to you for help, and I beseech you that they shall not look in vain.

#### The President :

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen, Dr. Nansen has submitted a draft resolution to the Assembly. This resolution will be printed and distributed to the members of the Assembly, who will be invited to give their opinion at the conclusion of the debate.

His Excellency M. Benes, Minister for Foreign Affairs for Czechoslovakia, will address the Assembly.

#### M. Benes (Czechoslovakia) :

*Translation :* Mr. President, gentlemen — M. Quiñones de León, first delegate for Spain, has submitted to the Assembly a resolution the importance of which will be realised by us all. For some it will mean the maintenance and confirmation of the great principles of our Protocol of last year; others will probably, or at any rate may possibly, regard it as meaning the end of the Protocol.

I do not wish to prolong unduly the debate on the Protocol, though this debate may one day be considered as one of the most significant records of European and even world politics since 1914. But I should be lacking in my duty to the Assembly if I did not state briefly my opinion on the subject. I do not wish to seem like a deserter during the battle.

I was the Rapporteur of the Third Committee, and I upheld the cause of the Protocol in the Assembly before the memorable vote was taken last year. You will remember the scene of enthusiasm in this hall then; you remembered it yesterday when you heard the admirable speech of my friend M. Paul-Boncour.

As former Rapporteur of the Third Committee, I had the honour of taking part in the debate, side by side with my colleagues of the Council, and I outlined my arguments in defence of the Protocol.

In the belief that I was expressing the feelings of a great number of my colleagues, especially those representing the smaller States, I laid stress, before the Council, on the need felt by those States for the evolution of a general system which will protect them all and provide the benefits of security by arbitration and disarmament.

I do not propose to repeat all these arguments

We are faced by a definite fact: the Protocol has not received the necessary number of ratifications. It will not come into force in the near future. We must therefore seek other means to obtain security for individual States and the fulfilment of the Covenant's provisions regarding disarmament. That is the position.

In his eloquent, shrewd and logical, yet persuasive and delightful, speech, M. Paul-Boncour tried to console us for this misfortune. With admirable clearness he showed us the close connection between the pacts of guarantee which are now being negotiated, and by which my country is also bound — indirectly, it is true, but still quite measurably — and the provisions of the Protocol, by demonstrating that, though our aim cannot be reached at one stroke by a general and universal instrument such as the Protocol, gradual progress towards it will nevertheless be made by the opposite route, that is, by proceeding from individual cases and limited measures to general solutions, until we reach the complete system contained in the Protocol.

I hasten to add that, as representative of Czechoslovakia. I associate myself in present circumstances with these negotiations, which, I think, represent a very great advance. I do not propose, therefore, to re-examine the two methods, which have been so clearly defined, in particular, by Mr. Austen Chamberlain, the first delegate for the British Empire.

Both methods are good in theory, and the first is not *a priori* better than the second. It all depends on the results obtained.

From this point of view, and despite what M. Paul-Boncour has said, we cannot help feeling some regret that our work of last year has not been crowned with success. In its boldness, its general structure, its magnificent universality, which gives expression to the essential and intrinsic idea of the League, the Protocol, in its broad lines, held much that is grand and beautiful. It embodied rules of international equity hitherto unknown in international politics. Its severest critics cannot deny that.

Another reason for the regret we inevitably feel lies in the new method itself which is to replace the old.

I am all in favour of a practical policy, but I foresee that it will be long before the slow and gradual evolution of regional agreements brings us final success. There is strong reason to suppose that many a year will pass before we possess a Protocol, or anything resembling it, which will give security to the whole world.

Finally, we come to the last and most serious objection. M. Quiñones de León very rightly states in his resolution — and I fully agree — that the Disarmament Conference can be called as soon as satisfactory conditions have been achieved from the point of view of general security. But do you not think that it will inevitably be found to be very difficult in the near future to apply the disarmament clauses of Article 8 of the Covenant? And do you not think that, by separating thus the different spheres and regions one from the other, we shall find next year, or later, when we are asked to take the first step towards disarmament, that there will always be a large number of important States which will say that they are not sure of security; and they will probably be right, judged by the standards laid down and adopted here, unless we can follow the example of the Western Pact now being negotiated, by concluding similar agreements, and that within a very short space of time. For the new circumstances are in some respects, even perhaps

inherently, antagonistic to our work in the field of security and disarmament.

Doubtless there are differences between the Anglo-Saxon and the Latin mentalities. There are also differences in the general conditions obtaining in different countries. But in my opinion it is by no means a matter of logic, or at any rate not of logic alone. The League is by its nature, by its structure as laid down in the Covenant, and in its very essence, a universal institution. As such, it tends always and inevitably to work on general lines and by means of general measures. Herein lies its strength. Accordingly, we feel the need of including the other States which are not yet Members; they must be brought within the fold. But herein also lies, in certain cases, its weakness. When it encounters practical impossibilities it is obliged, despite its universal character, to compromise and to admit partial solutions entirely contrary to its true spirit. It must compromise, despite its duty to legislate for the whole of mankind. It must thus be content with measures which do not make provision for the majority of its Members.

These are the moments when the adversaries of the League fasten upon its every act, and strive to prove its bankruptcy. Its friends and champions tremble lest it should end by vacillating between half-measures on the one hand and, on the other, vast, wide and ambitious schemes far beyond its powers. Such a situation would cause it to fail at the critical moment, and would result in its utter collapse. In this dilemma its friends and champions wonder whether it would not now be opportune to re-examine the constitution of the League so as to make provision within it for the differences to which we have alluded, by carrying out a kind of decentralisation on the lines of the great federalist States. I merely raise this point. I do not propose to follow it up, because it is an extremely important political question which cannot be answered off-hand.

I will endeavour to make my argument clear. Sooner or later we shall be obliged either to amend the Covenant along the lines I have indicated or else to bring forward and adopt general measures in conformity with the spirit of the present Covenant.

I am prepared to accept whichever of these two methods practical necessities render desirable, but I tremble for the League if it has to carry on its difficult task in face of the incongruities which at present are, as it were, inherent in its constitution.

In my opinion it is neither the Latin nor the Anglo-Saxon mentality which is at the root of our difficulty; it is the nature of the League itself, its universality, which hinders our work and yet is the secret of our strength. Until the League becomes entirely universal, we shall always be fighting for or against general measures, for or against universal measures. That is one of my practical arguments on behalf of the Protocol. That is why I am convinced that the Protocol, either in its present or in a new form, is not dead, and will not die. Next year, indeed, when we come once more to discuss disarmament, there will still be States which will say at once that no provision has been made for their security. The question of general measures may then come up again, for disarmament — as you yourselves have often said — can only succeed if it is general. If you turn to any other question connected with the Protocol — arbitration, the aggressor, chemical or scientific warfare, control of disarmament, economic sanctions — in every case you will come back to the consideration of general measures, because the universality of the League will not allow of

partial measures, which are bound to fail at the critical moment and may in the long run sully our high ideal.

These, then, are my reasons for confidence in the future, and this is why, in spite of all, I have a profound confidence in the League of Nations.

At a meeting yesterday I was greatly moved at the eloquent words of Viscount Cecil on the vitality of the League, on the salient fact that its existence, work and activity are present before us like the rock against which, one by one, all the struggles, all the relics of the past are being shattered. I will add that, in proportion as Europe is becoming stabilised, the League is also becoming stabilised. It gains new vitality and new features, it strengthens our mutual ties, and imposes upon us new obligations and, above all, moral obligations. We all of us feel that we are now more truly Members of the League than we were some time ago, and our actions are, I think you will admit, less unfettered than they were at the beginning.

As long, therefore, as the League exists in its present form, we are bound, I think, for the reasons I have stated, to strive steadfastly to promote general measures.

We do not know in what circumstances we shall meet again next year, but I am convinced that when disarmament and security come to be discussed I shall once again mount this platform in defence of general measures, for the self-same reasons as those I have already advanced; and I believe, too, that we shall not pass lightly over this subject.

These, I repeat, are the reasons why I do not believe that the Protocol is dead. Though it may not be carried out and applied to present-day politics, I feel sure it will give more signs of life than we suspect, in public opinion, at international public meetings, in the private studies of responsible statesmen, and, I venture to say, in the hearts of all here present. M. Quiñones de León's resolution points to this, for we all realise the great force of the idea, which, once launched, will pursue its irresistible course throughout the whole world.

I have another reason for believing in the vitality of this general plan. M. Quiñones de León's resolution is extremely characteristic. It contains all the ideas and principles of the Protocol: a war of aggression is a crime; treaties must only be concluded in conformity with the Protocol; a general system is regarded as a future possibility; the connection of the three principles: "Arbitration, security, disarmament", is accepted and the convening of a Conference on disarmament is requested.

If we vote for this resolution — and I shall be the first to do so — we shall show that we are by no means afraid to accept the essential ideas of the Protocol. We merely defer the welding of its principles into a system of practical politics. It seems to me that this in itself is an important sign of confidence in the future, because if we ask ourselves why we are rather shy of a close and rigid system, the answer will be that we cannot at present foresee the exact consequences which such a system will entail.

Just think how often, during the six years we have worked together here, we have had to change our minds.

I remember that, two years ago, in the Third Committee, the idea of regional agreements was argued and discussed with our honourable colleague, Lord Robert Cecil. Last year, again, we had a difficult fight to secure the adoption of this idea by our colleague, Mr. Henderson. You will also remember that two years ago, when one of our colleagues — M. Lange, I believe — suggested that the principle of arbitration should be embodied

in the Treaty of Mutual Assistance, nearly all of us thought this proposal novel and impracticable. Yet you see how we regard the idea of arbitration to-day.

This is not due to the fact that we have suddenly changed our minds; it is because during the last three or four years the world has made immense progress. It is not only due to the fact that certain countries have changed their Governments, and that the ideas of the new men who have come into power are radically opposed to the tenets of their predecessors. I see among us some who, during the struggle about the Protocol a year ago, were far from convinced — nay, they even opposed the Protocol. Yet to-day they rise in its defence! It is not because they have changed their minds. It is simply because, through the maze of the international situation, they could not at once see its ultimate consequences. Yesterday they saw it from one angle; to-day they see it from another. They foresaw how it would operate in the then existing political conditions, but these have since been profoundly changed, and changed not by the will of man. That is another and a further reason which convinces me that the League will eventually adopt some such general measures in a form similar to the Protocol. Indeed, general measures, I think, have always possessed this characteristic; actuated by circumstances which change and fluctuate and are beyond human control, they benefit now one and now another section of the community. And therein, in my opinion, lies their fundamental justness.

I am inclined to think that ere long most of those who hesitate to-day will, in the light of new world-events, regard the Protocol from our standpoint and not until then will all its vital and universally human elements be understood.

I therefore cling to the ideas which I championed at last year's Assembly, though I fully recognise, as I did last year, that certain of the articles of the Protocol must be modified to suit circumstances. The Government of Czechoslovakia has signed the Protocol and ratified it. It is following the policy of the Protocol and will continue to do so. It realises the necessity of negotiating a limited system of guarantees, such as is, at present, outlined in the Pact of Guarantee. It associated itself with the Pact from the outset, and, when the German Government initiated negotiations, the Czechoslovak Government took part in them in so far as it was concerned therein. This is the attitude it will maintain, and it will always have in view the need for a fuller realisation of the principles we adopted here last year.

My Government considers the present negotiations as a step forward. They may, if they succeed, render considerable service to peace and to the task of the League.

I have constantly defended regional pacts in this Assembly, and will be the last to deny the great and immediate benefits of arrangements of this nature. I shall not lose heart if we can only capture the fortress inch by inch. It is rare indeed for a great and splendid enterprise to be crowned with immediate success. But, for reasons which I have already explained, I believe that the battle for the general provisions of the Protocol will continue. It is for these reasons that I have every hope of the future.

We often give undue rein to imagination. We dream too long of unattainable ideals; but, as M. Painlevé said in his opening speech, it is much more serious to err on the side of over-scepticism, over-heredulity, baseless suspicion.

The League of Nations would perish if it were directed and administered by visionaries having no sense of the reality of things. Worse still, it

would lead but a struggling existence if it were directed and administered by sceptics and unbelievers. We all agree that these two dangerous extremes must be avoided.

Czechoslovakia, like you all, looks to the future with every hope and confidence. She is certain that neither her confidence nor yours will be betrayed and it is in this spirit that I support and shall vote for M. Quiñones de León's resolution.

#### The President :

*Translation* : Baron Lehmann, delegate for Liberia, will now address the Assembly.

#### Baron Lehmann (Liberia) :

*Translation* : Liberia, a member of the League from the beginning, has always been legitimately proud of being able to collaborate, on terms of equality, in the work for peace, progress and justice which is being done at Geneva, thanks to the efforts made by the Council and the Secretariat of the League.

I wish, as briefly as possible, to draw the attention of the Assembly to one special matter.

On July 30th last I addressed a note to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, in which, acting under instructions from my Government, I drew the attention of the Members of the League, and of the States non-Members of the League, to the fact that the Republic of Liberia, in the full exercise of its sovereign rights, undertakes, in so far as concerns its own territory, to put into force all regulations which may be necessary to comply with the provisions of Articles 12 to 18 inclusive of the Convention of June 17th of this year, relating to the exportation, importation and transportation of arms, ammunition and war materials.

Although Liberia adheres to this Convention, it is my duty to refer again to the deep impression made upon my Government by the decision taken by the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War in June last, to the effect that the territory of the Republic of Liberia should be included among the special zones.

This Conference, by a vote in which there were 36 abstentions out of the 42 delegations represented, decided that Liberia, a sovereign and independent State, a Member of the League of Nations since its foundation, a co-signatory to the Treaty of Versailles, should be placed in the category of countries subject to a protectorate or a mandate, and it is only through the compromise suggested at the session of June 11th, by the delegate for the United States of America, that the Republic was able to adhere to this Convention.

The legal international status of the Republic of Liberia is perfectly clear, and cannot be different from that of other sovereign States Members of the League. No consideration either political or legal could diminish the full value of its sovereign rights or cause them to be disregarded. In these circumstances, the Conference would, under common law, have been compelled to accord to this independent country, which has fulfilled all the essential conditions required of Members of the League of Nations, all the rights appertaining to it as an international entity.

The general legal principles involved were put forward by the delegate of Nicaragua, and later by M. Urrutia, the Colombian delegate; the arguments put forward by the delegate for Colombia were so clear and so just that they have never been seriously questioned. During the course of the same session, the Geographical Committee referred to the Conference of Brussels, as if certain

stipulations in the Decree of July 2nd, 1890, were applicable to the case of Liberia.

Article (1) of this international document, which aims at the abolition of the slave trade, defines the right and the duty of the protecting State as well as those of the occupying State, in order to assure to any African territory placed under the protectorate of civilised nations a progressive, administrative and legal organisation, etc. Therefore, it is plain that no connection can be established between the articles of this Convention and the case we are considering.

In the same way, the Treaties of the Berlin Conference of 1885 and the Convention of St. Germain of September 10th, 1919, are inapplicable to a sovereign and independent State, for Liberia has been placed neither under what may be called an international protectorate nor under a protectorate under international law, nor under a colonial protectorate, in the sense of the Treaties mentioned above.

After carefully studying the record of the twenty-third and the twenty-fourth meetings of the Conference, we have arrived at the following definite conclusions :

No principle of international law, no treaty or convention, no rule or custom recognised by international law can be cited to justify the prohibition imposed on the importation of arms, ammunition and implements of war into Liberia. I may also add that the neighbouring countries have never reported any smuggling of arms and ammunition from Liberia into their respective territories. There is, therefore, no justification for the request on the part of the Geographical Committee that the territory of Liberia should be included in the special zones.

Further, the reasons for imposing a convention such as the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War on the Republic of Liberia are as valid for that country as for any other European Power possessing territory in West Africa. Long before the idea of this Convention arose, Liberia possessed municipal legislation — which is still in force — regulating and restricting the importation and sale of arms and ammunition. Under this legislation my Government exercised its supervision over the trade in arms and ammunition in as effective a manner as any other Government in West Africa, and no one can import arms, ammunition, etc., into Liberia without having obtained (1) an import licence; (2) a licence issued by the War Department authorising the Customs authorities to allow the import of the arms and ammunition in question.

Persons residing in Liberia and wishing to purchase arms and ammunition are obliged to obtain (1) a purchase licence from the War Department; (2) an arms registration certificate, in accordance with Article 13 of the Firearms Traffic Act, also issued by the War Department.

In order to show how strict is the supervision of the trade in arms and ammunition, it is sufficient to add that the validity of the registration certificates for arms and ammunition expires on October 31st each year. On this date, the certificates must be renewed by the interested parties, either at the office of the War Department or at the offices of the Commissioners in the interior. Moreover, in order to import arms and ammunition into the interior, a special licence is required stating the name and occupation of the interested party and the name of the province, town or village into which the arms and ammunition are imported.

In the same manner as in the neighbouring colonies and protectorates, the Government of Liberia must maintain order in the country and

protect foreign subjects residing in its territory. The Government of Liberia adhered to the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War only from a feeling of international solidarity and from a wish to co-operate in a work which it regarded as useful and expedient, and this attitude must not be permitted to have the slightest effect on the sovereign independence of the Republic, as compared with that of the other States, whether Members or not of the League of Nations.

The legal equality of all countries is a principle underlying the very constitution of the League of Nations, and any infringement of this principle is prejudicial to the League and gives rise to misapprehensions calculated to destroy confidence in the work of peace and justice, which it is the League's task to develop and strengthen.

#### The President :

*Translation* : Dr. Gustavo Guerrero, delegate for Salvador, will address the Assembly.

#### Dr. Guerrero (Salvador) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It is only right and proper that I should pay tribute here to the valuable work done by the League, the Council and the Secretariat.

Those who have preceded me on this platform have already paid this tribute, but they have passed over in silence the most conspicuous act of the present year, the act which by itself constitutes one of the greatest pages in the opening history of the League.

I refer to the work done at the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War.

Pursuing its mission of peace and desirous of marking a first stage in the campaign for the limitation of armaments, the League prepared, by the method of which it alone possesses the secret, the material to serve as a basis for the discussions of the Conference for the supervision of the trade in arms.

Forty-four States answered the Council's invitation, including Germany, the United States and Turkey, which are not yet Members of the League.

Responding readily to the spirit of conciliation and solidarity which invariably governs the proceedings of the League, the representatives of these States vied in generous rivalry with the other States in their endeavour to find formulas which should smooth away the inevitable difficulties occasioned by the conflicting interests of different States.

After long and interesting discussions, we succeeded in setting up machinery which it would perhaps have been impossible to construct without the valuable assistance of the League and without that atmosphere which, from its very foundation, the League has always been able to create. This machinery consists in the establishment of restrictions designed to prevent the illicit trade in arms, thus minimising the use of implements of war.

Other results of the greatest importance were also obtained, chief among them being the prohibition of chemical and bacteriological warfare.

I now come to the real question which explains my presence on this platform.

The report submitted to the Assembly by the Council gives an account of the work done by the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms, Ammunition and in Implements of War.



It directs your attention to the declaration inserted in the Final Act and signed by almost all the States represented at that Conference. This declaration reads as follows :

"That the Convention of to-day's date must be considered as an important step towards a general system of international agreements regarding arms and ammunition and implements of war, and that it is desirable that the international aspect of the manufacture of such arms, ammunition and implements of war should receive early consideration by the different Governments."

The results of this Conference do not, strictly speaking, constitute an important stage of this work, they simply mark the opening of a stage which is still little more than begun. It is for the Assembly to trace the path along which the States will travel to attain their goal.

The declaration to which I refer expresses the view of the forty-four States represented at the Conference as to the urgent need of completing the work begun by the League with such wisdom and impartiality in preparation for the limitation of armaments, which is the earnest desire of all.

I had the honour to take a considerable share in the work of the Conference, and I can assure you that this declaration was no isolated expression of the conviction of these forty-four States as to the necessity of co-ordinating, by means of international agreements, the two questions of the supervision of the trade in arms and the supervision of the manufacture of arms.

Throughout those memorable discussions, in which the loftiest sentiments were expressed and shared by the representatives of every continent, one single thought dominated every mind—the conviction that the work begun could only be completed by a fresh Conference regulating the private manufacture of arms.

Imagine, then, the enthusiasm which hailed the declaration of the United States delegate when he announced that his country was prepared to take this question in hand without delay.

Other manifestations of the same nature marked the proceedings. We even expressed our surprise that the Conference on the Trade in Arms should not have been preceded by a conference on the private manufacture of arms, a procedure which would assuredly have been much more logical.

What was the League's real object in preparing and convening the Conference on the international trade in arms? Why did it desire to draw up regulations on armaments and to obtain accurate statistics of the trade in arms? Was it not in order to bring about, in the near future, the reduction and limitation of arms and to remove the most serious obstacle to universal peace and the economic recovery of the world?

In order, however, to attain the result at which the League and all countries are aiming, it is not enough to impose certain restrictions on countries which import arms; it is absolutely essential that these restrictions should also apply to States which manufacture arms.

Export statistics alone would be useless for the League's purpose. If they are to be really effective and help to prepare a system of universal security based on the application of lawful right, it is essential that the statistics to which we refer should be supplemented by further information, which can only be obtained by the complete supervision of the manufacture of war material.

In order to indicate what still remained to be done, the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms signed the Final

Act containing the declaration to which the Council of the League referred again in its report. Moreover, disarmament appears on the agenda of the Assembly under two distinct heads :

1. Under Item No. 13 : "Arbitration, Security and Reduction of Armaments";
2. In Chapter 3 of the Report and Chapter 4 of the Supplementary Report to the Assembly on the Work of the Council.

As regards the first item, no decision should be taken by the Assembly until discussion has revealed the general opinion on the subject.

This does not apply to the other questions in the Council's two reports, most of which can be examined at once by the Third Committee.

I have the honour, therefore, to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly refers to the Third Committee the examination of the following questions which appear in Chapter 3 of the Report and Chapter 4 of the Supplementary Report to the Assembly on the Work of the Council, on the work of the Secretariat and on the measures taken to execute the decisions of the Assembly :

- "Statistical enquiry on the trade in arms, munitions and implements of war ;
- "Private manufacture of arms, munitions and implements of war."

#### The President :

*Translation* : The Assembly has before it a new draft resolution, submitted by M. Guerrero, first delegate for Salvador. This resolution will be printed and distributed without delay.

The Assembly will vote on the draft resolution at the close of the present discussion.

M. Scialoja, first delegate for Italy, will address the Assembly.

#### M. Scialoja (Italy) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — After the numerous speeches in which such eminent representatives have stated their personal views and the views of their Governments, I cannot hope to say anything new or unexpected. The shortness of my speech must be my apology for speaking at all to-day. Italy could not be silent in this important discussion. The world is moving, and every country must publicly take its place in the march of events.

Nearly all the speakers who preceded me dealt with the fate of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, which was approved by the fifth Assembly amidst general enthusiasm, but which has not been ratified by many States or even by those primarily responsible for it.

Have we awakened from a glorious dream only to find ourselves in the workaday world? And is that world as bad as some have thought? If our dream has borne us to an ideal world, has enabled us to give shape to great moral and juridical aspirations — if it has been the vision of a future approaching more nearly to what is truly human and divine — let us not regret that we have dreamed. The ideal is often but the image of future reality, but we must not forget that present reality is the outcome of historical necessity, and that history is often a better taskmaster than any mere theory, or even — and I speak as a jurist — than the juridical conception of any single epoch.

In the observations which I had the honour to submit last year to the First Committee of the Assembly, I pointed out several defects in the Protocol, both in the part concerning arbitration — where the fault lies perhaps in the undue

importance attached to purely juridical perfection — and in the part relating to penalties, which proved a most serious difficulty.

The chief obstacle to the acceptance of the Protocol, however, was that it was premature, and was founded on a rather one-sided idea of the preservation of peace.

Men's loathing of war and its attendant horrors naturally leads them to think that it must be prevented at all costs, but an impartial examination of history shows that, although in a certain number of cases war has broken out without legitimate reason as the result of unbridled ambition and the instinct for violence, yet in other and no less important cases nations have gone to war for deep-seated reasons of social necessity.

War, it has been said, is an international crime; let us not forget that it is also a disease. Abolition is not everything; we must also think of cure and prevention. Peace is a sacred institution, but the life of nations and of civilisation in general is no less sacred. The League can never become the guardian of world peace unless it succeeds, by inculcating a spirit of international brotherhood, in eliminating the root causes of war. Then, and until then, will law — *jus* — govern not merely the outward form but the substance of international relations. The difficulty of the task must not prevent us from facing it, from attacking it and finding a solution. This, I think, is why conventional arbitration, even to-day, stands more chance of success than the purely juridical general settlement of international disputes. Arbitration will serve to supplement and perfect law, which has not yet reached a sufficiently advanced stage of evolution to be binding in every dispute of a moral, demographical or economic nature.

The delegate for the British Empire, speaking with all the weight of his authority, explained his opposition to the fifth Assembly's findings by the essential difference between the British mentality, which prefers to proceed from the particular to the general, and the Latin mind, which prefers general conceptions and logical results.

I do not know if his predecessor would have spoken in the same strain, or if this antithesis would have been unreservedly accepted by those intellectuals, astronomers, naturalists and leading physicists and chemists who are an honour to England and to the human race and have contributed to science so many great truths and theories. Nor does it seem to me that the learned authors of Roman law have followed a path different from that which leads us from the particular to the general. We Latins, it is true, have inherited from our ancestors a system of private law which had reached a high degree of perfection through the slow and laborious work of some ten centuries, and we frequently apply the general principles thus handed down to us; nevertheless, we are fully alive to the danger of regarding historical principles as eternal and unchallengeable truths.

We can advance, then, side by side, without fear of clashing. We will beware of indulging in dreams too frail to stand the stern test of experience, but we will not reject the ideal which should light us on our way.

By her resort to arbitration and international justice, Italy has already travelled far along

this glorious path. The last Assembly welcomed the Treaty concluded between Italy and Switzerland, which, in its comprehensiveness, might serve as a model.

Penalties will replace judgments, but the causes of disputes must still be ascertained. We must not imagine that history can, as it were, be cut-and-dried.

In the meantime let us endeavour to solve the problems submitted to us.

It is customary, at our annual Assemblies, to pause in the general discussion and show the world at large why the League of Nations is so necessary. I do not know if this is a good custom; it might be thought that we had doubts on the point. What we can show by deeds rather than by words is that the League really knows what is its duty. I personally am convinced that the League is before all a powerful organ created by the human conscience, and that, for that reason above all others, its creation confers a benefit upon civilisation as a whole. It has often been the means, through its wisdom and moral power, of preventing grave conflicts; it has enabled every country to do its share towards solving all kinds of questions of importance to all. Year by year we place on record fresh proofs of its beneficent work. We have all welcomed the success of our efforts to promote the economic and financial recovery of Hungary and Austria. I am happy to state that Italy, once their enemy, has already given, and will continue to give, this work her most zealous support.

We have before us many other problems. Even nations which have not yet joined the League have asked it to solve difficulties which would probably be unsurmountable without its help. To all those who look to us with doubting eyes we can surely reply: Behold our good works! It is for this that we live. Let us persevere!

## 26. — ELECTION OF THE SIX NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.

The President: *Translation*: The Chinese delegation has submitted the following resolution to the President of the Assembly:

"The Assembly reiterates the following recommendation adopted unanimously by the Assemblies of 1922, 1923 and 1924:

"It is desirable that the Assembly, in electing the six non-permanent Members of the Council, should make its choice with due consideration for the main geographical divisions of the world, the great ethnical groups, the different religious divisions, the various types of civilisation and the chief sources of wealth."

This draft resolution, like those already submitted, will be printed without delay and distributed to the members of the Assembly.

At the close of the present discussion the Assembly will vote on the action to be taken on this draft resolution.

*The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

## TENTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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28. YEAR-BOOK OF GENERAL AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE ARMAMENTS OF THE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES :

Amendment to the draft resolution proposed by the delegation of Salvador on September 12th, 1925.

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Draft resolution proposed by the Chinese delegation.

President : MR. DANDURAND.

27. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

#### The President :

*Translation* : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

I call upon M. J. A. Buero, delegate of Uruguay to address the Assembly.

M. J. A. Buero (Uruguay) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Uruguay has followed with deep interest all the efforts which have been made to obtain the settlement of international disputes by arbitration. Obligatory and unlimited arbitration is the very basis of her international policy. This principle even forms part of the Uruguayan constitution, which makes formal provision for such procedure.

We could give a long list of treaties, based on this principle, which we have concluded with the

great European Powers and with our sister Republics in Latin America.

Hence we most readily concur in the excellent suggestions made by M. Motta, the distinguished delegate of Switzerland, and the draft resolution submitted by M. Unden, delegate of Sweden, to the effect that it would be desirable to examine the provisions concerning the principle of compulsory arbitration contained in the Protocol recommended by the fifth Assembly.

From the Uruguayan point of view, compulsory arbitration is the very heart and essence of the Geneva Protocol. The problems of armaments and security are only of indirect concern to most Latin-American States, but arbitration has formed the subject of important discussions in Pan-American conferences, particularly in the fifth held at Santiago, at which Uruguay declared that she unreservedly supported compulsory arbitration.

In this connection I may remind you that the countries of Latin America are mutually bound by treaties of arbitration which are absolutely in keeping with the principles of the Geneva Protocol. Consequently we are entitled to hope that the systematic increase of regional arbitration treaties may enable us to reach the goal which we sought to attain through the general Protocol.

In this sense we may justifiably say that the international policy of Latin-American countries may be regarded as a continental application of the principles of the Geneva Protocol, or, in other words, the principles of the Covenant of the League, which Uruguay signed in 1919 as an original Member of the League.

But treaties of arbitration, however perfect and however numerous, will not of themselves suffice to complete the juridical organisation of international life. No State can exist otherwise than on a juridical basis, and it is difficult to conceive an international organisation without international justice. In this connection, no one will venture to deny the ever-increasing importance of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

This Court has already given striking proof of its capacities, and all are agreed that it constitutes one of the most important constructive legal efforts ever made. Its decisions, which have been numerous, and are all inspired by the highest principles of international law, display a wide understanding of the true interests of the international community, and have conferred upon the Court a universal authority which cannot be too highly commended. A Court universally respected, international public opinion sufficiently enlightened by acquaintance with international discussions and disputes, international law codified as far as possible with due regard for the legal particularities of nations, should, we think, provide the basic elements for an international organisation in which we may place unlimited hopes for the future of mankind.

Meanwhile we must persevere in our endeavours to obtain the adhesion of a large number of States to the Permanent Court of International Justice and the clause regarding compulsory jurisdiction. May I venture to remind you that Uruguay has already given her adhesion? At the present time she is, indeed, the only State of Latin America which has approved the Statute of the Court and the optional clause in the widest form adopted by the Members of the League.

We are, however, aware that the Statute of the Court, which has now been in existence for several years, can be so adapted as to render it more in keeping with the real international situation. It is therefore very desirable to assist in making universal a Court which is destined to represent the legal conscience of mankind. I may state that in parliamentary and scientific circles, in which the Court enjoys high esteem, amendments and adaptations have been suggested with a view to facilitating new adhesions. The Uruguayan delegation therefore has the honour to submit to the sixth Assembly the following draft resolution:

"The Assembly requests the Council to undertake a detailed examination of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, taking into account the work and experience of the Court and the views expressed in Parliaments and scientific and other circles, with a view to the jurisdiction of the Court being more widely adopted."

In conclusion, I should like to express our entire confidence in the work and future of the League.

I was personally present at its birth six years ago. I heard the dire forebodings which were uttered when it came into being. But the facts are there — the work has begun. I consider that success is certain if we are but firmly resolved to strive towards the goal.

You are aware that the States of Latin America owe a sacred debt to Europe. Europe gave them its civilisation, its culture, its political, social and even its artistic institutions. But we can repay our debt, loyally, nobly and in full, by helping Europe in this international work of co-operation, which has one supreme object in view — the final establishment of human peace, security and happiness in all the dignity of peaceful work.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Buero, delegate for Uruguay, has submitted a new draft resolution.

This resolution will be printed and distributed as soon as possible to the members of the Assembly.

The Assembly will be invited to give its opinion on this resolution at the close of the discussion on the report on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

Count Apponyi, first delegate for Hungary, will address the Assembly.

**Count Apponyi (Hungary) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — If I venture, at so late a stage, to take part in this discussion, on the most serious problems which have ever been submitted to the League, it is because I feel that those who are on the other side of the line — since there is a line — should be heard, and because I consider that they are not only entitled, but in fact bound, to endeavour to throw light upon the situation as a whole. This can only be done if all points of view are expressed.

I need scarcely say that the few observations I have to offer mainly concern the problem which is not only the burning question of the day, but an epitome of the whole task of the League. I refer to the Protocol, unanimously adopted by the Assembly last year and now brought once more into prominence by subsequent events.

But before coming to my main point, I venture to offer a few general remarks upon two other subjects, one of which is a bright spot on the horizon — at any rate, from our point of view — whilst the other constitutes one of the great difficulties with which we have to contend, one of the grave threats to the friendship and general unity of the nations and one of the great obstacles to that moral disarmament of which the British delegate spoke so eloquently; I refer to the question of minorities.

The first matter, with which I will deal briefly, as one of my colleagues more competent than myself will perhaps deal with the question at greater length, is the financial reconstruction of Hungary.

You know that important results have been obtained through the able collaboration of the Financial Committee and the Council and the sympathy displayed by the whole Assembly. The extraordinary success achieved may be summed up by stating that instead of a deficit of 100 million gold crowns, for which provision had been made in the Financial Committee's scheme, we have a surplus of 60 million gold crowns.

I must add, however, that this success is not wholly due to the collaboration of the able and distinguished men who have helped us with their advice — including above all that eminent American statesman, Mr. Smith, the League's Commissioner-General, who, from legal controller, has become also a friend and adviser; this success is also due — if the representative of Hungary may be permitted to say so — to the collaboration of the Hungarian people themselves.

The good-will, devotion and spirit of sacrifice with which the Hungarian taxpayer has submitted to the relatively heavy burdens necessarily imposed upon him is a fact which, I think, adds to the glory of my people, because it shows, better than any words, our ardent patriotism and our resolute will. Just as after the war a monument in memory of an unknown warrior is raised beside the monuments erected to perpetuate the glory of victorious generals, so in this work of the financial reconstruction of Hungary the unknown taxpayer deserves to have a monument dedicated to him, or at least he deserves a few words to commemorate his efforts.

Let us now review, as briefly as possible, the question of minorities. I will say, in the first place, that this year, as last year, this is still a burning question. In the few words I said on this subject at the last Assembly, I did not mention any particular case, or make any specific accusation. This year my procedure will be the same. Indeed,

to act otherwise would be quite useless, as it would merely envenom an atmosphere which it is our duty to keep as pure as possible, and free from any spirit of antagonism or criticism.

If, in the matter of minorities, the work of the League and the Council has not yet produced the results for which we had hoped, if it has not yet succeeded in fully reassuring the 40 million citizens who compose these minorities, it is not due to lack of good-will or capacity on the part of eminent members of the Council. I think it is due rather to defects in procedure, and, since the Council has been kind enough to submit to us a report setting out and enumerating all the changes in procedure which have been made since it first considered the question, I think we are well within our rights in offering a few observations on this subject.

To be brief, it appears to me that the Council's procedure needs to be amended on three points. It is not I who have invented these points; the International Federation of League of Nations Societies has defined them in a resolution which was unanimously adopted by representatives of public opinion in almost all the countries of Europe.

The first amendment, the first usage, the new provision which I should like to see introduced into the Council's regulations with regard to minorities would be this: When petitions emanate from certain sources, from supreme ecclesiastical organisations or the cultural and economic institutions of the different countries, they could and should be considered as documents to be laid before the Council without further examination. There is no need to explain in detail the reasons for this suggestion. It seems to me that simply to reject such petitions, without further examination, would be regarded by the minorities in question as a kind of insult, and would disturb—even seriously disturb—their sense of security and might shake their belief that their cause was receiving serious consideration, a matter as relevant and almost as important as the justice of the decisions themselves.

The second recommendation which I venture to make is this — that at all stages of the procedure representatives of petitioners should have the right to be heard and should be allowed to state their case and reply to objections, as in an ordinary lawsuit.

You may perhaps reply that the Council is always free to hear these representatives whenever it thinks fit, and I am sure the Council makes use of this right whenever such a course appears necessary. In such a case, however, the Council merely exercises discretionary powers, and the use of discretionary powers only inspires confidence amongst the limited number of those who know the persons to whom the discretionary power has been granted. The great mass of the people concerned can only have confidence when there is a fixed legal rule determining and defining their rights.

The third observation I should like to make is this: Whenever a point of law is raised at the request of one of the parties, reference to the Permanent Court of International Justice for an advisory opinion should be obligatory. This does not imply lack of confidence. I am bound to reiterate this point, because last year a similar expression of opinion offended certain susceptibilities. I am not proposing a vote of no confidence. I am not criticising the distinguished members of the Council. I am merely enunciating a principle which is recognised by the whole world. The settlement of points of law is work not for political assemblies, but for courts of law. It is work for the Courts specially set up to decide litigious questions.

I should like to offer one further observation of a general nature.

I have said that there can be no question of a vote of no confidence. Similarly, to press the question of the fate of minorities does not imply any hostile feeling towards those countries which have large minorities.

On the contrary, I think it is as much to their interest—from the point of view of national consolidation—as it is to the interest of peace and tranquillity in general that minorities should not only enjoy all the rights which treaties accord them, but should also be assured that in case of dispute these questions will be judged from a legal and not a political angle. In these matters, the psychological aspect of the question is as important as the decision itself.

I now come to the most serious and the most important subject under discussion—the Protocol.

Most of us shared last year in that great movement of enthusiasm which led to the unanimous adoption by the Assembly of the Protocol. I personally played my humble part in preparing it, throughout its various stages, since I had the honour to be appointed a member of the Legal Sub-Committee, and I count those three laborious weeks, during which I had the privilege of working with the most eminent personalities of the legal world and the highest authorities in international law, amongst the most interesting and happiest memories of my long political life.

We all know the change which has occurred in the situation. I gave my adhesion to the Protocol, but only in a personal capacity, as I had not been empowered by my Government to speak in its name. Nevertheless, I said that I regarded my personal adhesion as a moral engagement to do all I could to bring about the acceptance of the Protocol by the Government and Parliament of my country.

I have devoted myself to this task, and the Hungarian Government was engaged in examining the Protocol when the change in the British Government, and the attitude of the present British Government, modified the whole situation.

Before the change the Protocol represented the unanimous will of the Great Powers, or at least of their representatives in this Assembly. After the change no such unanimity existed. In these circumstances my Government held—and I think its attitude was fully justified—that Hungary, occupying but a modest position in the family of nations, could not take sides in a debate between the Great Powers of the world.

We have heard these differences of opinion stated, and the effect has been, I will not say to eclipse the Protocol, but, at any rate, to render it a mere theoretical instrument which cannot for the moment be put into force.

We have listened to the discussion; we have not only heard authoritative and highly interesting definitions of the difference between the British and French mentalities, but we have had the rare privilege of seeing these theoretical differences confirmed and illustrated by typical representatives of each—the first delegate for the British Empire, Mr. Chamberlain, on the one hand, and M. Paul-Boncour on the other. I think that the truest or sincerest compliment I can pay them is to say that they represent two national individualities, each of which is as great as the other, each of which has played an equally great rôle in the development of humanity, and each of which is indispensable to the future progress of humanity; and that they are both typical representatives, true representatives, the most personal representatives of the individuality of their respective nations.

If it were merely a question of being present at an intellectual feast of the finest order, the present discussion would have been enthralling and interesting. But it is more than that.

A disagreement exists, and scarcely any suggestion has been made as to how it is to be smoothed over. I shall revert to this point later. We have heard M. Paul-Boncour, in his memorable speech, which I whole-heartedly applauded, and that not merely because it was a work of art. We have seen him make a very ingenious attempt to adopt the analytical methods followed by the British. He explained that if we ultimately succeeded, by means of special agreements and by following a devious path, in obtaining a general agreement, the result would still be a general and world-wide agreement like the Protocol, since special agreements would be of no value unless welded into one whole and so made universal.

I already foresee the British reply to this argument: "We quite agree", they will say; "we too desire finally to obtain an agreement which will include the whole civilised world; but we wish to obtain it, not by enunciating a general theory based on general principles — which would probably receive a different application in different States — but by taking, as you suggest, the *terra firma* for our basis and by concluding partial agreements which, being more readily adaptable to circumstances, will provide better guarantees than a general agreement based on a universal theory." This appears quite plausible.

After this reply, however — which, though not actually made, was in the minds of all — M. Benes addressed us. In a speech which I admire for its profound political wisdom, he said: "We do not object to this method, but I warn you that it will take long to apply. It will be long before these partial arrangements are concluded, and when their number is sufficiently large and they have been co-ordinated — which is absolutely necessary — they will in the end give us a system very much the same as the Protocol."

This is perfectly true. I will even go further and say, with that frankness which I have always endeavoured to maintain, particularly in this Assembly, that I cannot to-day see any possibility of concluding, in that part of Europe to which I belong, such regional arrangements embracing all nations. I need not give reasons for this. I will again quote M. Paul-Boncour — not his speech, but something he said in a private conversation, and I acknowledge his authorship because I do not wish to steal another's thoughts. "The psychological difficulties", he said, "are so many and so formidable that it may in practice prove easier to conclude a general agreement than to conclude partial agreements." Where there are still latent antagonisms, to which it is better not to shut one's eyes, which it is better to admit than to palliate, agreement can be reached within a general framework. But we can hardly expect hostile nations to conclude regional and special arrangements amongst themselves. M. Benes, who belongs to the same European group as myself, who is on the other side of the trench but who sees the trench as well as I do, realises this. He says that the task will be difficult and long. I myself, without going so far as to say that it is impossible, would add that, by this devious route, the attainment of a universal pact of security made up of a number of partial agreements — if indeed we ever do attain it — will not only be difficult, but desperately slow.

We shall reach our goal so late and after so many difficulties that if we adopt this expedient and maintain our present policy, public opinion in

Europe will find the question of disarmament postponed "to the Greek Kalends", and that would be disastrous for the credit of the League.

The situation is made clear by the proposal which the first delegate of Spain, M. Quiñones de León, has laid before the Assembly. I do not blame him for what he has done — on the contrary. The last part of the resolution of which he is the author, the part which refers to arbitration, is what I would venture to describe as a temporising proposal, one of those proposals which are made when the author really believes that it is impossible to say anything definite and decided, and yet feels bound to say something:

"And requests the Council to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the reduction of armaments, as soon as, in its opinion, satisfactory conditions have been achieved from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the third Assembly."

On these lines we shall accomplish nothing at all. I can assure you that we have reached a critical point in the evolution of the League and the development of the influence which it ought to exercise in the world.

I will tell you quite frankly that last year I supported the Protocol, partly because it paved the way for the general Conference on Disarmament. But I had other reasons too; the grandeur of the plan cast its spell over me. Indeed, the Protocol does not merely aim at supplying certain omissions in the Covenant. There is between the Protocol and the Covenant a radical difference which cannot be over-emphasised.

The Covenant admits the legality of war in certain cases. It provides for certain interim periods, during which passions could often be allayed and better counsels prevail; but if, at the end of the period, the contending nations are not agreed that arbitration would lead to a satisfactory settlement, war, according to the Covenant, is permissible, is indeed declared to be legitimate.

The Protocol, on the other hand, undertakes an immense and formidable task, which might not immediately have led to practical results, but which is great if only because of the immensity of the idea it embodies — the task of abolishing war, once for all, because war, according to the Protocol, would be armed intervention to ensure the application of its provisions, the intervention of an international police force, and not the resort to arms by a party seeking to obtain justice by its own efforts.

This, then, is the radical difference between the Protocol and the Covenant, and now, as I say, we find ourselves faced with a conflict of opinions. It is not for me to take sides. It is not for me or my country to give an opinion when two nations for which it professes an equal regard disagree upon a point of European policy.

I will not say that we are the disciples of one or the other of these nations. We have evolved on entirely independent lines. Nevertheless, everybody knows that our constitutional evolution resembles, on a smaller scale, that of Great Britain; so much so indeed that all our instincts, all our sympathies, attract us to the country which has shown the world, on a grand scale, that which we ourselves have reproduced in a smaller way, but with striking similarity and, as I said, quite independently.

Our first constitutional document, the Golden Bull of King André, dates only seven years later than the Magna Carta of England. This was not a constitutional charter dictated by the King; it

was, like all the constitutional documents of England, a record of liberties and principles which already existed, but which had been violated. In our evolution we proceeded in the same way, by stages, always showing a firm front to every abuse as it occurred. There is not in Hungary, any more than in England, a document which can be called the Hungarian constitution. The constitution has developed by means of individual laws and of precedents.

The British delegate said that no revolutionary movement has occurred in his country for 250 years. We can say that never throughout its whole history has Hungary known a revolution. We have sometimes taken up arms in defence of our rights when they have been trampled upon, but of revolution, of any attempt to break with the past and reconstruct the future upon a purely rational basis, no trace will be found in the history of Hungary. Our constitutional development is characterised by its continuity throughout ten centuries and down to the present time.

We regard the British Empire, its constitutional evolution and its mentality, as the great model. It is a curious coincidence that this great nation should show the world, in the grand and imposing drama of its history, developments similar to those which have taken place on a smaller scale in Hungary.

On the other side, we see in France the glorious vanguard of all liberty and human progress; she has never hesitated herself to venture into the unknown in order to give humanity a new impulse, a new principle of universal emancipation.

Thus, divided in our sentiments, divided in our admiration, we cannot pronounce in favour of either side; but what I am anxious above all to prevent is our entering a blind alley and despairing of ever accomplishing anything in the way of disarmament.

You will remember the frequent applause with which M. Paul-Boncour's speech was greeted, but at no point of his discourse was the applause so long and so loud as when he uttered the magic word "disarmament".

There is no need for me to repeat what general disarmament means for us, who are regionally disarmed, disarmed under a unilateral system of disarmament! For us the general reduction of armaments would mean the end of an intolerable situation, bringing daily humiliations. For us it is not a case of security preceding disarmament; it is only disarmament which will give us security, for we are defenceless while all around us are armed.

Therefore what I seek, what I shall do my utmost to obtain, is that some further efforts shall be made to assure the world that the Assembly, that the League of Nations, is expending on the problem of disarmament something more than words, empty, futile words.

A wag said to me one day—I apologise for quoting him, but I really think his remark is witty, though it may not be in perfect good taste—that the activity of the League of Nations strangely resembled the efforts described in the French quatrain:

*A l'ombre d'un clocher,  
L'ombre d'un cocher,  
De l'ombre d'une brosse,  
Frottait l'ombre d'un carrosse.*

We must not allow that. We must have no more of phantoms.

Since we cannot obtain disarmament without first obtaining security, since we cannot and must not call a general Conference on disarmament which would inevitably fail, only one thing remains,

and that is to begin the preparatory work at once, so that when the time for the Disarmament Conference arrives, it will be able to attack the problem boldly and with a full knowledge of the facts, treat the problem on a general basis and reach a decision without delay.

I therefore venture to lay before you an amendment to the draft resolution of M. Quiñones de León, and I beg the Assembly to forward my amendment to the Committee which will examine the resolution submitted by the Spanish delegate. I ask you to substitute the following text for the last paragraph of the resolution proposed by the Spanish delegate:

"And invites the Council to consider forthwith plans for a general reduction of armaments in accordance with Article 8 of the Covenant, and, at the same time, to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the reduction of armaments, such Conference to meet and to begin its work without delay, as soon as, in the opinion of the Council or of the Assembly, those conditions of security are fulfilled on which the success of the Conference must depend.

"The Council is invited to report to the seventh Assembly on the progress of the work undertaken in execution of the present resolution."

You will perceive the difference. According to M. Quiñones de León's recommendation, nothing is to be done for the present. The Council and Assembly will await events with folded arms, and when, after a certain time, the question is reviewed from the point of view of security, the whole operation will have to be repeated from A to Z. But although there may be cogent reasons for not proceeding with disarmament until certain guarantees have been secured, there is no reason why we should not begin the preparatory work forthwith.

A resolution to the effect that the preparatory work should be begun at once will prove to the public opinion of Europe that we really desire to bring about disarmament and intend to secure tangible results.

Allow me, ladies and gentlemen, to add a few general remarks.

The first delegate for the British Empire expressed in eloquent phrases his faith in the power of moral forces. He also told us that the main task, the task upon which the effect of material disarmament depends, is moral disarmament.

I entirely agree. All my life I have proclaimed my respect for moral forces. I sincerely believe in them, but they must be operative, and at a stage when no formula can be found to embody them it is to be feared that they are not operative, that their effect is retrogressive; for moral forces can be destructive as well as constructive, and that is one of the chief perils in the present situation of the civilised world.

We have all arrived—or, at least, I hope so—at the stage of evolution where we desire the reign of right and not might. Indeed, the League was instituted for that purpose. We wish to establish the reign of justice, and to found peace upon justice, because these two terms, justice and peace, are correlative and inseparable. Justice is always imperilled when it is handed over to the chances of war, because there is no correlation between armed force and the justice of a cause.

Moreover, durable peace can only be founded upon justice; it cannot be based upon the toleration of injustice. The great danger of this work, the great danger of the present situation—a danger to which humanity is exposed at all troubled

periods—is this : though theoretically we are agreed as to bringing about the reign of justice, a profound disagreement exists among various countries of Europe as to what justice is. Moral disarmament, moral guarantees, the power of moral forces to secure peace will only become facts when this disagreement has been overcome, when it has, as the English say, been “bridged over”. That is a result which can be obtained neither by force nor by mere preaching. Force can determine material facts, but has no power over the soul. On the other hand, preaching alone is powerless in the face of organic and psychological forces as deep-lying as those which are now at work in the various countries. What, then, is to be done ?

We must allow time for this psychological evolution gradually to remove or gloss over our differences. It requires time, and that is why I gave my adhesion to the Protocol.

It requires time, and meanwhile we must strengthen existing positive law and protect it from all violation. Those who, like myself, are convinced that the present law must be modified, realise, if they have had any experience of history, that tottering and menaced institutions are the very ones which cling most tenaciously to their existence, and that we cannot alter a building unless its foundations are sound.

That is why, in the face of a large section of public opinion in my country, I adhered to that part of the Protocol which provides positive guarantees, although I was not at all enthusiastic about it. On the other hand, we must remove all lesser sources of friction; I therefore insist that both the problem of minorities and the general problem of disarmament must be dealt with. In fact, the one-sided disarmament to which we have been subjected is a great obstacle to racial reconciliation, because it inflicts upon the countries which are its victims a humiliation which is intolerable for countries possessing any national pride. If we desire to secure a lasting peace, we must remove all legal distinctions between the status of different nations. So long as there exists one law for certain nations and another law for others, we have not peace but an armistice. What we desire is peace, and not a truce. We desire a peace based upon the spontaneous adhesion, the real, sincere, permanent adhesion, of all men, to whichever side they may belong.

That is why I insist on our taking such action, in order to assist the healing influence of moral forces. The greatest of these moral forces, devotion to justice, can be directed along the path to disaster if there is perpetual disagreement as to the conception of justice itself. This moral force must be directed towards peace, towards moral disarmament. Confidence in the work of the League must be increased, because, frankly, that confidence is at present in a very parlous condition.

All this is necessary if we are to obtain the benefits of moral disarmament.

I now conclude. As the representative of a small country, I have perhaps been extremely outspoken, but I have always held that we do not come here to pay each other compliments; we come to throw light upon the situation, and in this all must assist by speaking with absolute frankness. Moreover, I am convinced that when we are speaking to those who are more powerful than ourselves, adulation and reticence are an insult, free and manly speech is homage.

The President :

*Translation* : Count Apponyi, first delegate for Hungary, has submitted a new draft resolution to the Assembly which constitutes an amendment

to the draft resolution proposed by the Spanish delegation.

This resolution will be printed and communicated to the members of the Assembly, as soon as possible.

The Assembly will be invited to give its opinion on it at the close of the debate on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Galvanauskas, first delegate of Lithuania, will address the Assembly.

M. Galvanauskas (Lithuania) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have no intention of examining in detail the various features of the remarkable work accomplished by the League last year. I will merely draw your special attention to one of the most important questions of the day—the Protection of Minorities.

The present system, despite the splendid services it has rendered to humanity, suffers from a defect which it would be extremely dangerous to ignore any longer. This system limits the sovereignty of a certain number of States, whilst justice demands that the noble cause of the protection of minorities should confer the same rights upon, and require the same duties on the part of, all the Members of the League.

The question of minorities is a question of domestic public law submitted to the control and guarantee of the League. Though Lithuania entirely agrees that this branch of domestic public law needs such control and guarantee, she is also firmly convinced that neither is permissible unless exercised in the case of all the States Members of the League.

The inequality in the position of the different Members of the League in this respect is a drawback both from the political and moral points of view. Moral unity between Members of the League is impossible so long as the sovereignty of some is restricted by higher interests whilst others are under no such restraint.

That is why it appears to me desirable that the League should make a general statement regarding the protection of minorities, imposing the same rights and duties upon all the States Members of the League in respect of their racial, religious and linguistic minorities.

In making this proposal I believe that I am voicing the public opinion of the world. First of all, I will remind you of the resolution passed by the third Assembly, on September 21st, 1922. It states :

“The Assembly expresses the hope that the States which are not bound by any legal obligations to the League with respect to minorities will nevertheless observe in the treatment of their own racial, religious or linguistic minorities at least as high a standard of justice and toleration as is required by any of the treaties and by the regular action of the Council.”

This is a first step along the path I recommend; but the world's opinion is no longer satisfied with a recommendation. It demands *vincula juris* from all.

The twenty-first Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which met at Copenhagen in 1923, has already prepared a declaration of the rights and duties of minorities. I will read you Resolution No. 1, annexed to this Declaration :

“In view of the desirability of bringing about the adoption, as principles recognised by international law and by the constitutional law of States with a representative system of



government, of the fundamental rights and duties of minorities of race or religion,

"The twenty-first Inter-Parliamentary Conference asks the groups to lay before their respective Governments the accompanying Declaration of the rights and duties of minorities,

"And requests the Inter-Parliamentary Bureau to transmit the said Declaration to the League of Nations, with a view to the drafting of a General Convention between the States, on the basis of the principles set forth in the Declaration."

I propose that we should give due recognition to the spirit of universality manifested in this resolution, and that a special committee be appointed to draft a general Convention for all Members of the League, laying down their common rights and duties towards minorities. The Lithuanian delegation has therefore the honour to propose that the sixth Assembly of the League should set up a special Committee to prepare a draft general Convention to include all the States Members of the League of Nations, and setting forth their common rights and duties in regard to minorities.

After so many remarkable speeches it is very difficult for me to add anything new on the question of international peace. No institution, indeed, is better qualified than the League to do this work. The guarantees demanded by the small nations are not peculiar to this or that Latin or Anglo-Saxon idea. The small nations will always support any attempt to achieve a just peace. And I emphasise the word "just". Without justice there can never be moral disarmament, and consequently there can never be a durable peace.

Justice must be the basis of moral peace. Nothing can prevail against justice. Nothing in comparison with justice is immovable or immutable. Our ideal should be, not peace alone, but peace based upon justice.

#### • The President :

*Translation* : M. Galvanauskas, first delegate for Lithuania, has submitted a draft resolution to the Assembly.

This resolution will be printed and communicated to the Assembly later, and at the close of this discussion the Assembly will be invited to give its opinion on it.

M. Kalfoff, Minister for Foreign Affairs and first delegate of Bulgaria, will address the Assembly.

#### M. Kalfoff (Bulgaria) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The long and detailed report on the work of the Council and Secretariat, which we have been discussing for the last few days, clearly shows how varied and also productive their work has been in combating all the evils which afflict mankind, in uniting the peoples of the world and bringing them security and peace. The Bulgarian Government wishes to add its sincere tribute of gratitude to the Council and to our devoted Secretary-General and all his collaborators.

This year, once again, the grave questions of disarmament and security constitute the central point of our discussions. Speakers far more able than myself have preceded me upon this platform and have with great authority examined these problems and recommended the best methods for their solution. May I, too, be allowed to explain my country's views on these problems ? I speak in the name of a people which has passed through terrible periods of suffering and whose one aim is to live in peace and harmony with all, and so be

free to devote itself to the task of regeneration; and this fact emboldens me to address this Assembly of illustrious statesmen, eminent politicians and distinguished jurists.

I need not, then, assure you that Bulgaria, inspired by these sentiments, associates herself whole-heartedly with the League's work for the attainment of security and disarmament.

The Bulgarian Government is of opinion that the Geneva Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes provides a satisfactory solution for these great questions. We do not mean, of course, that this Assembly cannot find other methods which would be equally satisfactory and would avoid existing difficulties, and we will not withhold such help as we can render towards the accomplishment of this task. Nevertheless, the Bulgarian Government definitely prefers a general pact which, by guaranteeing security through compulsory arbitration, will soonest enable us to attain that disarmament which is the goal of suffering humanity.

For these reasons the Bulgarian delegation approves the draft resolutions submitted, and I think I may also say that my Government will renew its adherence to the optional clause regarding the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

We believe that these aims can only be attained upon a basis of international solidarity. It is true that the Peace Treaties also provide a solution for these problems, but the solution they offer would seem to be far from ideal, otherwise the nations would not still be seeking a solution to-day. This is not surprising; the peace treaties, like all other works of man, are not perfect. Nevertheless, they at least laid the foundation-stone of international solidarity by creating that great institution, the League of Nations. It is the League that must take in hand the noble but heavy task of bringing concord to the world.

International solidarity will come, but it will only come when all the peoples feel that they have an equal right to a free and happy existence. On that day the souls of the nations will be freed from their sufferings, and peace in the true sense will have become a reality. The problems of security and disarmament will solve themselves, and all the nations, united in true fraternity, will pay a grateful tribute to the League of Nations.

I speak for a young nation which puts its faith in international solidarity and which believes in the League, and I should be lacking in my duty if I did not refer also to the hopes which it places in the League.

Completely disarmed, having forces hardly sufficient to ensure internal order, my country hopes that its security will be guaranteed and that the other nations will feel bound in honour to fulfil, by themselves disarming, the engagements they have solemnly assumed.

Bulgaria also hopes that she will be granted access to the sea, which has been formally promised, and which is a vital necessity for her economic prosperity. She also earnestly hopes that another solemn promise given in the Peace Treaties—the rights of minorities — will be fulfilled. This is a burning problem for many other nations, but we speak of it more and oftener because we are profoundly convinced of the necessity of finding a solution which will eradicate the dangers it presents to international peace.

This solution will be found by granting the political and religious minorities a system guaranteeing them a life of free citizenship. The authors of the Peace Treaties have carefully and fully defined this system and have made it binding upon the Governments. It is also placed under

the guarantee of the League, and what more powerful or more impartial protection could be found for it ?

We gratefully accepted this system, believing that it would ensure the freedom of the minorities and would permanently remove any possibility of international friction arising from this cause.

Our war-weary people looked forward to a future of peace. Yet I am sorrowfully forced to recognise that our hopes have been deceived. To-day, seven years after the conclusion of treaties which guaranteed the rights of minorities, we are still no further than when we started. Indeed, we have gone back, since no real step has been taken to improve their lot.

We do not wish to belittle what the League has done. We are aware of the noble aims of the Council and the good-will of the Secretariat, but the results are woefully small. Last year our delegation and that of our neighbour Greece were deeply moved at this unfortunate and perilous state of affairs, and jointly came to the Council's assistance. Our common efforts, aided by the Council and the Secretariat, resulted in the preparation of two Protocols for the protection of minorities in Greece and Bulgaria. These Protocols were intended to transform the supine system provided by the Treaties into a living reality, and were unanimously welcomed and approved.

But Greece did not wish this system to be retained. I need not descant upon our bitter disappointment at the Greek Government's act, which, moreover, is hardly calculated to help our Government in its efforts on behalf of the Greek minority in Bulgaria.

We are therefore forced to an inevitable conclusion. We are convinced — and we have frequently told the Assembly so — that the rights of minorities will not be safeguarded until the Council stretches forth its arm to protect them.

The Bulgarian Government and the Bulgarian nation hope that that day is at hand, because we are loath to believe that the rights of hundreds of thousands of people to a better lot will be flouted, and that the profound faith of millions of others in the League of Nations will be shaken.

Despite all, we still hope, for to despair would be to despair of justice, to despair of a brighter future, to despair of international peace.

28. — YEAR BOOK OF GENERAL AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE ARMAMENTS OF THE DIFFERENT COUNTRIES : AMENDMENT TO THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE DELEGATION OF SALVADOR ON SEPTEMBER 12th, 1925.

The President :

*Translation* : I have received the following letter from M. Guerrero :

"I have the honour to request you to add the following amendment to the draft resolution which I submitted, and which has been distributed as Document A 57 :

"Add at the end the following paragraph :

"Year book of general and statistical information on the armaments of the different countries."

This addition to the draft resolution submitted by M. Guerrero, first delegate for Salvador, is laid before the Assembly. It will be printed and distributed to the members of the Assembly as soon as possible, and you will be invited to give an opinion on it at the close of the present discussion.

29. — SITUATION IN CHINA : DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.

The President :

*Translation* : The Chinese delegation has submitted the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly,

"Having heard with keen interest the Chinese delegation's suggestion regarding the applicability of Article 19 of the Covenant to the existing situation in China,

"Having learned with satisfaction that a Conference of the interested States is soon to take place in China to consider the questions involved,

"Expresses the hope that a satisfactory solution may be found at an early date."

This new draft resolution, which will be printed and communicated without delay, is submitted to the Assembly, which will be invited to give its opinion on it at the close of the present discussion.

*The meeting rose at 1.10 p m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 1925, AT 10.45 A.M.

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Report of the General Committee of the Assembly.

President : MR. DANDURAND.

30. — SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

*Translation* : The first item on the agenda is the second report by the Committee on the Credentials of Delegates.

I call upon M. de Aguero y Bethancourt to read his report.

M. de Aguero y Bethancourt (Cuba), President and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials.

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Committee on Credentials has examined a telegram from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, stating that M. Angel Morales, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic in France, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy, has been appointed delegate to the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations.

The Committee has also received a letter from the Minister of the Republic of Haiti in Paris, informing the Secretary-General of the League that M. Frederick Doret, engineer of the Ecole Supérieure des Mines, Paris, has been appointed delegate of the Republic to the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations.

In the opinion of the Committee the communications to which I have just referred are fully in conformity with Article 5, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. The Committee therefore considers that the representatives of the Dominican Republic and Haiti to the sixth Assembly are duly accredited.

The President :

*Translation* : I thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report. Does anyone wish to speak on the report? If no one wishes to speak, I declare the report adopted.

*The report was adopted.*

31. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

*Translation* : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the debate on the Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Idman, Minister for Foreign Affairs and first delegate of Finland, will address the Assembly.

M. Idman (Finland) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before taking part in the debate upon the report on the work of the Council, I wish, in the first place, to tell the Assembly how highly Finland appreciates the importance of the League of Nations, and secondly, on behalf of my Government, to congratulate the various organisations of the League on the results they have achieved.

It is with reference to the splendid work of the fifth Assembly, which still remains incomplete, that I think it desirable to say a few words.

At a meeting of the Council last March, M. Briand, the eminent representative of France, reminded us of the enthusiasm with which the nations represented at the fifth Assembly had voted, through their delegates, in favour of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes. The Finnish delegation entirely concurred in this unanimous decision, which was so sincere and of such hopeful augury for the future, and it regarded the result as the greatest step yet taken towards securing world peace.

The Finnish delegation therefore unhesitatingly recommended its Government to sign the Protocol, and the latter, after careful examination, decided to sign it. My Government considered it a satisfactory instrument, which adequately met the essential international needs of the day.

The Protocol doubtless contains certain imperfections, and some of its provisions are too vague. The Finnish Government mentioned some of these points in its declaration of December 18th, 1924, setting forth its views on the interpretation of parts of the Protocol. It is only natural that so comprehensive an instrument as the Geneva Protocol could hardly claim to be perfect. The Protocol is, and is bound to be, the result of compromises and concessions; consequently, every State is sure to find some provisions which do not entirely coincide with its views. Let us even admit that the Protocol contains provisions which might in the interests of all be clearer, more precise, more elastic and more adaptable. Does that mean that the whole work prepared at the cost of so much labour should be cast aside like the Treaty of Mutual Assistance? There are certainly many States which are opposed to such action.

We can, of course, continue to revise the Protocol and remodel it, but, apart from other considerations, this is surely a case to which we can apply the maxim: "Leave well alone".

As we have said, then, an instrument like the Geneva Protocol, which is the result of compromise, can never, by its very nature, attain absolute perfection. However desirable it may be that its terms should be as uncontroversial as possible, it must not indulge in mere hair-splitting. There are questions of detail which must be left for subsequent interpretation; clauses the application of which will depend, in part at least, on the needs of the moment.

Finland remains faithful to the principles of the Protocol, as the basis of a more solid and equitable international organisation, less influenced by incalculable political factors at variance with all notions of right. She is convinced that, even though the Protocol in its original form may never come into force, its principles can never be abandoned.

The reception accorded to the Protocol by the various Governments has shown that it is hardly possible to reach immediate agreement on a general pact of guarantee. At the Council session in March the representative of the British Empire, Mr. Chamberlain, pointed out that "the best solution" would be to complete the Covenant in co-operation with the League, by concluding special mutual agreements adapted to meet special needs. In the splendid speech which he made last Thursday he gave further details, indicating the conditions which such special agreements should fulfil.

Similarly, M. Painlevé, the French Prime Minister, referred in his opening speech to the conclusion of regional agreements, and he divided these agreements into two categories: alliances between

States the interests of which are identical and alliances of States between whom disputes might arise.

We must not forget, however, that special situations might arise in which the rules laid down in the special agreements could not immediately be applied.

In certain cases it will, I think, be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to conclude such agreements. There are countries which sincerely desire always to live in peace, but which feel they cannot trust their security to special agreements in the strict sense of the term, because, on account of their geographical situation, or for other reasons, they are exposed to dangers due to the vicissitudes of international politics. They are forced, pending guarantees of security which the League alone can provide, to make heavy sacrifices in order to organise their national defence.

Accordingly, the organisations of the League especially emphasised, in Resolution XIV of 1922, the necessity of adopting special measures to safeguard these States.

Finland hopes, not only in her own interests, but in the interests of world peace, that the general agreement interpreting and defining the application of the principles of the Covenant has only been adjourned. In the meantime, she feels it her duty to observe a policy in strict keeping with the doctrines of the Geneva Protocol. She has concluded agreements of conciliation and arbitration with eight neighbouring countries, and she hopes to increase this number. My country asks nothing better than to contribute, in proportion to her strength, to the realisation of the aims of the League, in whose future she has complete confidence.

**The President:**

*Translation:* M. Morales, first delegate of the Dominican Republic, will address the Assembly.

**M. Morales (Dominican Republic):**

*Translation:* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Dominican Republic, which I have the honour to represent in this Assembly, though a young nation with less than a century of independence behind it, has passed through many vicissitudes in its courageous struggle for existence as a free and sovereign State with solid and stable foundations.

Every page of my country's history bears witness to her heroic attempts to attain her undoubted right of self-determination, and prove to the world her unwavering adhesion to the eternal conception of justice and liberty.

But I have not come to tell you of our gallant struggles and past misfortunes. I only wish to say that to-day the Dominican Republic in the full enjoyment of her sovereign rights, and despite her small territory, feels herself great in being mistress of her own destiny, in the sovereign power she exercises for the well-being and happiness of her people, and, as far as she is able, for the realisation of peace and progress in international relations.

My country has emerged from her infancy; to-day, adult in reason and in conscience, she has crossed the threshold of a youth filled with the brightest hope.

Assured of the stability of her democratic institutions, and firm in her faith in the universal power of right and justice as the creative force of all real human progress, my country is developing her natural resources fully and unreservedly, and is devoting special attention to the encouragement of friendly international relations.

With all her youthful enthusiasm she has embraced the cause of the League of Nations,

because she believes that this institution will make the greatest efforts ever witnessed to establish world peace as a living and lasting reality, based on mutual confidence and respect for the moral and material interests of each and every State. Definite progress, I am glad to find, is being made towards the attainment of this goal. All the signs of the times point to the fact that an agreement conciliating all divergent points of view and satisfying all just claims will eventually be reached. As regards the fulfilment of their destinies, the sincere and unanimous desire of the peoples of the world to bequeath to future humanity an era of happiness and glory which has been denied to past and present generations, creates a favourable atmosphere for the conception and fulfilment of those ideas which the delegation of the Dominican Republic hopes will soon materialise.

The principles which form the foundation of the majestic edifice that we are raising are in themselves solid enough to bear the weight of the structure they will have to support. When arbitration has been raised to the status of a compulsory rule for the settlement of international difficulties, when every nation is free to devote itself to the development of its vital energies in an atmosphere of moral peace, based on security, when confidence in the effective application of justice has confirmed these principles and led to the necessary reduction of armaments, then the world will have removed the obstacles which have hitherto stood so obstinately in the path of progress and happiness.

The Dominican Republic, though but a small American State, openly avows before this Assembly her ardent desire to see the settlement of the dispute which has arisen among the European nations, and feels sincere admiration for the new and advanced international political methods which it is hoped to establish in order to present in the future all causes of dispute or conflict between nations. Convinced of the efficacy of arbitration for the settlement of international disputes in a manner fully consonant with right and equity, the Dominican nation has raised this principle to the status of a constitutional law, and has undertaken to include it as a compulsory clause in all its international treaties.

Accordingly we have always pressed for settlement by arbitration in the case of our frontier problem with the neighbouring Republic of Haiti, the sole international dispute which at present occupies the minds of our statesmen. In the hope of strengthening the friendship between the two nations which share the sovereignty of this island, and improving still further the cordial relations and the sympathy which unite them, I venture upon this solemn occasion to express a fervent desire for a prompt and satisfactory solution of the dispute.

Another movement now taking definite shape and destined to prepare the way for an era of definite peace — a movement which we should do our utmost to promote — is the codification of international law. Serious difficulties are inherent in every attempt to unify regulations and laws which are essentially abstract, and which nevertheless have to be applied to existing situations of every conceivable kind and in every country. Doubtless these difficulties stand in the way of success, but we are bound eventually to succeed, because we have on our side spiritual forces and vital energies, far more potent than these obstacles themselves.

By codifying international law we shall render its precepts clearer and more precise, we shall reduce its vagueness, which up to now has allowed it to be dangerously misinterpreted and has caused regrettable disturbances of the international equilibrium.

The Dominican delegation is happy to declare that its Government will always be willing to offer its humble but sincere co-operation in realising any progress calculated to ensure world peace. Once more it voices its enthusiasm for the cause of the League; it reiterates its unshakable confidence in the triumph of the League's cause, and transmits an expression of cordial good-will to all the delegations assembled here.

The President :

*Translation* : M. Loucheur, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Loucheur (France) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The French delegation has the honour to submit to the Assembly a draft resolution which I will now read :

“The Assembly,

“Being resolved to examine every method of promoting peace throughout the world ;

“Being convinced that economic peace will contribute largely to ensuring the security of peoples ;

“Invites the Council to set up on the widest basis a preparatory committee for the purpose of preparing for the work of an International Economic Conference, with the help of the Technical Organisations of the League and of the International Labour Office.

“A decision regarding the convening of this Conference under the auspices of the League of Nations should be taken later by the Council.

“The purpose of this Conference should be to examine the economic difficulties which stand in the way of the restoration of general prosperity and to discover the best methods of surmounting these difficulties and of avoiding disputes.”

I will explain briefly the reasons for which France has submitted this resolution to the Assembly.

We shall soon have concluded a long and interesting discussion, in which the question of security has dominated all others. The close attention with which the Assembly has followed the discussion has shown to the peoples of the world, whose eyes are turned towards Geneva, that you are determined to give them security.

But as our distinguished colleague, M. Scialoja, told us the other day in a speech which was enriched with all the treasures of his long experience, and in which a touch of scepticism was concealed amid some very sound advice—as M. Scialoja told us, it is the hidden causes of war which we must discover and destroy. It is not enough merely to cure the attack or the illness once it has broken out ; you must try to prevent it.

Such is our aim in laying our proposal before you.

The causes of war are undoubtedly manifold. They are often political, sometimes ethnical. But I think everyone in this Assembly will agree that one of the most frequent causes of the scourge of war in the past has been the economic struggle between different countries. I could find many examples of this in recent history, but I desire to avoid any discussion which might be painful, any allusion which might wound our feelings. The statesmen assembled here will know what I mean from their own experience.

All of us here are aware of the serious unrest which now prevails and has prevailed throughout the whole world, and especially in Europe, ever since the end of the war. The causes of this unrest are many, and lie perhaps in the pre-war situation. I wonder, then, whether the world had sufficiently

realised the profound changes which had taken place during the last century. Consider the evolution of those peoples who once were almost exclusively engaged in agriculture, and who, dragged gradually into the industrial whirlpool, have perceived the social dangers which were growing up simultaneously with the increased difficulty of trading.

Diplomats, who, it is said, are, often behind the times, had perhaps not followed the movement closely enough, and had not quite clearly perceived the dangers of these economic conflicts.

Then came the war, complicating the situation still further. To-day, what with new frontiers and the alteration of Customs tariffs, what with the system of import and export prohibitions, the difficulties in connection with transit and communications, and above all, to be quite frank, the monetary disturbances which have completely charged the system of commercial exchanges, the whole world is now plunged into a state of economic unrest.

Does this mean that nothing has been done during the last few years to remedy this situation? That would be to ignore the efforts both of the Governments and of the League.

Improvements, indeed, have already been accomplished. Many nations, for example, have succeeded in restoring a sound monetary system. But at the same time something has occurred to which, I think, sufficient attention has not been given. At the very time when great efforts were being made here to attain international co-ordination, a drastic policy of economic nationalism was being pursued in every country, with the paradoxical result that at the very moment when we, assembled at Geneva, were leaving no stone unturned to promote the security of the world, there was, in your own countries — in mine as well as yours — a manifest desire to bar imports as far as possible, and live under a sort of self-contained industrial system which may, I think, in the future lead to very serious trouble.

And now, having rapidly reviewed the existing unrest and its causes, let us consider the possible remedies.

First of all, does this question come within the competence of the League? I am not a jurist. It is not for me to discuss the Covenant. Still, I have read it, and I remember Article 23, paragraph (e), which was not inserted without good cause, and which, in fact, refers to the economic task we ask you to undertake.

Recently, you rendered assistance to certain nations, and the other day, when M. Scialoja — I apologise to him for quoting him again — reminded you of the League's task, when he told you that you have done magnificent work in the financial restoration of Austria and Hungary, he traced the same path which we are now asking you to follow. That work is a splendid reply to those who are criticising the activities of the League, and I myself, speaking as a practical man — which is quite compatible with idealism — am astounded at the magnificent results you have so speedily obtained. Four years ago at the Paris and London Conferences, Great Britain and France jointly began to attack the difficult problem of Austria. That problem was submitted to you in 1922, and to-day the financial part of the problem is solved. In a few days you will also have occasion to applaud a similar success in the case of Hungary. Yet the Covenant did not explicitly provide for intervention by the League in such financial questions. Do not these encouraging results, combined with the programme laid down in Article 23, paragraph (e), give you the right — which, in my opinion is indisputable — to undertake the great task of

economic reconstruction, which is the aim of our resolution?

You will ask me, how, and for what purpose?

I am perfectly aware of all the objections to an international economic conference. I would even undertake to make from this platform a far longer speech against it than for it, but that is what always happens in life. I have often found that, on the whole, it is easier to destroy than to construct; yet I appeal to you to undertake a work of construction.

What States would be invited to take part in this International Economic Conference? What would be its programme?

We do not claim to lay this programme before you. We merely ask you to authorise, or, more exactly, to invite your Council to call a preparatory committee to prepare the programme for this Conference. The difficulty will perhaps lie not in stating what the programme should include, but rather what it should not. Economic questions are so vast that clearly, if we attempt to go too far in certain directions, if we attempt to draw up too comprehensive a programme, we shall almost certainly fail, and the Conference will degenerate into a purely academic debating society.

But I would not have you suppose that this Conference will result in real international conventions. To think so would be a great mistake. The Conference would enunciate a number of principles. It would seek some method of international co-operation to apply them, and as a result — this, in my opinion, is the most important point — it should be possible, in respect of certain branches of production which are easier to examine and analyse than others, to draw up a number of Conventions between nations, or rather between producers in those nations under the control of the Governments. Such conventions, apart from the Conference itself, will lead, for a time, to stability of production and consumption.

That is what I desired to say concerning the object of our proposal.

I repeat that we could develop this programme at great length, but in so doing we should show a lack of respect for the Second Committee, to which we ask that our resolution shall be referred, and we should also be exposing ourselves prematurely to certain criticisms which I can already foresee. I will not dwell on these objections for the moment, because we shall have an opportunity of replying to them either in the Second Committee or during the final meetings of this Assembly.

In taking the initiative in this matter, and submitting to you this resolution, which you must all realise is of great importance for every one of the countries that has sent you to Geneva, France is not acting in her own interest. In point of fact, after all her suffering during the war, France has regained, during the last three years, a certain measure of prosperity more apparent, perhaps, than real. This is partly owing to the mildness of her climate and the fertility of her soil, and partly to the fact that she is not so highly industrialised as other countries, and in short has been able to maintain an equilibrium between her agricultural and industrial production.

France, therefore, has no direct interest in proposing the resolution I have submitted to you. She feels it her duty to do so because, like all of you, she is deeply attached to the cause of peace — that is to say, security. Security is the theme on which I will conclude what I have to say. You have met together here, you have shown the world the magnificent example of an Assembly determined to continue the work begun last year,

of an Assembly where standpoints which are widely divergent in appearance—but mainly in appearance—have come into conflict, you have done this because you intend not only to maintain your programme, but to carry it out, adhering strictly to the principles of arbitration, security and disarmament.

Your prolonged debates have shown all those who are watching you that, without desiring uselessly to prolong the discussion, you firmly intend to solve the problem. You have reached a stage when you can no longer delay your decision till to-morrow—a morrow which never dawns.

The task which France ventures to propose to you is the normal and logical outcome of the effort to obtain security by seeking to effect a radical cure of the evil you are combating.

Believe me, ladies and gentlemen, this task is in keeping with the ideals of justice and of peace on which you have set your hearts. The nations of the world are longing for its achievement. It is worthy of the nations you represent.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Raul Fernandes, delegate of Brazil, will address the Assembly.

**M. Raul Fernandes (Brazil) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before the close of this discussion, which has been largely occupied by the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, may I be allowed, on behalf of the Brazilian delegation, to proclaim my faith and confidence, and to make a statement which is especially necessary, since my country, and indeed other Latin-American countries, might be somewhat discouraged by most of the speeches made at this Assembly.

We shall find it difficult to share M. Paul-Boncour's sturdy optimism concerning regional pacts of arbitration and security. The eloquent delegate of France is confident that they will increase, will develop side by side, and will ultimately become correlated under the auspices of the League.

I agree that that is a fairly accurate forecast of the future awaiting the system of security described by M. Painlevé as "analytical". Nor do I doubt that the principles laid down in the Protocol will henceforth form the foundation of this diplomatic machinery, and that consequently very great moral progress will be made. In this sense, the failure of to-day may contain the germ of future success. Nevertheless, in our distant countries on the other side of the Atlantic, we might feel we were playing the part of Lazarus at the feast. We have no concern with regional pacts of security, for the peace of our continent is based upon unshakable moral foundations, and is the outcome not of exceptional political foresight, but of the geographical and economic causes determining our history. On the other hand, we have urgent need of inter-continental pacts, for there is a constantly increasing influx of foreign labour and foreign capital. Both are coming, or have already come, from populous and wealthy regions — largely from Europe, and, to an extent which may become very considerable, from the Far East.

Any international disputes in which we may be concerned will therefore be the outcome of these inter-continental relations and will, by reason of their very origin, be legal rather than political in character. Our security thus requires that such legal disputes should be settled by judicial means, either by compulsory arbitration or, preferably, through the Hague Court. This is more especially necessary since we may be involved in quarrels over acts coming wholly within the domestic

jurisdiction, and such cases, which must be rigidly excluded from the internationalisation of quarrels, require an impartial judge to settle them by pacific means.

It is only too obvious that in the system of regional pacts room can hardly be found for the inter-continental agreements upon which our peace depends. There is, of course, an indirect way out of the difficulty — a means we employed before the existence of the League: I refer to partial arbitration treaties. But these conventions are independent of the League and do not include all the guarantees given under the Covenant.

Need I say that, if we fail in our purpose, if we are left to rely upon these inadequate means, the League of Nations, which aims at universality and desires to increase its prestige, will gain nothing thereby? My purpose in offering this criticism is to forestall the man in the street, who would be sure to make it, and to declare that we still have reason to rejoice, since the rejection of the Geneva Protocol will result in the conclusion of certain European pacts designed to ensure peace in that part of the old continent which is most exposed to risk of war. If the Protocol had served this purpose alone, it would have been of the greatest value to Brazil, and, no doubt, to Latin America in general; for European peace is vital to our progress and prosperity. Half our foreign trade is with Europe and — an even more important point — it would be an irreparable blow to our growing culture if fresh wars should break out and enfeeble that fruitful source of civilisation from which we obtain enlightenment, encouragement and all that makes life beautiful.

Let us do justice to Great Britain, on whom the whole onus of responsibility for the failure of the Protocol has been unjustly laid; let us acknowledge that, while safeguarding what she regarded as her chief interests, she had the courage to take a step from which not only Europe but all the nations which are bent on peace and European civilisation must benefit.

While on the subject of compulsory justice and arbitration, may I be permitted, in passing, to correct a statement in the eloquent speech delivered on this platform yesterday by my honourable colleague, the delegate of Uruguay? He said that his country was the only one which up to the present had ratified the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice and the compulsory jurisdiction clause. Brazil has also ratified the Statute of the Court and given her adhesion to the optional clause. Her ratification, it is true, was subject to a suspensory condition; she stipulated that this clause should not apply to her until two of the Powers having permanent seats on the Council of the League also gave their adhesion.

M. Motta referred in complimentary terms to Brazil's ratification.

I should like to take this opportunity of giving an explanation. When the Statute of the Court was drawn up — and this part of the Hague scheme was accepted by the Assembly — the jurists, whose work I followed and with whom I was associated at the generous suggestion of my colleagues and the Council, were divided upon the fundamental point as to the manner in which the Court should be set up.

All finally agreed that the Council must be given as important a rôle as the Assembly, a rôle which would allow the Great Powers the main voice in the composition of the Court. We agreed to this procedure because we were convinced by the evident soundness of the arguments advanced by Mr. Root, who made so valuable a contribution to our work.

He said: "Take care; the Great Powers have not the same need of a Court as the small States. They

are strong enough to defend themselves. If they are to descend from their lofty pinnacle of force and put themselves on a level with the rest of the world, even the smallest States, by submitting their disputes to the Court, they will obviously want a water-tight guarantee as to the composition of the Court, for those are the only terms on which they will submit to its jurisdiction."

That argument convinced us; and that is why so important a rôle in the composition of the Court is played by the Council, and, in consequence, by those Powers which are permanent Members of it.

There was another clause in the Statute which may be said to have been unanimously accepted by the Hague Committee of Jurists, but which was nevertheless amended by the Council—and the Assembly has had to consent to the amendment. I refer to the clause concerning compulsory jurisdiction.

This clause counterbalanced all the concessions made in regard to the actual composition of the Court. It was deleted at the suggestion of the Council and we were forced to acquiesce.

But when I returned to my country, when I reported on our work and gave my Government my opinion, I said: I think it only right that, by adhering to the clause concerning the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court, we should emphasise that, over and above the legal and political necessities, the great Powers which have a preponderating voice in establishing the composition of that Court are morally bound to set the example of submitting to its jurisdiction.

That is why, when we adhered to this clause, we stipulated that it should not come into operation in respect of our country until it had been ratified by two of the Powers permanently represented on the Council of the League.

After this digression, I now return to the main thread of my speech.

Speaking, as I do, towards the end of the present discussion, I am somewhat in the position of a beggar who is allowed to glean where others have already reaped and gathered in the harvest. M. Scialoja will, I am sure, let me take what his skilled hand has missed.

In his opinion the Protocol was premature. War, he said, is often a disease which must be gradually cured and not eradicated at a stroke, and it would be the height of folly to subject future events to legal regulation by means of compulsory adjudication or arbitration, instead of making law conform to historical development by means of optional or special arbitration.

His argument appears to me disquietingly far-reaching; if it were really sound, the Protocol would remain premature to the end of time. Nations, like individuals, have to reckon with the inconstancy of fortune; the *beati possidentes* of to-day are the *non-possidentes* of to-morrow, and if justice based upon law were premature for the latter, its advent in international affairs would always be vetoed on the ground that it was premature.

I understand what is at the back of my colleague's mind; I fully concur in his view that the nations will only submit to law in so far as it is just, and that, if it is to be just, co-operation must be made obligatory by means of covenants concluded loyally and on equitable terms. I have said more than once, and I say again, that the foundations of peace are to be found in the principles of Article 23 of the Covenant, and there alone. But, granting this, I think that the policy of adapting law to historical evolution by means of arbitration as and when required, as the eminent delegate of Italy proposes, might easily be made a cloak for a policy of force; while, on the other hand, compulsory

arbitration, on the basis of constructive legal practice, would have the direct effect of adapting law to the vital requirements of international relations. The sooner we resort to judicial methods and the legal practice evolved therefrom, the sooner we shall come within measurable distance of a system of law bearing some relation to the necessities of international life. That is why I think it can never be too soon for the jurisdiction of the Permanent Court to become compulsory.

The Italian thesis is, in reality, not simply calculated to delay the legal and judicial organisation of international life; it is tantamount to a refusal which would be unvarying, though the reasons for it might change. In formulating such an objection, M. Scialoja has discarded his customary Florentine rapier for a club.

I merely wish to point out this move to those who claim—and I am one of them—that the Protocol still survives as a powerful moral force. To those champions who are better equipped than I am to defend it, I will simply say that, if the great work of the fifth Assembly were really dead, its remains, too vast for a world already surfeited with misery and violence, would pollute the whole earth.

**The President:**

*Translation:* M. Rentis, Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs, will address the Assembly.

**M. Rentis (Greece):**

*Translation:* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—May I be allowed first to fulfil an agreeable duty and to express the profound satisfaction and admiration I feel for the work accomplished by your Council during this last year. Greece submitted to it for settlement and arbitration several questions referred to in the report now before us.

Quite recently this conciliatory procedure was employed in regard to the establishment of Greek refugees. In all the questions dealt with the solutions reached have been practical, just and impartial, and reflect the greatest honour both on the members of the Council, individually and collectively, and on the Secretariat, which in its work of preparation and documentation has given evidence of exceptional activity and competence.

As regards the question of minorities, I have no desire to enter into a fresh controversy with the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I must, however, remind you of one all-important fact: the Report on the work of your Council during this last year mentions the settlement of the question raised by the supplementary Protocols to the Treaty relating to the so-called Bulgarian minorities in Greece and the so-called Greek minorities in Bulgaria. The refusal on the part of Greece to apply the Protocol which concerned her was fully upheld by the Council. I am convinced, moreover, that when the Græco-Bulgarian Convention on exchanges of population has been applied we shall have eliminated yet another source of friction between the two countries.

Greece, desirous that the Treaties should be scrupulously carried out, has no objection to the settlement of the question of an economic outlet for Bulgaria on the Aegean Sea. The relevant article of the Treaty of Neuilly will be applied in a manner satisfactory to both countries—an arrangement which Greece for her part has always urged and been ready to facilitate. I desire to re-affirm this now, and to add that, in order that this question may be settled, the Greek Government is prepared to apply to the League, whose intervention is, moreover, provided for in the Treaty itself.

It would be rash for the Government which I have the honour to represent at this Assembly



to define its attitude, in what might be called a purely formal discussion, on the Protocol on arbitration, security and disarmament. The unanimous desire proclaimed by this Assembly to solve the problem of the organisation of international peace and concord fills me with optimism as to the achievement of the work in which we are engaged. I am confident that the good-will of all will succeed in finding a solution. In this connection, I respectfully beg to differ from the first delegate of Hungary as to the difficulties of regional agreements between neighbouring countries. I am, of course, only expressing an opinion concerning Greece and her neighbours, who, I am certain, will fully justify the genuine optimism I feel in regard to this matter.

I desire therefore to give my unqualified support both to the proposal for the establishment of a Committee of conciliation and to the draft resolution submitted by M. Quiñones de León, and, at the same, to express my earnest hope that the great work on which all our energies and aspirations are set may be accomplished, if not at one stroke, at all events step by step.

**32. — REFERENCE TO ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES OF ITEM 13 OF THE AGENDA AND OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED DURING THE DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.**

**The President :**

*Translation :* In order to expedite the work of the Committees, the General Committee has decided to propose to the Assembly that the draft resolutions submitted during the discussion of the report on the work of the Council should be allocated to the various Committees at once.

The General Committee therefore proposes that these resolutions should be distributed as follows :

**1. To the First and Third Committees :**

Item 13 of the agenda, which reads as follows :

"13. Arbitration, Security and Reduction of Armaments :

"The Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes ;

"Declarations by the Members of the Council made at its Session in March 1925, and any other declarations communicated by the Members of the League."

**2. To the First Committee :**

(a) The Spanish delegation's draft resolution concerning the establishment of peace through arbitration, security and disarmament and the preparation of a Conference for the reduction of armaments ;

(b) The Swedish delegation's draft resolution concerning compulsory arbitration for the settlement of international disputes ;

(c) The Swiss delegation's draft resolution concerning the optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice ;

(d) The Uruguayan delegation's draft resolution concerning the jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

**3. To the Third Committee :**

(a) The Spanish delegation's draft resolution concerning the establishment of peace through arbitration, security and disarmament and the preparation of a Conference for the reduction of armaments. This resolution will also be referred to the First Committee ;

(b) The Netherlands delegation's draft resolution concerning the reduction and limitation of armaments ;

(c) The draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Salvador concerning certain technical questions relating to disarmament ;

(d) The draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Salvador amending its earlier resolution (c) ;

(e) The Hungarian delegation's draft resolution on the Disarmament Conference. This resolution may perhaps involve the amendment of the Spanish delegation's draft resolution.

It is understood—and this is not a decision taken by the General Committee but simply an observation of my own on the duties of these Committees—that the Chairmen of the First and Third Committees will be free to decide, after consultation with one another, what proposals shall be submitted to these Committees concerning the division between them of questions raised in certain of these draft resolutions. They can also decide between themselves as to the most suitable procedure for the independent or joint examination of these questions.

**4. To the Fifth Committee :**

(a) The Norwegian delegation's draft resolution concerning Armenian refugees ;

(b) The Norwegian delegation's draft resolution concerning Russian refugees.

**5. To the Sixth Committee :**

(a) The Norwegian delegation's draft resolution concerning mandates ;

(b) The Lithuanian delegation's resolution concerning minorities.

**6. To the Agenda Committee :**

(a) The Chinese delegation's draft resolution concerning the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council ;

(b) The Chinese delegation's draft resolution expressing the hope that the Conference convened to study Chinese affairs may arrive at a satisfactory solution.

Does any member wish to speak on the proposals made by the General Committee?

*The proposals were adopted.*

In order to expedite proceedings, I shall submit to the Assembly, at the close of the discussion, proposals for the reference to the various Committees of the draft resolutions which have been submitted since the meeting of the General Committee and any which may be submitted before the end of the general discussion.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

## SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

## LEAGUE OF NATIONS

### TWELFTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

#### 33. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

##### The President :

*Translation* : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the debate on the report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Duca, Minister for Foreign Affairs and first delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

##### M. Duca (Roumania) :

*Translation* : I think no impartial person can read the report on the work of the Council without feeling an increased confidence in the future of the League.

The League of Nations has already rendered most valuable assistance in a wide range of

questions of the highest importance to the world. I need scarcely tell you, therefore, that I approve the report submitted to us and shall vote for it without reservation.

I should like, however, to say a few words on the question of minorities.

Firstly, I share the Assembly's view that minorities should be ensured just and generous treatment, not only for the sake of justice, not only for the sake of the treaties which some of us have signed, not only for the sake of consolidating that world peace which is our supreme goal, but for the sake of the States themselves which possess such minorities.

I therefore desire to state, on behalf of my country, that we are determined to apply to our minorities the most liberal policy possible.

Secondly, as regards Roumania -- and I think that this point of view ought to be shared by the whole Assembly -- the question of minorities has a twofold aspect.

Governments are bound to afford protection to minorities, but the engagement must be reciprocal; the minorities on their side have a duty of loyalty towards the State of which they form a part.

Unless these two conditions are fulfilled, there can be no genuine moral disarmament. There can be no real consolidation of peace such as we desire and are striving to obtain.

Thirdly, we do not think that the true way to protect minorities is to occupy ourselves with details of procedure. Consequently, as far as we are concerned, we have absolute confidence in the spirit of justice and impartiality displayed in the work of the Council.

We have this absolute confidence in the Council of the League for the very reason that we know it regards the problem of minorities from the two points of view to which I have referred, and that it will therefore never allow the minorities question to degenerate into a source of constant obligation, on the one hand, and a pretext for selfish agitation on the other. We know that the Council of the League will do all in its power to avoid a situation

which would be as inadmissible as it would be paradoxical.

Fourthly, reference has recently been made in the Assembly to the necessity of modifying the status of minorities. If such a necessity exists, we think that the modifications should be made on the lines indicated in the resolution submitted by our colleague, M. Galvanauskas, first delegate of Lithuania. It is not the first time that Roumania has expressed this opinion.

When, at the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, it was first proposed to introduce clauses relative to the protection of minorities, Roumania declared that she had no objection, provided these clauses were of a general nature, since otherwise the world would find itself divided into countries with absolute sovereignty and countries with only limited sovereignty, a result quite incompatible with the democratic principles now governing the world.

I will also venture to offer a few brief observations on that burning problem which has formed the theme of all our discussions during the last few days — the Geneva Protocol.

I must say, first of all, that whatever decision is reached, and in spite of the differences of opinion which now divide us, Roumania is determined to adhere to the principles of the Geneva Protocol — Arbitration, Security, Disarmament. These are the three factors which, in my country's opinion, are inseparable and indispensable to the final triumph of peace.

Since the first condition of modern diplomacy is frankness, I venture to say that Roumania would have been in favour of a draft Protocol containing obligations more definitely compulsory than those laid down in the Geneva Protocol. If you consider the geographical situation of my country, you will, I think, understand the reasons for this preference. But we quite appreciate the difficulties which certain countries experience in admitting definite obligations. This year, the difficulty of admitting even the limited obligations contained in last year's Protocol has been brought home to us. In these circumstances you will understand that we cannot sacrifice present political possibilities to the desire to obtain something more.

We are therefore waiting. We shall wait until the Geneva Protocol and its principles are accepted. We await that hour with confidence, but we feel that it is not enough merely to wait. We cannot remain inactive. Until the Protocol has been accepted, we must all, according to our means, work for the consolidation of peace.

Allow me to indicate very briefly the manner in which we in Roumania think that the intervening period should be employed.

First of all, we think that regional agreements must be concluded. These have been mentioned during the last few days. I will add that Roumania has already concluded agreements of this kind, and will endeavour to conclude others in the future.

On the other hand, the idea of arbitration is becoming more and more firmly established in public opinion throughout the world.

Whenever, therefore, we find it possible to conclude a treaty of arbitration, we shall do so, and I am happy to be able to announce that at this very moment Roumania is engaged in negotiating such treaties with a number of States.

In order to demonstrate Roumania's peaceful intentions in the most effective and practical manner possible, we offer to conclude with all neighbouring States, without exception, permanent pacts of non-aggression. We are ready to sign such conventions with all our neighbours, because nowhere on any of our frontiers do we intend, either

now or at any time, to commit the crime of aggression.

In general, I should like the League to know that wherever a problem relating to peace may arise, wherever anything can be done to promote international peace, there, ladies and gentlemen, you will find us on your side, ready to collaborate with you, and, in the measure of our strength, ready to assist this policy in every way we can.

In thus preparing the final triumph of the principle contained in the Geneva Protocol, we have the satisfaction of collaborating in a splendid work, which must one day be completed, and at the same time we are conscious of fulfilling our whole duty towards ourselves, towards the League of Nations, and towards the highest aspirations of humanity.

#### 34. — PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS : DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE SWISS DELEGATION.

The President :

*Translation* : The Swiss delegation has submitted the following draft resolution to the President of the Assembly :

"The sixth Assembly of the League of Nations requests the Council to be good enough to transmit to the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young Persons, for any action that may be necessary, the recommendations and resolutions of the first general Congress on Child Welfare."

This draft resolution will be printed without delay and distributed to the members of the Assembly. In order to prevent loss of time I shall make a proposal, at the close of the present meeting, regarding the reference of the draft resolution to one of the Committees.

#### 35. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

*Translation* : We will now continue the discussion on the Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Doret, delegate of the Republic of Haiti, will address the Assembly.

M. Doret (Haiti) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — May I beg your indulgence while I say a few words on that part of the report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat which concerns the instruction of children and youth. You will forgive me if I deal with this question when so many other questions of urgent importance are claiming our attention.

As a former Minister of Education and as one who has had much to do with text-books, I know how powerful an influence these have upon the minds of the young, and how greatly they can contribute — indirectly, but not less surely — towards the attainment of the objects of the League.

The little Republic of Haiti, I need hardly say, has perfect confidence in the future development of the League, and earnestly hopes that this newly founded institution, which has already displayed such activity, will one day succeed in establishing the reign of peace through the wider application of international justice.

We are here, ladies and gentlemen, to seek together all possible means, great and small — none of which is negligible — of hastening the advent of peace. Among these means the report by the Secretariat mentions the instruction of children and youth in the existence and aims of the League, and advocates the revision of history books with a view to their adaptation to modern ideas on international relations. I would like something more, something to reinforce this teaching. While instructing young people in the aims of the League, I would at the same time take steps to eradicate certain prejudices which prevent the realisation of those aims. What are the toys given to a boy as soon as he learns to walk? A trumpet and a drum. That is easily understood, when the only object is his parents' peace and quiet. But after the trumpet and the drum there comes a gun. The gun is for sport, of course. But it is also — and on a far vaster scale — an implement of war. Armed with his gun the boy plays at "soldiers" with his companions. Is it any exaggeration to say that his initiation begins almost as soon as his babyhood ends? When, later on, he learns history, 70 per cent of the pages of his history manuals — these are last year's statistics for the United States — relate to wars. I might find examples in other subjects also.

I had occasion, in the Sixth Committee of the first Assembly, to submit a resolution on moral disarmament. One of my colleagues expressed the opinion that the first effect of my resolution, if it were adopted, would be to make every history manual out of date. My resolution was converted into a recommendation. Far be it from me to advocate any revolutionary upheaval. All I urge is that we should begin the work which we shall one day have to undertake — the elimination of anything which instils into children a taste for war.

As moral disarmament has several times been mentioned on this platform, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution:

"With a view to moral disarmament, the League of Nations invites its Members to undertake, as far as possible, the revision of their history manuals so as gradually to reduce the number of pages devoted to military events and especially those passages in which wars of conquest are justified and held up for admiration."

**The President :**

*Translation :* The Assembly has before it a new draft resolution submitted by M. Doret, delegate of the Republic of Haiti. This draft resolution will be printed and distributed without delay to the members of the Assembly. In order to prevent any loss of time, I shall submit proposals, at the close of the present meeting, for the reference of this draft resolution to one of the Committees.

Mr. Hewitt Bostock, President of the Canadian Senate, will address the Assembly.

**The Honourable Hewitt Bostock (Canada) :** Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have listened with great interest and appreciation to the most eloquent speeches which have been made by the distinguished representatives who have taken part in this discussion on the work of the Council.

This being the first occasion on which I have had the honour of appearing before this Assembly, I do not intend to ask for your attention for any length of time. I think, however, that it is important to state clearly and briefly the position of Canada in regard to the problem of Arbitration, Security and Disarmament.

It is true that Canada did not consider it possible to ratify the Protocol, but she accepted in a general way the principles of compulsory arbitration and of reduction of armaments. Her peculiar situation made it impossible for her to accept in its entirety the document as it was submitted to the Government for ratification. Nevertheless, being in complete accord with the aims and objects of the League of Nations, Canada has endorsed all the principles of universal interest contained in this document.

Early in March of this year the Prime Minister of Canada communicated to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations the conclusions of his Government, which were summarised as follows :

1. That Canada should continue to give whole-hearted support to the League of Nations and particularly to its work of conciliation, co-operation and publicity.

2. That we do not consider it in the interests of Canada, of the British Empire, or of the League itself to recommend to Parliament adherence to the Protocol and particularly to its rigid provisions for application of economic and military sanctions in practically every future war. Among the grounds for this conclusion is the consideration of the effect of the non-participation of the United States upon attempts to enforce the sanctions, and particularly so in the case of a contiguous country like Canada.

3. That, as Canada believes firmly in the submission of international disputes to joint enquiry or arbitration and has shared in certain notable undertakings in this field, we would be prepared to consider acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court in justiciable disputes, with certain reservations, and to consider methods of supplementing the provision of the Covenant for settlement of non-justiciable issues, including the method of joint investigation, reserving ultimate decision in domestic issues and without undertaking further obligations to enforce decisions in case of other States.

4. That Canada would be prepared to take part in any general Conference on Reduction of Armaments which did not involve prior acceptance of the Protocol.

Canada has been criticised in some quarters for not assuming all the obligations of the Protocol. Canada, however, is realising to-day, more intensely than she did at the time of the great war, what it has cost her; she therefore naturally hesitates to undertake in advance rigid obligations which would render her liable to intervene in conflicts so far removed from her shores.

Canada has complete confidence in the future of the League of Nations, and realises that it is now firmly established in the hearts and minds of the peoples. Undoubtedly, the rising generation will more and more come to appreciate the value of its work for the peace and well-being of mankind.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The last speaker on my list is M. Yañez, delegate for Chile.

**M. Yañez (Chile) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I venture to ask for your kind attention for a few moments while I refer briefly to a matter which, in my opinion, will make for the realisation,

n an efficient, rapid and practical manner, of the high ideals which are the origin and the object of the League of Nations.

I am now speaking, not only in my own name and in that of the Chilean delegation, but also as the representative of a far country in the midst of democratic evolution, which, small in population, military forces and strength, is great in courage, glorious traditions and activities, and has the same mentality, the same manner of understanding life, right and justice as have all the Latin peoples.

I am not proposing to make a speech; the hour for that has passed. The general debate is nearly at an end and the Committees must be given the necessary time in which to complete their work.

Nevertheless, I desire to say that America, on account of its situation, traditions and distance from Europe, and on account of its special problems, has certain interests which are peculiarly its own. That is why the American States are not all represented here.

This fact, however, should not alienate us from the ideal of world fraternity, nor weaken our will to help in the work of peace and universal solidarity.

Without mentioning any European countries not represented here, I must specially regret the absence of the United States, Mexico, the Argentine Republic and Ecuador from this Assembly; their absence prevents the unity and weakens the confidence which we need, and emphasises the necessity for a spirit of co-operation and harmony between the peoples of America and the whole world.

The United States persist in their refusal to participate in our work, doubtless because they fear that by taking an interest in European affairs they might incur responsibilities, and also because they fear the interference of Europe in American affairs.

These circumstances create for the other countries of the continent a special situation which we cannot afford to ignore.

The situation must be changed; interests which are vital must be reconciled, and certain nations not represented here must not be allowed to enjoy a situation of exceptional independence with regard to international questions which may affect the security of the world.

To avoid such a state of affairs, it is not enough to bring pressure to bear upon Governments and their most enlightened representatives; we must also create amongst the masses that new spirit to which the great war gave birth, and which the League is striving to disseminate throughout the whole world.

M. Painlevé stated in his able opening speech — and several speakers have followed him in his idea — that the League's discussions are helping to create a new international morality through mutual understanding. But the result would be small indeed if we rely solely on our discussions, and no result at all will be obtained by mere diplomatic instruments.

We must work for the evolution of the human spirit; we must form a new mentality, so as to bring about the conciliation of the varied intellectual characteristics which distinguish each nation.

If we desire to achieve permanent success, we must not merely seek formulas and words; we must appeal straight to the masses and devote ourselves to the organisation and education of new democracies, for it is there that racial feeling, passions, interests and the traditions which thousands of years have bred in the hearts of the nations are to be found in all their fullness

The equality of nations upon purely legal grounds; peace and right; fraternity in the sphere of ideas; pacific idealism. are not sufficient to conciliate interests and create a feeling of universal peace and harmony. That is why, in my opinion, the work of the League appears somewhat slow and somewhat unreal; that is why it does not attain the noble ideals of international right and justice, though we are painfully and perseveringly striving to attain them.

It has been rightly said that faith moves mountains. Well, the heaviest of all must be moved that of apathy and indifference.

I can conceive no more effective method of forming this new spirit than by influencing the minds of peoples through the Press and moulding the future generations in the schools.

I shall deal with this last point in the Second Committee, and I propose to invite the Council to examine attentively the replies already received by the Secretariat with regard to the instruction of youth in the principles of peace and the ideal of the League, with a view to calling a Conference of teachers to study the best possible means of creating the spirit of universal concord in schools.

With regard to the Press, I suggest for your consideration the idea of unifying its directive action on public opinion and its moral influence over Governments.

Journalism has in every country but one meaning in its spirit and in its essence because it is and should be the reflection of the ideas of liberty, progress and morality.

A universal bond of feeling unites all men and all peoples on the question of peace and the welfare of the working classes. The Press is the vanguard of these ideas, and that is why I submit the following draft resolution to the Assembly :

“The Assembly,

“Being profoundly convinced of the necessity of creating a new sense of international concord in the world ;

“Considering that the Press constitutes the surest and 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 in the different continents, with a view to determining by what means the Press may contribute towards the work of disarmament and the organisation of peace :

“(a) By ensuring the more rapid and less costly transmission of Press news, with a view to reducing risks of international misunderstanding,

“(b) And by discussing all technical problems the settlement of which would in their opinion be conducive to the tranquillisation of public opinion in the various countries.”

I wonder if this idea can be considered as coming within the scope of the action and mission of the League. Can the League call upon the Press of the entire world to collaborate in the work of world-fraternity, in that powerful intellectual movement which will be the best guarantee of security, disarmament and arbitration ? I believe it can.

If the League of Nations is not legally entitled to do so, it at least possesses the moral authority to take this step, and I think it should do so.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does any member still wish to speak on the Work of the Council and the Secretariat ?

If no one wishes to speak, I declare the discussion closed.

**36. — REFERENCE TO ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES OF FURTHER DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED DURING THE DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE PRESIDENT.**

**The President :**

*Translation :* I will now read to the Assembly the Agenda Committee's report, which has just been transmitted to me. It reads as follows :

The Committee met on Wednesday, September 16th, at 10.15 a.m., in the Salle de la Réformation.

The Committee decided that, in the absence of M. Skrzynski, the chair should be taken by M. F. Sokal, delegate of Poland.

The following were the items on the agenda :

1. *Draft resolution submitted by the Chinese delegation concerning the election of the six non-permanent Members of the Council :*

"The Assembly reiterates the following recommendation, adopted unanimously by the Assemblies of 1922, 1923 and 1924 :

"It is desirable that the Assembly, in electing the six non-permanent Members of the Council, should make its choice with due consideration for the main geographical divisions of the world, the great ethnical groups, the different religious divisions, the various types of civilisation and the chief sources of wealth."

The Committee was of opinion :

That, the Assembly having already on several occasions given a unanimous opinion on this recommendation, it was not necessary to submit these proposals again to one of the permanent Committees for preliminary examination, but that the recommendation should be referred direct to the Assembly.

The Agenda Committee decided therefore, following the precedent of last year's decisions, to suggest that the Chinese delegation's proposal should be submitted direct to the Assembly.

2. *Draft resolution submitted by the Chinese delegation concerning the situation in China.*

The Committee received notice from the Chinese delegation that the latter desired to introduce a slight amendment into the text submitted to the Assembly on September 14th, 1925.

The text now submitted to the Assembly is as follows :

**RECOMMENDATION.**

"The Assembly,

"Having heard with keen interest the statement of the Chinese delegation regarding the reconsideration of China's treaties which, in the opinion of the Chinese delegation, have become inapplicable;

"Having learned with satisfaction that a Conference of the States concerned is soon to take place in China to consider the questions involved;

"Considering that the purpose of this Conference corresponds to the spirit of the Covenant, particularly to that of Article 19,

"Expresses the hope that a satisfactory solution may be found at an early date."

The Committee was of opinion that, as this was a recommendation upon which the Assembly would have to take a vote, but which involved no question of principle, it should be submitted direct to the Assembly.

For the Committee :  
(Signed) VAN HAMEL,

*Director of the Legal Section  
of the Secretariat.*

If no one wishes to speak on these proposals, I shall consider them as adopted.

*The proposals were adopted.*

With the object of expediting the work of the Committees, as I announced at yesterday's meeting, I have now framed proposals for the immediate reference to the various Committees concerned of the draft resolutions submitted to the Assembly since the meeting of the General Committee yesterday morning.

This more expeditious method is in conformity with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. It is also justified by our unanimous desire to avoid all loss of time.

Since the distribution of the draft resolutions which was decided upon at yesterday's meeting, five new drafts have been submitted to the Assembly :

1. The French delegation's draft resolution concerning the examination of economic difficulties which stand in the way of the restoration of general prosperity;

2. The Chilian delegation's draft resolution concerning the collaboration of the Press in the work of disarmament;

3. The Swiss delegation's draft resolution concerning the protection and welfare of children and young persons ;

4. The draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Haiti concerning the influence of teaching on the work of moral disarmament;

5. The Chilian delegation's draft resolution concerning instruction in schools in the principles of peace.

I propose that the Assembly should refer the French delegation's draft resolution at once to the Second Committee.

I also propose that the Chilian delegation's first draft resolution be referred to the Agenda Committee.

As no plenary meeting will be held for some days, I ask the Assembly's sanction for the immediate execution of any proposals which the Agenda Committee may make for the reference of the Chilian delegation's draft resolution to one of the Committees of the Assembly.

I propose that the Swiss delegation's draft resolution be referred to the Fifth Committee, that the draft resolution presented by the delegation of Haiti be referred to the Second Committee, and, lastly, that the Chilian delegation's second draft resolution be referred to the Second Committee.

If no one has any observations to make, I shall consider these proposals adopted.

*The proposals were adopted.*

*The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## THIRTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st, 1925, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

37. — CREDENTIALS OF M. ENRIQUE BUERO, DELEGATE OF URUGUAY: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

*Translation* : M. de Agüero y Bethancourt will address the Assembly.

M. de Agüero y Bethancourt, Chairman of the Committee on Credentials :

*Translation* : The Committee on Credentials has received a cablegram from His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay stating that His Excellency M. Enrique Buero, Uruguayan Minister at Berne, has been accredited delegate for the Republic in place of M. Juan Antonio Buero.

In the Committee's opinion, this communication fully conforms with Article 5, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.

The Committee therefore considers M. Enrique Buero duly accredited.

The President :

*Translation* : The communication which has just been made is duly noted.

38.— SIGNATURE BY THE POLISH GOVERNMENT OF THE PROTOCOL CONTAINING THE AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT ADOPTED BY THE FIFTH ASSEMBLY: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

*Translation* : I have received a letter from the Polish delegation to the Sixth Assembly stating that the Polish Government, with a view to increasing the prestige and authority of the League, attaches great importance to the articles of the Covenant relating to preventive measures against

war, and to sanctions, and has decided to accept the amendment to Article 16 voted by the Fifth Assembly in order to assist in bringing it into force.

In execution of this decision M. Skrzynski, Minister for Foreign Affairs and first delegate for Poland, signed the amendment in question on the 15th of this month.

### 39. — SITUATION IN CHINA : POSTPONEMENT OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.

The President :

*Translation* : The first item on the agenda, which has been communicated to members of the Assembly, is the draft resolution of the Chinese delegation relative to the situation in China. The Chinese delegation has notified me, however, that it wishes to examine this draft resolution again, and I therefore think it preferable to postpone the discussion of this question to our next meeting.

The delegations will have received the definite text of the draft resolution by to-morrow, and the question will be included in the agenda, for Tuesday morning's meeting.

### 40. — WORK OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

*Translation* : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the work of the Health Organisation.

I invite the Rapporteur, M. Velghe, delegate for Belgium, and the Chairman of the Second Committee, Jonkheer van Eysinga, to take their places on the platform.

*(Jonkheer van Eysinga and M. Velghe, took their places on the platform.)*

M. Velghe (Belgium), Rapporteur, gave the following summary of the report of the Second Committee (Annex Doc. A. 79.1925. III) :

Encouraged by the approval of the Fifth Assembly last year, the Health Organisation has continued its work in a manner which deserves the approval of the Second Committee.

The Epidemiological Intelligence Service, the great value of which is appreciated by the health administrations, has continued to publish its monthly report. In view of the necessity of accelerating the transmission of information regarding certain diseases, the Governments of several countries on the Mediterranean and Black Sea decided to notify Geneva by telegraph at their own expense of the first appearance of plague or cholera cases in any of their ports. This represents a considerable step forward, for if all prophylaxis is based upon the notification of the outbreak of contagious diseases, the speed and efficacy of such prophylaxis varies directly with the promptitude of the notification.

Further, the proposed Epidemiological Intelligence Bureau in the Far East has been established at Singapore and has been at work since March 1st last, thanks to the far-sighted generosity of the International Health Board of the Rockefeller Foundation. This Bureau is now in communication with forty-six of the principal ports of Asia, Australia and East Africa. It co-ordinates the information received and transmits it weekly by wireless to the interested health services in the Far East and also to the Health Section of the Secretariat, which in turn transmits

it to the health administrations of the Members of the League. The establishment of the Singapore Bureau and the addition to this Bureau of a Commission composed of delegates of the Far Eastern Health Administrations and of representatives of the Health Organisation of the League are evidence of the special importance which the Health Committee attaches to the improvement of the health situation in Far Eastern countries, and constitute an assurance that the Committee will endeavour to extend its work in that part of the world.

The services rendered by the Singapore Bureau since its recent foundation have induced the French delegation to propose the establishment of a similar bureau on the West Coast of Africa.

This office would in its opinion be of great service, not only to the African countries but also to the countries with which they have relations, especially the South American States.

The Health Organisation has undertaken a series of investigations with the object of ensuring that official morbidity and mortality statistics shall be drawn up on a comparable basis. The researches for a standard definition of still-birth have been concluded, and the report of the Health Committee has been forwarded by the Council's instructions to the various Governments.

As regards the standardisation of biological products, the investigations are so advanced that it has been possible to hold another international conference at Geneva.

The investigations in connection with sera in respect of which standardisation is possible in the present state of knowledge are so far advanced that there is some prospect of resolutions being adopted next year which will be submitted to the Governments for ratification.

The experience acquired by the Malaria Commission continues to be appreciated by the administrations concerned. At the invitation of the Spanish Government, the Commission has visited certain malarial regions in Spain. One of its members has visited the health administration of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes at the request of the Government of that country. The French Government has asked the Commission to conduct an investigation in Corsica, and a similar request has lately been received from the Turkish Government.

There are also other matters in connection with which Governments have appealed to the Health Organisation. Thus, at the request of Persia, a delegate of the Health Section proceeded to that country to study the possibilities for organising measures against epidemics. The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics has also recently solicited the co-operation of the Health Organisation in investigating the causes of the persistence of endemic plague in certain parts of Eastern Siberia bordering upon Manchuria.

On the suggestion of the Health Committee, which was transmitted, in accordance with a decision of the Council, to all Governments having possessions in Central Africa, a Conference met in London last May to consider the campaign against sleeping-sickness and tuberculosis in those regions. This Conference made various recommendations and proposed, in particular, that an international commission should be asked to study in East Africa, along certain definite lines, a series of problems relating to the epidemiology of sleeping-sickness.

Interchanges of public health officials, organised in part by means of funds placed for this purpose at the disposal of the Health section by the Rockefeller Foundation, took place this year in Great Britain, Belgium and the Kingdom of the



Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Sixty-five officials belonging to thirty-six different countries participated. In addition, three interchanges of specialists took place, one of which was organised in conjunction with the International Labour Office for medical inspectors of labour. A special interchange was arranged for the health officers of Latin-American countries, whilst another is being arranged for the sanitary officials of Eastern countries.

As it is difficult for Public Health officers of the British Dominions to take part in these collective tours, health experts from Australia and New Zealand have been charged with individual study missions in Europe. Similarly, a Canadian tuberculosis expert has had the opportunity of investigating thoroughly the methods in use in different European countries for combating tuberculosis.

These interchanges of officials are intended to develop the scientific and technical knowledge of those who take part; to give them an insight into the institutions and organisations of the countries they visit and to enable them to appreciate the efficiency of the methods in use for combating disease and for improving the hygienic conditions of the population. The relations which result from the interchange of health experts of the various countries serve to promote mutual understanding, a desire for collaboration, and a spirit of emulation which cannot fail to be of value, both to those who take part in the interchanges and to the sanitary administrations to which they belong.

The Fifth Assembly asked the Health Committee to institute an enquiry into the value of the measures taken against tuberculosis in different countries.

In carrying out this decision, the Health Committee decided, as a preliminary measure, to prepare a report dealing with the decline of mortality from tuberculosis in the various countries from a statistical point of view.

This report having demonstrated that there was a real decline of mortality from this cause in certain countries, and having brought to light the probable reasons, a Committee was formed to continue the work and to study the effect of industrial labour, of housing and food supplies generally, and of milk consumption in particular, upon the prevalence of tuberculosis.

We appreciate the methodical character of the proposed investigations, and we realise the important part they will play in strengthening our defences against tuberculosis. Let us therefore hope that they will shortly be productive of satisfactory results.

Last year the Assembly was pleased to recognise that the work accomplished by the Health Organisation had been kept within the limits of the mission entrusted to the League of Nations under Article 23, paragraph (f) of the Covenant and was likely to promote valuable co-operation in health matters.

The Second Committee would also emphasise the fact mentioned by the Health Committee in its report — that the greater part of the work of the Health Organisation has been done not so much upon its own initiative as at the request of Governments, of national public health authorities, of the Council or of the Assembly.

As the investigations of the Health Organisation are given a wide publicity, they are of value to the local and central health authorities in all countries. Even when the Health Organisation, at the request of any particular Government, sends a mission to a given country to investigate its health conditions and discover what remedies are needed to improve them, it does not render service to the public health authorities in that country alone, for all nations

are united in health matters, all benefit by the experience of others, just as all are menaced by the unsatisfactory health conditions of any one of them or by the inadequacy of its sanitary equipment. The League of Nations fully realised this when it established the Health Organisation and approved the methods of work of the Health Committee. By forming permanent or temporary commissions, as the case might be; by appointing the most highly qualified experts in the various countries to be members of these commissions; by the research work entrusted to these experts; by the missions sent to make studies on the spot, in order that they might ascertain the actual state of affairs and might judge in special circumstances of the extent of the evil from which populations are suffering and of the remedies best suited to local conditions, the Health Organisation is in a position to make prompt and useful suggestions to the public health authorities which seek its advice.

In order to show its appreciation of the work done by the Health Organisation, the Second Committee decided to submit to the Assembly the following resolution, which was proposed by the Venezuelan delegation and seconded by the delegations of Belgium, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, Japan, Paraguay, Poland, Roumania, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and Switzerland.

In proposing the following resolution, the Second Committee emphasises that its adoption does not involve any additional expenditure.

*The Assembly has examined the report presented by the Health Committee on the activities of the Health Organisation and considers that the work accomplished since the last Assembly has been carried out in accordance with the recommendations of former Assemblies and in conformity with the decisions of the Council.*

*The Assembly notes with satisfaction that this work, thanks to the research and investigations undertaken for the solution of the problems examined, will be of the greatest value to the public health services of different countries.*

*The Assembly is glad to note that the Governments are more and more disposed to collaborate with the Health Organisation in matters concerning the prevention of communicable diseases and the improvement of health conditions of the people.*

*The Assembly requests the Council to refer to the Health Committee and to the Economic Committee for their consideration the proposal submitted by the delegation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and to the Health Committee the proposals of the delegations of Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, Paraguay and Venezuela, on the assumption that these proposals will not involve any expenditure supplementary to the estimates already submitted for 1926.*

I put the resolutions to the vote.

*(The resolutions were adopted).*

#### 41. — WORK OF THE ORGANISATION FOR TRANSIT AND COMMUNICATIONS : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Second Committee's Report on the Organisation for Communications and Transit.

M. Avramovitch, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), Rapporteur :

*Translation* : Before presenting my report on the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit, I trust that I shall be voicing the desire of the whole Assembly in congratulating the British delegation upon the celebrations which took place in London last June on the occasion of the Fourth Railway Congress organised by the British Government in commemoration of the centenary of the opening to public traffic of the first railway from Darlington to Stockton in England in 1825.

This work, which was destined to be of such high importance and was conceived by a great Englishman — George Stephenson — marks a definite stage in the development of civilisation. It is a fitting moment, now that we are discussing the question of communications, to say that George Stephenson deserves the highest gratitude, not only of his own country but of the whole world.

After offering these few observations, as it was my duty to do, I turn to the question on the agenda.

I will not take up your time with the report of the Second Committee (Annex, A.81.1925.VIII), which you already have, as we all wish to finish the work of the Sixth Assembly as rapidly as possible.

The questions for which I have the honour to act as Rapporteur are neither controversial nor very interesting to the public. I venture to say, however, that few questions are of greater importance, few questions are of wider interest in the whole field of human activity. I will not dwell upon this point — indeed, before such an Assembly as this it would be out of place to do so — but, bearing in mind the progress that has been made, not merely in the last century but in the last twenty years, I cannot help pointing out that, but for this improvement in communications and transit, even the great principles and noble ideas of the League would be less easily disseminated throughout the world, and the advance of scientific knowledge and material and moral progress would be impossible.

Means of communication have been a great spur to progress, even in the most abstract domains. Without them, certain transcendent principles of international law and international relationships would never have seen the light. Owing to its means of communication the world now forms a single material, intellectual and moral entity, which is rapidly destroyed as soon as these communications are broken; the best proof of this is to be seen in all the different crises which have arisen and the unrest which has prevailed throughout the world since the war.

In adopting the resolutions which I am about to read, you will not only be serving the individual interests of your own countries but also the general interests of humanity, and you will be acting in conformity with the fundamental principles of the League.

(M. Avramovitch read the two following draft resolutions submitted by the Second Committee.)

#### I. The Assembly :

*Having taken note of the report of the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit on the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit between the Fifth and Sixth Assemblies,*

*Expresses its gratification at the work undertaken and the results obtained by the Advisory and Technical Committee, its Sub-Committees and the*

*various persons appointed by the Chairman of the Advisory and Technical Committee to undertake special missions :*

*Associating itself with the resolution adopted by the Advisory and Technical Committee at its last session, considers it highly desirable that the Conventions adopted at the last General Conference on Communications and Transit should come into force as early as possible between the greatest possible number of States, draws the attention of the Governments concerned to this fact, and reminds them that, should it seem desirable to any of these Governments to obtain, with a view to facilitating ratification or adherence, any necessary information or particulars as to these Conventions in order to dispel all misunderstandings, the Advisory Committee would be ready to give any assistance which might be required ;*

*Trusts that the European Conference of the Tonnage Measurement of Vessels employed in Inland Navigation, which is to meet on November 20th next, will obtain the complete success which can be already expected as a result of the excellent preparatory work of the Advisory and Technical Committee carried out with the full co-operation of the European States not Members of the League ;*

*Draws the attention of all the Governments to the special importance of the Conference on Passports to be held in 1926, which public opinion, particularly in economic circles, undoubtedly expects to take at least a step towards the abolition, to the widest extent possible, of the passport system, and to mitigate considerably the disadvantages and expense which that system entails for the relations between peoples and for international trade facilities ;*

*Follows with keen interest the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit which may result in the convening of a Conference on communications and transit of the European States concerned with a view to maintain, preserve and, if necessary, adapt to present circumstances, the unification of private law concerning international traffic as applicable to international traffic on successive contracts, of the method of presentation of tariffs and of the method of presentation of operation regulations which were all effected before the war between certain railway systems in Central and Eastern Europe ;*

*In view of the great economic importance which problems relating to the organisation and exploitation of hydro-electric power present for a large number of countries Members of the League of Nations, and in view of the influence which favourable agreements will exercise on the economic reconstruction of Europe and the improvement of the general economic conditions of the world, again draws the attention of Governments and the Organisation for Communications and Transit to these problems, and to the fact that, apart from the question of the ratification of the Conventions concluded at the last General Conference, it is desirable that the competent organs of the League should draw up a definite plan of action for instituting the most practical methods whereby the League of Nations may take as active a part as possible in the solution of these problems ;*

*Convinced that the Members of the League will further the work of the Organisation in every direction, and, in particular, will assist its efforts to arrange for the technical settlement between States of disputes concerning international communications, of which remarkable examples have been given by the Advisory Committee during the past year :*

*Invites the Organisation for Communications and Transit to continue its work in the same*

spirit and on the same lines, with a view to the improvement of international transport and the development of international law in regard to communications.

## II. The Assembly :

Considering that all improvements in railway, telegraphic, radio-telegraphic, telephonic and radio-telephonic communications between the seat of the League of Nations and the States Members or non-Members of the League are of the highest political and practical importance to the working and development of the League ;

And having taken note of the efforts of the Organisation for Communications and Transit to secure improvements in the railway time-tables which affect communications with the seat of the League :

Calls the attention of the Governments concerned to the necessity for further progress accompanied by an improvement in conditions as regards Customs formalities at the frontiers near the seat of the League. These conditions are still giving rise to the delays and inconveniences to which attention was drawn in the discussions of the last Assembly, and the Assembly requests the Organisation for Communications and Transit to continue to co-operate in the endeavour to achieve such progress ;

Associating itself with the resolution adopted by the Advisory and Technical Committee at its last session with reference to the questions raised by the establishment of a new European long-distance telephone system, draws the attention of the Governments concerned to the desirability of treating communications between the seat of the League and the principal European capitals on the same footing as communications between important capitals, when considering the question of priority and urgency for the establishment of different lines ;

Recommends that a resolution proposed by the delegate for Uruguay<sup>1</sup> on the subject of telegraphic facilities for the dissemination of information regarding the work of the League of Nations should be referred to the Organisation for Communications and Transit for consideration and for any action which it may think expedient and possible.

I am certain that in adopting these resolutions and in doing what is necessary to carry out the suggestions they contain, the various Governments will be accomplishing a useful work not only for the League but for their own countries.

Indeed, we shall be greatly helping to strengthen the foundations of the League and to establish international co-operation in every sphere : material and moral disarmament, the security of nations, and universal peace.

I therefore beg the Assembly to adopt the resolutions submitted by the Second Committee, and I beg the Governments Members of the League here represented in the persons of the honourable delegates to do all they can to ensure that these resolutions shall be approved and put into practice.

<sup>1</sup> Draft resolution : "... requests the Conference of the Universal Telegraphic Union, which is now in conference, to consider how far it is possible for the telegraphic administrations to further the work of the League of Nations and assist in bringing it to public notice by affording newspapers and journalists who follow the work of the League the widest facilities in regard to rates, approximating as nearly as possible to uniformity, and by considering the improvement of the telegraphic and radio-telegraphic services, which can and should be utilised for the wider dissemination of information regarding the work of the League of Nations."

The President :

Translation : Does anybody wish to speak on these resolutions ?

I put them to the vote.

The resolutions were adopted.

## 42. — FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF HUNGARY : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the debate on the Report of the Second Committee concerning the financial reconstruction of Hungary.

M. Loucheur, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Loucheur, Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — As the report on the financial reconstruction of Hungary has been distributed in both languages (Annex, A.80.1925), I will merely refer to its salient points.

Less than eighteen months after the signature of the agreements providing for the financial reconstruction of Hungary, we are glad to be able to say that, at the end of the financial year 1924-1925, instead of the estimated deficit of 100,000,000 gold crowns we have a surplus totalling 63,000,000 gold crowns. Moreover, the crown has been stable for over a year ; the Bank's resources are sufficient for the needs of the harvest ; its reserves have been tripled in a year ; and the commercial balance has greatly increased. Lastly, the deposits in crowns in the Hungarian banks have increased from 2,600,000 to 78,000,000 gold crowns.

Nevertheless, a number of problems remain to be solved, such as the reduction in the number of officials — a question which is more important in Hungary than elsewhere. To carry this out, the Hungarian Government has planned a complete reorganisation of its public services.

Above all — and this is an essential point to which the attention of the Hungarian Government should be drawn — the commercial negotiations at present in progress, particularly the negotiations with Austria, must be brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

The present fiscal charges, although they constitute 13 to 15 per cent of the national revenue, are not too heavy. Unfortunately, they are raised by methods which should be modified, since about three-quarters of the State revenue is raised by direct taxation. The Hungarian Government has, however, resolutely taken in hand the required reforms.

The economic programme in connection with railways, posts, telegraphs and telephones, and the construction of drainage canals, on which the Financial Committee and the Economic Committee are in agreement, has yet to be completed.

Such, gentlemen, is the work that has been done and the work that remains to be done.

I believe I am interpreting the sentiments of the Committee and of the whole Assembly in congratulating the Hungarian Government upon the great effort it has made, and in thanking and congratulating the Commissioner-General, whose outstanding ability is highly appreciated by the whole Assembly, and who, in co-operation with the Hungarian Government, has succeeded in surmounting the difficulties of this period.

In order to be just also towards the people of Hungary, I venture to second the tribute paid here by Count Apponyi to the Unknown Taxpayer,

who during 1924-1925 bore the burden of this taxation and thus made the restoration of his country possible.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does anybody wish to speak on the resolution submitted by the Second Committee?

*The following resolution was put to the vote and adopted :*

*The Assembly notes with satisfaction the rapid progress made in the financial reconstruction of Hungary. In the first year in which the reconstruction programme has been applied, the budget has been balanced and the accounts relating to the period from July 1924 to June 1925 show a considerable surplus instead of a deficit, which would have had to be covered out of the yield of the international loan. Monetary stability is assured, and there is an improvement in the economic situation.*

*The Assembly expresses its congratulations to the Hungarian Government and the Commissioner-General. It confidently hopes that the reconstruction programme may be brought to a conclusion within the period provided for by the Protocols.*

*It notes the Hungarian Government's declarations regarding its proposals for re-organising the administrative departments.*

*It considers that the measures taken by the Hungarian Government with a view to re-establishing freedom of trade are of a kind to encourage the development of the country ; it would welcome the conclusion of further commercial agreements between Hungary and other countries — particularly the adjoining countries with which negotiations are in progress — which would tend to bring about a progressive reduction of the tariffs in Central Europe and would thus contribute to establishing closer economic relations.*

#### 43. — FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRIA : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the debate on the report of the Second Committee on the financial reconstruction of Austria.

I invite M. Michelet, delegate of Norway, Rapporteur, to take his place on the platform and to communicate his report to the Assembly.

**M. Michelet (Norway), Rapporteur :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have pleasure in laying before you the report of the Second Committee on the financial reconstruction of Austria, as we now come to a new stage — a happy and a conclusive stage — in the League's work of reconstruction : the gradual liquidation of international control.

This liquidation is subject to certain conditions, but there is every reason to believe that these conditions will be fulfilled. Though there are still clouds on the Austrian horizon, we all hope that they will soon be dissipated, in order that this noble people may be able to develop and place the whole of its strength at the service of civilisation.

The Second Committee's report has been submitted to you, together with the accompanying resolutions (Annex, Doc. A. 78. 1925). I shall therefore not read it.

Before concluding, I should like to offer two observations in a personal capacity.

It is my duty to thank the Secretariat for the splendid assistance it gave me when I was engaged in investigating this question. I have everywhere met with unparalleled kindness and helpfulness,

and it has been a great pleasure to me to cooperate with men so cultured, so sympathetic, and so engrossed in the questions submitted to them. I offer them my heartiest thanks.

**Colonel Bolli (Switzerland) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Swiss delegation desires to associate itself whole-heartedly with the congratulations addressed to Austria on the approaching completion of the work of financial restoration which was only begun a few years ago. Our congratulations are also due to the League, under whose auspices this happy result has been obtained.

For a number of reasons the Swiss nation has always followed with cordial sympathy the progress of the financial restoration of Austria, and Switzerland has endeavoured, within the limits of her modest resources, to afford both material and moral aid.

In the first place, the two nations have long been united by traditional ties of loyal friendship and neighbourly amity. The great river which flows from our mountains and for many miles forms the frontier between Switzerland and Austria has for centuries neither separated nor divided them. Rather has the Rhine united the two nations in a joint effort to safeguard their respective shores and the well-being of the inhabitants.

But in addition to this, and viewing the matter from a more general aspect, the Swiss nation welcomes every effort of the League that bears witness to the active spirit of solidarity on which it is based. With her practical clear-sightedness Switzerland recognises in work such as this, which bears immediate fruit, indications of the progress being made towards great achievements and high ideals. She will always welcome the establishment of secure foundations for the future peace and happiness of humanity.

**M. Suvich (Italy) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I do not think I need speak at any great length on the question of the financial restoration of Austria. There are, however, certain aspects of the problem to which the Assembly's attention might, I think, be drawn.

In the first place, we must not lose sight for one moment of the preponderating and decisive part played by the League. It would be going too far, perhaps, to say that but for the League's intervention Austria would have been lost. But it is only fair to say that when Austria was in imminent peril the League intervened and played a decisive part in her affairs.

Before this intervention, however, Austria had received advances and assistance from other Powers, from Great Britain, France, Italy and Czechoslovakia, who had gone to her assistance and given her their generous and fraternal support. Their help, unfortunately, could only have the effect of prolonging the country's agony; the real need was to discover some method of reviving her and endowing her with new vitality.

This method was found, in face of the imminent danger caused by the depreciation of her currency, which complicated the provisioning of the country and made the introduction of sweeping financial and economic reforms a most hazardous venture. The means adopted took the form of a scheme for the reconstruction of Austria drawn up by the League. It was a new scheme, which, if concrete results were to be obtained, demanded, on the one hand, strict but wise and reasonable control, and, on the other, absolute good-will.

• These conditions were fulfilled, and that is why the original plan of 1922 — certain points of which were modified in 1924 in the light of the experience obtained during the first two years of the scheme's application — has now brought about the desired result.

Perfect co-operation was essential between all the agents concerned in the execution of the scheme: between the League and its organs, the Commissioner-General, the Board of the National Bank, the Government and the Austrian nation. This co-operation was attained, and the work begun three years ago may be regarded as almost completed to-day. The system is already in operation by which control will eventually cease; it has, indeed, been relaxed since last August in virtue of a decision of the Commissioner-General.

The budget equilibrium is now an accomplished fact. Although the actual expenditure has exceeded the estimates in the agreement reached with the League in September 1924, the revenue during that period has also increased to a corresponding extent. This fact is recorded by the Financial Committee in its report on the work of its nineteenth session,<sup>1</sup> in which, after noting that there was a surplus on the ordinary budget for 1924, it states that a similar result is expected for 1925. Since the drawing-up of the plan of reform the Austrian currency has remained stable.

There is reason, therefore, to believe that the responsible Governments of the Federation and the Austrian nation itself, which has suffered so greatly from inflation, will certainly never venture to disturb the equilibrium of the budget, since to do so would inevitably lead to fresh difficulties and further suffering. Such being the case, it may surely be said that the reservations contained in the scheme for the cessation of control will not hamper Austrian economic activities but will rather serve to maintain confidence in the national finances and, it is to be hoped, make it possible to float at a moderate rate of interest the long-term loans which Austrian production requires if cost prices are to be reduced.

Economic conditions in Austria still bear traces of an acute crisis, the most serious feature of which is unemployment, which as yet shows no signs of decreasing.

Mr. Layton and Professor Rist, the experts who have given us such an admirable account of conditions in Austria in the form of a general summary and a more detailed statement, attribute this crisis to two main factors: first, the cost prices due to the economic organisation of certain undertakings which date back to the period of inflation, and the present high rate of interest; and, secondly, the difficulty in finding outlets for Austrian products owing to the Customs and tariff systems in the Danube countries.

In this connection the experts contemplate the possibility of closer co-operation between Austria and her neighbours in the matter of a commercial and Customs policy. The question is to be studied and has been referred by the Council to the Economic Committee for examination.

Italy desires to state that she is prepared, if this project is taken up, to give it her support, as she is most anxious to promote the economic recovery of Austria in order to complete the very useful work undertaken by the League in this connection. In any case, the interests of third parties should, as far as possible, be safeguarded.

Italy is convinced that no efforts in this direction will be wasted; all will really contribute towards the economic reconstruction of Central and Eastern Europe.

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Journal*, October 1925.

In any case, the work already done towards the reconstruction of Austria, and the work now being undertaken — and already so far advanced — for the recovery of Hungary, represent an enormous contribution towards the maintenance of peace and undeniably reflect lasting credit on the League.

**The President :**

*Translation :* I call upon M. Veverka, delegate of Czechoslovakia, to address the Assembly.

**M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Czechoslovak delegation desires first to associate itself with the praise so rightly bestowed on the admirable work of the Rapporteur. It also pays tribute to the wisdom of the Council and to all those who have contributed to the success obtained in 1925 in connection with the work begun in 1922 under the auspices of the League. The admirable report of Professor Rist and Mr. Layton had already encouraged us to hope that the great work of financial and economic restoration is nearing its conclusion. The Austrian Government's assurances and the evidence laid before the Council and the Second Committee have converted this hope into a certainty.

If, from this complex mass of facts and arguments I might venture to select the two chief constructive ideas, I would simply quote these two outstanding statements :

1. Austria is able to live.
2. Austria is not suffering from any specific ills.

I would add, in the words employed by M. Loucheur in the Austrian Committee of the Council when he summed up the situation of the country in so clear, able and concise a manner: "Want is at an end, and prosperity is in sight".

The discussions of the competent Technical Committee will show whether it is expedient to adopt special economic means to encourage Austria in this path of prosperity. I am also inclined to think that the general conference which is about to materialise through the action of this Assembly might, as a result of its general economic diagnosis of the present distress, throw sufficient light on the question and suggest a remedy for this concrete case. One thing, however, appears to be already certain: Austria will never be obliged to resort to measures foreign to her natural organic evolution or historic mission in order to ensure her power to live and her national prosperity.

As the representative of the country which is her neighbour and her friend and which is directly interested in her destiny, I hasten to offer her my congratulations.

When I say "neighbour", I use the word in its fullest meaning and particularly in its economic sense. Czechoslovakia, which is in a similar position and is destined to share and experience every reaction produced by the general economic situation, cannot but rejoice at seeing her neighbour emerge from her peril unharmed and strengthened. It is in this spirit that I extend to Austria my best wishes for the future.

The Czechoslovak delegation whole-heartedly seconds the resolution now before us.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Avramovitch, delegate of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, will address the Assembly.

**M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen

— I have the honour, on behalf of the Serb-Croat-Slovene delegation, to congratulate the Rapporteur and the Austrian Government on their contribution towards the work so courageously undertaken and so successfully carried out by the League of Nations.

November 28th, 1921, and September 21st, 1925, will be two red-letter days in the history of the League.

In 1921, the world was distraught by the financial and economic straits to which every country was reduced. Everyone wondered whether a remedy could be found at all.

It was then, if you remember, that M. Ador, as Rapporteur of the Second Committee, indicated the means which appeared best calculated to restore Austria and those other countries whose finances were in an unsatisfactory condition. Following his lead, we declared that their restoration could only be accomplished by the combined efforts of public opinion, the various Governments and the League.

We appealed for international co-operation. We rejoice to find that this co-operation, which developed under the auspices of the League, has led to the most striking results.

The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Austria's friend and neighbour, is particularly gratified. May I remind you that, since 1918, my country has had very close economic and financial relations with Austria. Moreover, quite recently we have concluded with the Austrian Government a commercial treaty which must contribute both to the financial reconstruction of Austria and to the prosperity of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

As M. Michelet, the Rapporteur, rightly said, the League can congratulate itself on its work in Austria, as can the States which are creditors of that country. The Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes did not hesitate to abandon certain legitimate rights, even though it was itself faced with serious financial and economic difficulties. It willingly made these sacrifices in the hope that it would thereby help towards the reconstruction of Austria and the pacification of the world.

In conclusion, may I again offer the sincere congratulations of the Serb-Croat-Slovene delegation to the Austrian Government, to the League and to the Rapporteur of the Second Committee, who has so admirably voiced the sentiments of every delegation ?

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

**M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein (Austria) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Rapporteur and several members of this august Assembly, whose interesting and remarkable speeches we have just heard, have revealed the great work done by the League in Austria since the agreements with the Federal Government were concluded here at Geneva during the third Assembly.

I desire to express my deep gratitude to the representative of that noble country which is now offering us hospitality, for the eloquent terms in which he referred to the amicable relations which for centuries past have existed between Switzerland and Austria. His words, which will find a ready echo in my country, touched me profoundly, and I can assure him that his feelings are fully reciprocated.

It fills me with the keenest satisfaction, here on this platform, from which in previous years it

has more than once been my duty to plead the cause of my country, then on the verge of the abyss, to note to-day that the sympathy shown for Austria by the League has never failed. That sympathy has survived unchanged during the long period of effort and sacrifice through which we have passed. I rejoice to find that it remains as strong as ever after the reading of the Second Committee's report to the Assembly on the results obtained in Austria.

This report, like the recent report of the Financial Committee, notes that Austria's currency has been stabilised and her budget balanced. It reproduces the Council resolution contemplating the withdrawal of the League's control in the near future.

Before this stage is reached, however, something still remains to be done. The time specified for the execution of certain conditions in the agreements has not yet elapsed. Again, the Council, with the object of guaranteeing the credits granted to Austria — a vital and indispensable element in her industrial activity — has seen fit to require the Federal Government to agree to certain precautionary measures for which the latter still has to obtain the assent of the Legislative Assembly; namely, the stipulation that the services of a foreign adviser to the National Bank must be retained for three years, and that the control may be re-established if, within the next ten years, budgetary equilibrium should be seriously threatened, or if the securities assigned should prove insufficient to cover the service of the loan. These contingencies, however, are most improbable and, we are convinced, will never actually occur. The necessary laws will be submitted to Parliament, and will mark the last stage in the execution of the complete scheme of financial reconstruction.

May I venture now to speak of one of the chief contributors to this work, who, to my regret, is not present to-day. I refer to the Commissioner-General — M. Zimmerman — for whom my country will always entertain the sincerest feelings of gratitude, and whom it will always regard as a loyal and disinterested friend, as one who was at once our wise and trusted counsellor and the able and loyal executor of the League's recommendations.

May I also pay a tribute to the patience and courage with which the Austrian nation submitted to the trials and sacrifices required of it, confident that those trials and sacrifices would not be in vain and that the League's help would always be forthcoming in the work of financial reconstruction which was then the supreme question of the hour.

Nor must I omit the name of that courageous and far-sighted statesman Monsignor Seipel, who took the first step of all by appealing to the League, and to whom my thoughts turn to-day with sincere respect and admiration.

In thus voicing Austria's profound gratitude towards the League, I must not forget our gratitude to those countries which at the outset guaranteed the loans of which we stood in dire need.

The Council, realising our anxiety as to our economic future, instituted the economic enquiry the outcome of which you know. In their admirable report, the experts — Professor Rist and Mr. Layton — pointed out that the unfavourable economic situation in Austria, which was brought about by the same causes as those existing in many other countries, can be remedied; but the present economic crisis in all parts of Central Europe hits Austria harder than any other country, because she is the weakest. The remedy will be found through the efforts of the Governments concerned which are represented here, and some of which already have possible solutions in mind. I refer more particularly to the important statement

which my distinguished colleague M. Scialoja made on September 11th before the Austrian Committee of the Council.

The members of the Second Committee will also recall the statement made by M. Mataja, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, and I call upon you, gentlemen, who represent here the interests of countries which are Austria's neighbours, to help us to improve our economic position. The Czechoslovak representative has just said that all the Central European countries are faced with the same difficulties. I place my hope in the League, which has achieved so striking a success in financial reconstruction and whose assistance, whose competence and whose far-reaching influence will bring about the restoration of economic prosperity, so that Austria will soon be enabled to exert her powers to the full.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does anyone else wish to speak on the resolutions proposed by the Second Committee which read as follows :

1. *The Assembly desires to express its satisfaction at the progress made by Austria towards the stabilisation of her finances, as shown in the Commissioner-General's reports and in the declaration of the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs. It tenders its congratulations to the Austrian Government and to the Commissioner-General.*

2. *It is happy to see that the work undertaken by the League is approaching its conclusion and notes the resolutions of the Council and the report of the Financial Committee, which contemplate the speedy termination of the control.*

*It hopes that the measures which will allow the control to be abolished will soon be realised.*

3. *The Assembly has further noted the conclusions embodied in the report of the experts entrusted by the Council with the investigation of the economic situation of Austria.*

*It hopes that the enquiry to be carried out by the Economic Committee will soon yield positive results.*

If no one wishes to speak I will put the resolutions to the vote.

*The resolutions were put to the vote and adopted.*

#### 44. — PROPOSAL BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION CONCERNING THE REPLIES OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF JURISTS APPOINTED UNDER THE COUNCIL'S RESOLUTION OF SEPTEMBER 28th, 1923 : REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the First Committee's report on the proposal by the Netherlands delegation concerning the replies of the Special Committee of Jurists appointed under the Council's resolution of September 28th, 1923.

I call upon M. Limburg, delegate of the Netherlands, Rapporteur of the First Committee, and M. Scialoja, Chairman of the First Committee, to take their places on the platform.

*(M. Scialoja, Chairman of the First Committee, and M. Limburg, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform).*

**The President :**

*Translation :* The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

**M. Limburg (Netherlands), Rapporteur :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — As you are aware, the Council, by its resolution of September 28th, 1923, appointed a Special Committee of Jurists to formulate answers to five questions with regard to certain points concerning the interpretation of the Covenant and other questions of international law.

This Special Committee of Jurists, under the Chairmanship of our eminent colleague M. Adatci, soon formulated its replies. Its report was approved by the Council in March 1924 and was submitted to the Assembly last year.

This Special Committee of Jurists is deserving of our deepest gratitude. We are indebted to it for a work which is of great value from the legal point of view and is most important for the interpretation of the Covenant. It is essential that this work should be continued in the interests of the development of international law, more especially as doubts might arise as to certain of the replies, and even as to the real purport of some of the questions which were asked.

Accordingly, the Netherlands delegation last year proposed the resolution which was referred this year to the First Committee and was examined by the latter.

This resolution was as follows :

*The Assembly, having taken note of the replies of the special Committee of Jurists appointed in pursuance of the resolution adopted by the Council on September 28th, 1923, and considering that certain points in these replies require elucidation, requests the First Committee to consider how far such elucidation would be desirable.*

The Netherlands delegation, not being especially desirous that the examination in question should take place at present or that it should be undertaken by the First Committee itself, amended its draft resolution.

It seemed to us that a Committee of Experts making in the future an exhaustive study of the question should know in advance the various doubtful points which the States Members of the League might have found in the report of the Special Committee of Jurists. We thought, therefore, that the proper course was to propose that the Council should request the States Members of the League to transmit to it, before a given date, any comments which they might have to make on the report of the Special Committee. Once these points have been communicated to the Council, the latter could refer them to a Committee for examination.

The Netherlands delegation, though it amended its proposal, would have suggested that any doubtful points raised by the States Members of the League should be referred to the same Special Committee of Jurists, if this Committee were still in existence. But the Committee in question had been appointed *ad hoc*. It no longer exists. The Council, therefore, will either have to call it together again or take such steps of a similar character as it may think fit.

The Netherlands delegation accordingly proposed to the First Committee the resolution now submitted to you. The First Committee unanimously accepted this resolution, which I now have the honour, on behalf of the Committee, to submit to you for adoption.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does anyone else wish to speak on the resolution submitted by the First Committee which reads as follows :

*The Assembly requests the Council to invite the Governments of States Members of the League*

which find in the report of the Special Committee of Jurists appointed under the resolution of the Council of September 28th, 1923, doubtful points which require elucidation, or which may have other comments to make on this report, to forward their observations to the Secretariat of the League of Nations before February 1st, 1926, with a view to a possible examination of the matter by a committee to be appointed by the Council.

If no one wishes to speak I will put the resolution to the vote.

*The resolution was put to the vote and adopted.*

45. — AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

*Translation* : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the First Committee on the British delegation's proposed amendment to Article 16 of the Covenant.

I call upon the Rapporteur, M. Fernandes, delegate of Brazil, to take his place on the platform.

*(M. Fernandes, Rapporteur of the First Committee, took his place on the platform.)*

M. Fernandes (Brazil), Rapporteur :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The First Committee examined the British amendment to Article 16 of the Covenant, unanimously accepted it, and now proposes that you also should adopt it.

Article 16, as you are aware, begins by defining breaches of the Covenant. The first paragraph defines the powers of the Council in such cases.

At the 1922 and 1924 Assemblies three amendments to Article 16 of the Covenant were adopted, which, when they have been ratified and come into force, will be inserted as paragraphs 1, 2 and 3.

The present paragraph 1 (new paragraph 4) will then become pointless and meaningless, as it defines the powers of the Council concerning contingencies which were previously mentioned.

The British delegation proposed the amendment

in question in order to correct this textual error, which, though apparently trifling in itself, had the serious consequence of depriving of all meaning a very important hypothesis in the Covenant.

I need hardly say that the acceptance of this amendment by the Assembly would be without prejudice to those other amendments which are still in process of ratification. The present amendment is necessary in view of the possible adoption of the others, but it is understood that if the latter are not adopted this amendment also will be dropped.

In view of what might happen if the amendments now in process of ratification were only partially accepted, the First Committee considered whether the simultaneous acceptance or refusal of the amendments could be made, as it were, automatic. It decided that no technical means could be found to link the four amendments, which are in actual fact independent of one another, being submitted under separate proposals.

The Assembly must rely on the wisdom of the Governments concerned, and trust that the amendment it now proposes will only be ratified if the other amendments, and more particularly the amendment concerning the first paragraph, are ratified by the number of States necessary to enable them to come into force.

The President :

*Translation* : Has anyone any objection to the adoption of the Committee's conclusions, which read as follows :

*The Assembly adopts the following resolution, being an amendment to Article 16 of the Covenant :*

*"The words 'in such case' in the second paragraph of the original text of Article 16 of the Covenant shall be deleted.*

*This amendment shall be submitted for ratification by the Members of the League.*

*A Protocol embodying the amendment shall at once be drawn up in accordance with the principles adopted by the Second Assembly for amendments to the Covenant.*

I shall therefore consider them adopted.

*The conclusions of the First Committee were adopted.*

*The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.*



# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## FOURTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22nd, 1925, AT 10 A.M.

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46. — QUESTION OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA FROM THE LEAGUE : DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FRENCH DELEGATION.

The President :

*Translation* : M. Montigny, a member of the French delegation, has asked leave to submit a draft resolution.

I call upon him to address the Assembly.

M. Montigny (France) :

*Translation* : Ladies and gentlemen — On behalf of the French delegation I have the honour to submit the following draft resolution :

*The Assembly,*

*Having learnt that the Republic of Costa Rica has expressed its intention of resigning its membership of the League ;*

*Deeply regrets to note the absence of a Member whose participation in the work of the Assembly has been unanimously and highly appreciated ;*

*Expresses the hope that the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica may again find it possible to afford the League its valuable co-operation.*

I can explain quite briefly the text I have just read.

The settlement by the Assembly of what is a purely administrative matter led the Republic of Costa Rica to think that the League meant to offer it an affront ; and the President of the Republic informed the League Secretariat of his Government's intention to resign its membership.

The Latin-American nations were particularly grieved at this news, and they deeply regret that a sister nation should have taken so serious a step

in consequence of so trifling an incident. They intended to submit to the Assembly a draft resolution of the same tenor as the one I have just read, asking the Government of Costa Rica whether it could not reconsider the question and once again participate in our work. They have, however, conferred upon the French delegation the great honour of asking it to speak on this occasion.

The French delegation is happy to refer this matter to you and feels sure that all States Members will support this fraternal appeal to the Republic of Costa Rica, whose valued co-operation we have greatly appreciated at former sessions.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The Assembly has heard the draft resolution submitted by the French delegation, the text of which has been printed and distributed to you.

In view of the urgent nature of this resolution, I think it can be placed on the agenda of one of the next meetings of the Assembly.

Has anybody any observations to make ?

*The proposal was adopted.*

#### 47. — SITUATION IN CHINA : DRAFT RECOMMENDATION PROPOSED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The first item on the agenda is the draft recommendation submitted by the Chinese delegation on the situation in China; this question was withdrawn from yesterday's agenda and included in to-day's. As you are aware, the text was submitted to the Agenda Committee, which decided that as this was a special case the question should be referred direct to the Assembly. The form of the recommendation has been slightly modified, the text now being as follows :

*The Assembly,*

*Having heard with deep interest the Chinese delegate's suggestion regarding the possibility of considering, according to the spirit of the Covenant, the existing international conditions of China;*

*Having learned with satisfaction that a conference of the interested States is soon to take place in China to consider the questions involved :*

*Expresses the hope that a satisfactory solution may be reached at an early date.*

M. Chao-Hsin Chu, delegate for China, will address the Assembly.

**M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :**

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I put forward this draft resolution for two reasons : In the first place, China looks earnestly to the League of Nations for moral support in accordance with the letter and spirit of Article 19 of the Covenant. Secondly, we all recognise that Article 19 of the Covenant is a remedy for changing international conditions which might endanger the peace of the world. When the application of this article is carried out for the first time in the case of China, it will not only more fully justify the existence of the League but will also convince the whole world of the League's activity and efficiency. I am sure the whole world will have more and more confidence and faith in the League, and will appeal to the League for guidance in all international disputes and for their equitable adjustment.

The draft resolution which is now before the Assembly will, if adopted, create a very good impression in the Special Tariff Conference at Peking on October 26th, and at a subsequent time when the whole question of the revision of China's

treaties with foreign Powers, which have been generally regarded as out of date and inapplicable, will be brought up for reconsideration on the basis of equity and reciprocity. I am sure that all the members of the Assembly will agree with me in expressing the sincere hope that a satisfactory solution in readjusting China's treaty relations with the foreign Powers concerned will be reached at an early date. The Chinese people will be exceedingly grateful to the League for its valuable assistance and moral support.

I beg, therefore, to move the draft resolution in the form in which it has just been read to you by the President.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Are there any observations on the draft recommendation which has been submitted ?

Since there are no observations, the text is adopted.

*The recommendation was adopted.*

#### 48. — STATISTICAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE TRAFFIC IN ARMS AND AMMUNITION AND IN IMPLEMENTS OF WAR: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

**The Président :**

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the report of the Third Committee on statistical information regarding the trade in arms and ammunition and in implements of war.

I invite the Rapporteur, M. Guerrero, delegate for Salvador, and in the absence of the Chairman of the Third Committee, M. Löfgren, I invite the Vice-Chairman, M. de Brouckère, delegate for Belgium, to take their places on the platform.

M. Guerrero, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

**M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur.**

*Translation :* As the report of the Second Committee on statistical information regarding the trade in arms and ammunition and in implements of war has been distributed (Annex, Document A, 82. 1925. IX), I will simply read the resolution at the end :

*The Assembly :*

*Taking into account the provisions of the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War, signed at Geneva on June 17th, 1925 ;*

*Considering the advantage to be derived from the standardisation of nomenclature and statistical systems for this trade ;*

*Considering paragraph 3 of the resolution of the fifth Assembly, dated September 27th, 1924, in virtue of which States Members and non-Members of the League of Nations are invited to transmit to the Secretariat all documents which they may deem likely to be of assistance in the preparation of a collection of statistical data concerning the trade in arms, munitions and implements of war ;*

*Recommends all States, so soon as they may find it possible, to adopt the models given in Annex I to the said Convention for their national statistics and for the documents they supply to the Secretariat as data for the preparation of the above-mentioned collection.*

**The President :**

*Translation :* If no member of the Assembly desires to speak on the resolution. I shall consider it adopted.

*The resolution was adopted.*

49. — ESTABLISHMENT OF A CONCILIATION COMMISSION ATTACHED TO THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: PROPOSAL OF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT.

The President :

*Translation* : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the First Committee's report on the proposal of the Danish Government to set up a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

I invite the Rapporteur, M. Urrutia, delegate for Colombia, and the Chairman of the First Committee, M. Scialoja, to take their places on the platform.

The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Urrutia (Colombia), Rapporteur :

*Translation* : The First Committee has studied the proposal which the Danish Government has placed on the Assembly's agenda and which relates to the establishment of a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

The Danish delegation submitted to the Committee, as the basis of discussion, a statement of reasons which brought out clearly the objects aimed at by the proposal and its legal foundations. According to this statement, the draft for the establishment of the above-mentioned Commission originated in two different points of view :

The first contemplates that questions susceptible of being settled by the Court may also be submitted to a Conciliation Commission attached to the Court for purposes of conciliation.

The second contemplates centralisation of efforts to secure conciliation in accordance with the resolution of the 1922 Assembly.

It is the first of these points of view which the Danish delegation developed as the principal basis of its proposal.

The First Committee examined the general aspects of the Danish proposal with the interest and attention which it merits. Many members delivered statements which were as conscientious as they were well informed. It appeared from the tenor of these statements that the majority of the Committee feared that it was impossible for the moment to carry out an innovation which might involve making amendments in the Permanent Court's Statute, amendments which would be exposed to not being accepted by all the signatories of the Statute. Other objections were also raised, based on the judicial nature of the Court and on the special conditions, different from those applicable to judges, which mediators in international conflicts ought to satisfy.

On the other hand, the Committee fully realised the importance of the Danish proposal, not merely with regard to the authority of the Government making it but also on account of its lofty inspiration and the significance of the question which it raises. The proposal is in fact directed towards unifying and strengthening those methods of international conciliation which at the present moment occupy a pre-eminent place among contemplated methods for ensuring peace. On all sides, both within the League and in the sphere of public opinion, a constantly increasing interest is being taken in the study of such methods of conciliation.

Having regard, however, to the considerations indicated above, the Committee felt that the better course would be to adjourn consideration of the important Danish proposal for a sufficient period of time to enable Governments to form a

mature opinion on its contents and scope in the light of the views expressed about it in the Committee.

The Danish delegation accepted this solution. In agreement with it, therefore, the First Committee has the honour to propose for adoption by the Assembly the following resolution :

*The Assembly decides to adjourn to a subsequent session the consideration of the proposal of the Danish Government as to the establishment of a Conciliation Commission attached to the Permanent Court of International Justice.*

The President :

*Translation* : Does anyone wish to speak on this resolution ?

If no one wishes to speak, I declare the resolution adopted.

*The resolution was adopted.*

50. — OPTIONAL CLAUSE OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

*Translation* : The next item on the agenda is the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee relative to the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

M. Motta, delegate for Switzerland, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland), Rapporteur :

*Translation* : Ladies and gentlemen — The First Committee proposes the following draft resolution for adoption :

*The Assembly,*

*Noting with satisfaction the fact that fifteen States have accepted up to the present the optional clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice concerning the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court ;*

*Noting also that some of those States have assumed this obligation for a period which will shortly terminate :*

*Requests the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to draw the attention of such States to the measures to be taken, if they consider it proper, in order to renew in due course their undertakings.*

The First Committee thinks it unnecessary to submit a written report on this draft resolution, as it does not call for much comment. I am asked merely to make a verbal report, and I need only offer a few observations on the subject.

The clause in Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice which refers to compulsory jurisdiction has been accepted definitely and unconditionally by fifteen States. Eight other States have also accepted this clause in principle, either subject to ratification by their Parliaments (in some cases this ratification has not yet been given) or subject to some other reservations.

Twenty-three States, therefore, have declared themselves, in principle, in favour of this clause. The majority of those which have bound themselves definitely and unconditionally have done so for a period of five years, subject to reciprocity. For many of these States this period of five years will expire next year. They should accordingly take timely steps to renew their engagements if they desire to do so.

The Swiss proposal, which gave rise to this draft resolution, was merely a recommendation. In the text as now submitted the Secretary-General of the League is requested to undertake the necessary negotiations with the States in question. There is no question of exerting pressure: it is simply a friendly act of encouragement. States which have not accepted compulsory jurisdiction can quite easily and without inconsistency express their satisfaction that other States should have accepted it and vote for this resolution. The vote would in no way imply criticism. The States in question will simply be encouraging those which have already adopted this procedure.

I am particularly glad to find that the prevailing idea in all the debate of the First Committee which I had the honour and pleasure of attending was compulsory jurisdiction with all its consequences, such as, for example, the extension of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court. All the members of the Committee agreed that it was necessary to encourage States to adopt and practise this method.

Some delegates have stated that their Governments will shortly accept compulsory jurisdiction. It is not for me to give the names of these States; it will be for their representatives to make this solemn declaration at the fitting moment.

I would merely point out that the example of those who have accepted compulsory jurisdiction has already borne fruit, and we can but congratulate ourselves on this fact, for this policy contains an essential element of international peace and mutual confidence. It is by following this path that we shall eventually attain disarmament and security.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does anyone else wish to speak ? I put the resolution submitted by the First Committee to the vote.

*The resolution was adopted.*

## 51. — WORK OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Financial Committee.

I invite the Rapporteur, Mr. Samuel, delegate for the British Empire, and Jonkheer van Eysinga, Chairman of the Second Committee, to take their places on the platform.

The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

Mr. Samuel (British Empire), Rapporteur :

Ladies and gentlemen—The report of the Second Committee is before you (Annex, Document A. 84, 1925). It is therefore useless for me to read it. This report also contains the resolutions submitted by the Second Committee.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does anyone wish to speak ?

I put to the vote the resolutions submitted by the Second Committee, which read as follows :

I. *The Assembly :*

(a) *Has learnt with satisfaction that the scheme which was prepared, and partially put into execution through temporary advances last year, for the settlement of Greek refugees has been realised through the successful issue of a loan, yielding an effective sum of £10,000,000 in Athens,*

*London and New York, on the basis of the Protocol signed on September 29th, 1923, and the Additional Act signed on September 19th, 1924 ;*

(b) *Notes that, of the 1,200,000 refugees who, on the estimate of the original scheme, required settlement in productive work, over 700,000 have already been settled in agricultural districts or housed in urban settlements near Athens ;*

(c) *Notes with pleasure the reports received that the refugees form an energetic and industrious class, rapidly taking advantage of the opportunities afforded them, and will put to good use the land and materials which it is the work of the Commission to place at their disposal ;*

(d) *Observes that the Settlement Commission thus instituted under the auspices of the League has been able to effect a piece of work which, apart from the benefit to the refugees themselves, should have far-reaching beneficial results for Greece of both an economic and political character ;*

(e) *Expresses the hope that, through close collaboration between the Greek Government and the Settlement Commission, the work may be successfully pursued and brought to a conclusion.*

II. *The Assembly approves the part taken by the Financial Committee and the Council in the issue of a loan for the economic development of Danzig and for the equipment of the port, under conditions which have fully satisfied all those interested.*

III. *The Assembly notes the conclusions which have been formulated by the representatives of the revenue departments of certain European countries on the problems of double taxation and fiscal evasion. It observes with satisfaction that agreement has been reached on certain common principles, which are expressed in these conclusions, and that a further Conference of Experts is to be convoked in 1926, selected on a larger basis. It hopes that this technical Conference, which for the first time undertakes at the request of the Council the study of a financial problem of universal importance, may be able to submit practical proposals.*

IV. *The Assembly has learnt with interest of the new publications which are in course of preparation by the Statistical Branch of the Secretariat for the use of the Financial and Economic Organisation of the League, and considers that they form a useful contribution to the study of economic and financial problems.*

*The resolutions were adopted.*

## 52. — WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation.

(At the President's invitation, M. de Agüero y Bethancourt (Cuba), Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

M. de Agüero y Bethancourt gave a summary of his report (Annex, Document A. 83. 1925. XII) and read the resolutions.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does anybody wish to speak ?

I put to the vote the resolutions submitted by the Second Committee which read as follows :

1. *The Assembly invites the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation to continue its work in the same spirit of prudence and firmness as heretofore; it expresses its satisfaction with the results obtained and, in particular, with the manner in which the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation has been organised.*

*It notes with pleasure that the work of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation is becoming more and more appreciated and that still greater services are expected of it in the future and, it is happy to observe the response made in numerous countries to the appeals which it has issued on behalf of nations, the intellectual position of which is particularly difficult and of students and young people, and also with a view to assisting research workers in their task.*

2. *The Assembly notes with satisfaction that most of the States Members of the League have acted on the resolutions adopted by the fifth Assembly on the subject of the instruction of youth in the ideals of the League of Nations and the encouragement of contact between young people of different nationalities. It expresses its satisfaction with the report prepared by the Secretary-General on this subject and considers that the report should be regarded as a first stage.*

*It therefore invites the Council:*

(a) *To consider the possibility of requesting all States Members of the League of Nations and non-Member States to keep the Secretary-General informed of the progress made in their respective countries as regards the various points mentioned in the report, and to forward to the Secretary-General all publications on this subject as soon as they appear.*

(b) *To instruct the Secretary-General to collect the information mentioned above. This information should be communicated from time to time to States Members of the League and to other States interested in the question.*

(c) *To forward the Secretary-General's report, together with the proposals submitted by the Chilean, Haitian, Polish and Uruguayan delegations, to the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and to request it to consider the possibility of summoning a sub-committee of experts to consider the best methods of co-ordinating all official and non-official efforts designed to familiarise young people throughout the world with the principles and work of the League of Nations and to train the younger generation to regard international co-operation as the normal method of conducting world affairs.*

*The resolutions were adopted.*

### 53. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

#### The President:

*Translation:* The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Sixth Committee on the Protection of Minorities (Annex, Document A. 88. 1925).

*(At the invitation of the President, M. van Lynden, van Sandenburg (Netherlands), Rapporteur, and M. Guerrero (Salvador), Chairman of the Committee, took their places on the platform.)*

#### The President:

*Translation:* The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. van Lynden van Sandenburg (Netherlands), Rapporteur:

*Translation:* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. — Under the Treaties of Versailles, St. Germain, Trianon and Neuilly, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Roumania and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and under the Treaty of Lausanne, Greece, all agreed to conclude Treaties containing such provisions as the Principal Allied and Associated Powers might consider necessary to protect the interests of racial, religious and linguistic minorities.

In virtue of this undertaking special "Minority Treaties" were concluded between the Principal Allied and Associated Powers and each of the above-mentioned five States, the provisions of these treaties being guaranteed by the League of Nations.

Under the Treaties of St. Germain, Trianon and Lausanne, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey agreed to similar provisions.

There are, in addition, special conventions which contain provisions relating to the protection of certain minorities, as, for example, the Treaty concluded between Poland and the Free City of Danzig on November 9th, 1920, the Germano-Polish Convention of May 15th, 1922, relating to Upper Silesia and the Convention of May 8th, 1924, concerning Memel.

The question of minorities was dealt with by the first Assembly of the League, more particularly in connection with the admission of new States, and the following resolution was adopted:

*"In the event of Albania, the Baltic and Caucasian States being admitted to the League, the Assembly requests that they should take the necessary measures to enforce the principles of the minorities treaties, and that they should arrange with the Council the details required to carry this object into effect."*

In conformity with this resolution, Albania, Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania, which were admitted as Members of the League by the first and second Assemblies, made declarations before the Council concerning the protection of the minorities in their respective countries.

Finland, after having granted the inhabitants of the Aaland Islands local autonomy in virtue of a Law of May 7th, 1920, gave guarantees, in its declaration to the Council on June 27th, 1921, that this law should be amended, and undertook to inform the Council of the application of the guarantees. In a resolution dated October 2nd, 1921, the Council took note of the information relating to the position of racial, religious and linguistic minorities in Finland furnished by the Finnish representative.

The question came before the third Assembly in virtue of proposals submitted by Professor Gilbert Murray (delegate of South Africa) and Dr. Walters (delegate of Latvia), and a resolution was adopted, paragraph 4 of which reads as follows:

*"The Assembly expresses the hope that the States which are not bound by any legal obligations to the League with respect to minorities will nevertheless observe, in the treatment of their own racial, religious or linguistic minorities, at least as high a standard of justice and toleration as is required by any of the treaties and by the regular action of the Council."*

Finally, the fourth Assembly dealt with the matter and passed a resolution providing that:

*"In accordance with the resolution of the Council dated September 5th, 1923, the communication of minorities petitions shall be restricted to the Members of the Council. By virtue, however, of paragraph V of the Assembly resolution dated September 21st, 1922, the Government of any*

*Member of the League can request the Secretariat to communicate to it any petition (together with the observations of the Government concerned) which have been communicated to the Council."*

The Lithuanian delegation submitted to the present Assembly the following proposal, which was referred to your Sixth Committee :

*"The Lithuanian delegation proposes that the sixth Assembly of the League should set up a special committee to prepare a draft general convention to include all the States Members of the League of Nations, and setting forth their common rights and duties in regard to minorities."*

In view of the divergence of opinion which arose in the Sixth Committee when the matter was discussed, it was decided, after M. Galvanauskas had withdrawn the Lithuanian proposal, that a draft resolution should be submitted to the Assembly requesting the Secretary-General to communicate to the Council the discussion which took place in the Sixth Committee in this connection.

The Committee also took note of the part of the Report on the Work of the Council which concerns the procedure followed by the Council in minority questions. This procedure has already been frequently discussed by the Council and the Assembly. Resolutions on the subject were adopted by the Council on October 22nd, 1920, June 27th, 1921, and September 5th, 1923, and the question was dealt with by the Second and Third Assemblies. Quite recently, with the object of amending this procedure and facilitating the very difficult and important task of the President of the Council, without, however, modifying the terms of the treaties, the Council considered the matter afresh and decided, in accordance with the conclusions of the report submitted by the representative of Brazil, to adopt the rules which are to be found on pages 18 to 20 of the Supplementary Report on the Work of the Council.

Among these rules, I would mention the following, which relate to the constitution of the "Committee of Three" :

*"Any petition submitted and which may be accepted under the terms of the Council resolution of September 5th, 1923, is examined by the President of the Council and by two members appointed by him in each case, neither of whom shall be the representative of the State to which the persons belonging to the minority in question are subject, or the representative of a State neighbouring on that State, or the representative of a State a majority of whose population belongs, from the ethnical point of view, to the same people as the persons in question."*

If these conditions apply to the President of the Council, the latter shall be replaced by the Member of the Council who exercised the duties of President immediately before the Acting-President and who is not in the same position.

The sole object of the examination of a minorities petition by this Committee is to establish whether it is advisable or not for members of the Committee to exercise the right of drawing the attention of the Council to the infraction or danger of an infraction which is the subject of the petition, while reserving to other members of the Council the right of initiative which belongs to them under the treaties.

The Committee's resolution adds, therefore, that all the members of the Council shall receive the document for the examination of which the Committee is set up and can, if they take a special interest in the matter, inform themselves, through the Secretariat, of the treatment of the petition in the Committee, and, if necessary, submit to the Committee their own observations.

The Sixth Committee proposes that you should approve that part of the Report on the Work of the Council which relates to this procedure and should consequently adopt the following resolution :

*The Assembly takes note of the Sixth Committee's report with regard to the protection of minorities and adopts the following resolution :*

*"The Assembly approves that part of the Report on the Work of the Council, the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly, dealing with the procedure followed with regard to the protection of minorities (paragraph VI of Chapter 7 of the Supplementary Report). The Lithuanian representative having withdrawn the proposal submitted by him on September 14th, 1925, the Assembly requests the Secretary-General to communicate to the Council the discussion which has taken place in the Sixth Committee in this connection."*

**The President :**

*Translation :* Count Apponyi, delegate of Hungary, will address the Assembly.

**Count Apponyi (Hungary) :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — The Hungarian delegation regrets that it is unable to support the conclusions of the report just submitted to you, which expresses unqualified approval of the work of the Council and Secretariat in the matter of minorities.

I simply desire to make this declaration. There is no need for me to revert to the suggestions I made when I addressed the Assembly a few days ago. I said then that I had no intention of criticising or calling into question the competence of those eminent persons who constitute the Council; I stated that I had found defects in the procedure, and I made suggestions for its amendment.

They were simply suggestions and not proposals; because it seemed to me that the Assembly was not qualified to dictate to the Council its method of procedure. Under our Rules of Procedure and under the terms of the Covenant, the Council is autonomous, within the limits of its specific powers. What I desired, and what I still urge, is that the Council should consider my suggestions with a view to their being incorporated in the Rules of Procedure.

Until those suggestions are taken into account, the Hungarian delegation cannot express its formal and unqualified approval of the work of the Council and of the Secretariat in the matter of minorities.

I was unfortunately obliged to be absent from Geneva for some days and was unable to take part in the discussions of the Sixth Committee, where my suggestions were the subject of criticism to which I cannot reply here.

The only point I desire to mention is this : one objection advanced against my proposals was that their acceptance would necessitate the amendment of the Minorities Treaties. I do not think that this is so, and I am prepared to prove it whenever there is an opportunity of reopening our discussion. I simply desire to-day to inform you that, in view of the reasons I have just given, the Hungarian delegation greatly regrets that it cannot accept the conclusions of the report submitted on the question of minorities.

I do not ask for a vote by roll-call, but if such a vote were taken, Hungary would be obliged to abstain from voting. The Hungarian delegation reserves the right to raise the question again at the next Assembly.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Hymans, delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

• **M. Hymans (Belgium) :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — I do not propose to speak on the protection of minorities in connection with Count Apponyi's remarks. The delegate of Hungary himself did not desire, at the time when the report was examined, to re-open the discussion he raised some days ago.

I merely wish to inform him that the Sixth Committee, which dealt at some length with the Council's work in regard to minorities, examined every aspect of the question, and, in fact, discussed some of the suggestions he made in the Assembly.

The Committee proposed to communicate to the Council the minutes of its discussions on the question ; in this way the Council will be informed of Count Apponyi's views.

The Council, as the Assembly is aware, recently took various measures with a view to improving the procedure for the examination of minorities questions, and I can assure Count Apponyi that it will constantly bear the question in mind and is quite prepared to receive suggestions for the improvement of the present procedure.

The Assembly will feel, I think, that these few words of mine have served some purpose if they have shown Count Apponyi that the Council is only too ready to consider suggestions for the improvement of this intricate and highly important procedure.

**M. Henry de Jouvenel (France) :**

*Translation :* I desire to inform the Assembly that in the Sixth Committee, on which every country is represented, the Report on the Work of the Council was unanimously and unreservedly accepted.

**The President :**

*Translation :* If no one else wishes to speak, I will now put to the vote the resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee which reads as follows :

• *The Assembly takes note of the Sixth Committee's report with regard to the protection of minorities and adopts the following resolution :*

*The Assembly approves that part of the Report on the Work of the Council, the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly, dealing with the procedure followed with regard to the protection of minorities (paragraph VI of Chapter 7 of the Supplementary Report). The Lithuanian representative having withdrawn the proposal submitted by him on September 14th, 1925, the Assembly requests the Secretary-General to communicate to the Council the discussion which has taken place in the Sixth Committee in this connection."*

*The resolution was adopted.*

#### 54. — MANDATES : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee concerning mandates.

*(At the invitation of the President, M. Veverka, Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, took his place on the platform.)*

**The President :**

*Translation :* The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

**M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur :**

• *Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Sixth Committee yesterday approved a resolution on the question of mandates which

I had the honour to submit at the conclusion of its proceedings. This resolution briefly summarises the Committee's discussion, and, more particularly, the views expressed by Dr. Nansen and the representative of South Africa.

There is no need to enter into a detailed explanation of the first paragraph of the resolution, which is couched in quite general terms. The second paragraph, however, refers to a recommendation made by the Council to the Members of the League. The object of this recommendation, as Dr. Nansen explained to the Committee, is to extend to mandated territories as far as possible the benefits accruing to neighbouring territories belonging to the mandatory Powers through special international conventions.

The resolution which the Sixth Committee submits to the Assembly for approval is as follows :

*The Assembly,*

*Having noted the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission on its fifth and sixth sessions, and the documents relevant thereto :*

(a) *Desires to express its keen interest in, and satisfaction with, the work of the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council of the League, in fulfilling the duties devolving on them under Article 22 of the Covenant in connection with the application of the mandates system ;*

(b) *Expresses in particular the hope that all the Members of the League of Nations will give effect without delay to the recommendation made by the Council in paragraph II (1) of its resolution of September 15th, 1925, concerning the extension of special international conventions to mandated territories.*

**The President :**

*Translation :* Dr. Nansen, delegate for Norway, will address the Assembly.

**Dr. F. Nansen (Norway) :**

• Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I do not desire to detain the Assembly for any length of time ; my only purpose is to move in a few words the adoption of the proposed resolution which has been unanimously adopted by the Sixth Committee. I believe that every delegation in the Assembly agrees with the view that the responsibility of the League of Nations for the territories now administered on its behalf under mandate is of great importance, not only to the inhabitants of those territories but also to the League of Nations itself. It is because of the direct interest and responsibility of every Member of the League and of the League as a whole that it is right for the Assembly to consider the work which has been done by the mandatory Powers and the reports on that work drawn up by them and by the Permanent Mandates Commission.

The Assembly will remember that certain of the mandates were first brought into force at the end of 1920 and that others have been brought into force at various intervals since then. Now that the whole system is in full working order, the Mandates Commission has found it necessary to hold two sessions a year of at least two weeks each—a fact which is only one more proof of the thoroughness with which the Commission does its work and the high standard to which it has conformed.

It is therefore right for us to express, as we do in the resolution now being proposed by the honourable delegate for Czechoslovakia our great interest in and satisfaction with the work which the Mandates Commission has accomplished in pursuance of Article 22 of the Covenant of the League. That resolution similarly expresses the satisfaction of the Assembly with the work of the

mandatory Powers and of the Council, and I think that anyone who reads the reports of the mandatory Powers or who has followed the debates in the Mandates Commission between their representatives and the members of the Commission will agree that this expression of gratitude to them and to the Council is well justified.

In a number of different ways the whole mandates system is making notable progress. May I perhaps draw a comparison, which I ventured to make yesterday in the Sixth Committee, between the events in South-West Africa a few years ago on the occasion of the Bondelswarts rebellion and the events of this year in connection with the disturbance in the Rehoboth community? The disturbance which has taken place among the Rehoboths this year was dealt with without the loss of a single drop of blood and it is very satisfactory to know that, as soon as the disturbance was over, the South African Government sent a special Commission to investigate the problems raised by the troubles in that community. We are glad to feel that we can be certain that the mandatory Power will ensure to the Rehoboths all the rights to which they are entitled.

Another example of the progress of the mandates system may be found in the recent letter from Sir Joseph Cook, in which he states that the Australian Government has decided to exempt the mandated territory of New Guinea from the operation of the coastal trade provisions of the Navigation Act. The Assembly may remember that a year ago the Mandates Commission called attention to a criticism to the effect that the application of this Act to the mandated territory might hamper its economic development; the promptness with which the mandatory Power has acted on the suggestion of the Commission is, I think, only characteristic of the whole spirit of co-operation which exists between the organs of the League and the mandatory Powers — a co-operation upon which the ultimate success of the whole system must plainly depend.

There are, of course, one or two points which have given a certain amount of trouble to the Commission during the last year or two. One of them relates to the question of loans, advances and investments of public and private capital in mandated territories. Only a few days ago the Council adopted a definite resolution on this subject, which was calculated to remove from the minds of investors any doubts concerning the stability of the financial obligations contracted in or for mandated territories, and I think we may confidently hope that this resolution will finally remove the doubts which have hitherto subsisted on this point in the minds of potential investors.

Another troublesome point is concerned with the definition of the liquor traffic. The evils of that traffic among natives have for many years been the subject of international agreement and regulation, and it was hoped that by Article 22 of the Covenant we should definitely stamp out these evils and protect the natives from the consequences which, in the past, have resulted from the unscrupulous conduct of liquor traders. The application of the mandates, however, has been somewhat hampered by the obscure wording of Article 22 of the Covenant and by the fact that there has been no agreed definition of the technical terms employed in that article, in the mandates and in the St. Germain Convention of 1919. We may hope that those Members of the League which have not yet sent to the Mandates Commission an expression of their views on this matter may do so without delay and that the Commission will then be able to reach a definite decision at an early date.

On those points and on others which I could mention, such, for example, as some of the remarks of the Mandates Commission on health conditions and the rate of mortality in connection with certain enterprises in mandated areas in Africa, there is still some cause for anxiety. That is only to be expected. But even when we have made allowance for such matters, it is still possible to say that we can see the mandates system of the League growing in strength year by year. That is a most important fact.

It has been said from this platform, but I venture to say it again, that the relations between the advanced and backward peoples of the world are destined in our century to be of immense importance. It may well be that the peace of the world and the fabric of our civilisation as we know it may depend on finding a solution for some of the problems raised by these relations. The mandates system has made great progress. It is not too much to hope that in the wider application of its principles, and above all of its fundamental principle, that the welfare of backward peoples is a sacred trust of civilisation in which may lie the solution sought to-day by the Governments of the world in connection with this most important matter of human relationship.

I beg to support the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Madame Bugge-Wicksell, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

**Madame Bugge-Wicksell (Sweden) :**

Ladies and gentlemen — Will you permit me to say a few words with regard to one of the points raised by Dr. Nansen : namely, the importance of properly restricting the liquor traffic in the mandated territories? This question has been treated by the Mandates Commission in a whole series of meetings, and is considered by the Commission as one of the most essential of those confided to its jurisdiction.

For the time being, one of the most prominent members of the Mandates Commission has agreed to write a special memorandum on this subject; that memorandum will be discussed at the session of the Commission which will take place next month.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does anyone else wish to speak on the following resolutions submitted by the Committee :

*The Assembly,*

*Having noted the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission on its fifth and sixth sessions, and the documents relevant thereto :*

(a) *Desires to express its keen interest in, and satisfaction with, the work of the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council of the League, in fulfilling the duties devolving on them under Article 22 of the Covenant in connection with the application of the mandates system ;*

(b) *Expresses in particular the hope that all the Members of the League of Nations will give effect without delay to the recommendation made by the Council in paragraph II (1) of its resolution of September 15th, 1925, concerning the extension of special international conventions to mandated territories.*

*The resolutions were put to the vote and adopted.*

*The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.*



# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

## SIXTH ASSEMBLY

OF THE

## LEAGUE OF NATIONS

### FIFTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th, 1925, AT 10 A.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

55. — PROTOCOL OF AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT ADOPTED ON SEPTEMBER 21st, 1925.

#### The President :

*Translation :* The Protocol of an amendment to Article 16 (second paragraph of the original text) of the Covenant, adopted by the sixth Assembly on September 21st, 1925, is open for signature by the representatives of Members of the League in Room 68 of the Offices of the Secretariat.

56. — MODIFICATIONS IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE FRENCH, NORWEGIAN, ROUMANIAN AND GREEK DELEGATIONS.

#### The President :

*Translation :* I am informed by a letter from the French delegation that M. Réveillaud, expert, has been appointed substitute delegate.

A letter dated September 21st, 1925, from the Norwegian delegation announces that as from that date Dr. Nansen will be head of the Norwegian delegation, and that M. Michelet, hitherto a substitute delegate, has been appointed delegate, in consequence of the departure from Geneva of the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs, who was originally first delegate.

In a letter dated September 21st, 1925, we are informed that, owing to the departure from Geneva of M. Duca and M. Titulesco, the third delegate of the Roumanian delegation has become first delegate, and the first and second substitute delegates are now second and third delegates respectively.

According to a letter dated September 16th, 1925, from the Greek delegation, M. Alexandre Carapanos is now president of that delegation in consequence of the departure of M. Rentis, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

61. — QUESTION OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF COSTA RICA FROM THE LEAGUE : ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FRENCH DELEGATION.

#### The President.

*Translation :* The first item on the agenda is the draft resolution submitted by the French delegation concerning the question of the withdrawal of the Republic of Costa Rica from the League.

Members of the Assembly will remember that, when this draft resolution was submitted at the meeting on September 22nd, I reserved the right

to submit it direct to the Assembly for examination at a later meeting.

The draft resolution reads as follows :

*The Assembly,*

*Having learnt that the Republic of Costa Rica has expressed its intention of resigning its membership of the League :*

*Deeply regrets to note the absence of a Member whose participation in the work of the Assembly has been unanimously and highly appreciated ;*

*Expresses the hope that the Government of the Republic of Costa Rica may again find it possible to afford the League its valuable co-operation.*

M. Guerrero, first delegate of Salvador, will address the Assembly.

**M. Guerrero (Salvador) :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen—Although my country is among those which, with France, were instrumental in submitting to the Assembly the draft resolution which has just been read, I desire particularly to associate myself with the statement and the hope it expresses.

The Republics of Costa Rica and Salvador have always stood together throughout the varying fortunes of their common history. They have always worked for the maintenance of peace in Central America and the development of all that was calculated to increase the moral and material well-being of their peoples.

Salvador would therefore be deeply grieved if her sister Republic should sever her connection at the very time when the two countries are called upon to unite in playing an important part and performing a great task.

This task consists in extending their humanitarian influence as peacemakers beyond their natural frontiers ; the part they are called upon to play is that of maintaining the rights of small States, as established for the first time in history by the noble institution with which we are all closely co-operating.

Costa Rica has never failed in this duty, which the Marquis de Peralta has always carried out worthily and with conspicuous ability.

I am voicing the desire of my country in thus associating myself whole-heartedly with the message of good-will which the Assembly transmits to the Republic of Costa Rica.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. de Palacios, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

**M. de Palacios (Spain) :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen—The Spanish delegation is most anxious to see the immediate and unanimous adoption of the draft resolution concerning the Republic of Costa Rica.

Directly it learnt of the communication sent by the Government of Costa Rica to the Secretariat of the League, the Spanish Government hastened to urge the Government of Costa Rica to reconsider its attitude and begged it, even though it might reasonably take exception to certain words uttered in the fifth Assembly and despite the right of Members to judge for themselves, not to act hastily.

In heartily supporting the proposal presented to the sixth Assembly, the Spanish delegation is therefore simply reiterating the desire already expressed by the Royal Spanish Government.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does anyone else wish to speak on the draft resolution ?

I shall, therefore put it to the vote.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**58. — ELECTION OF THE SIX NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL : ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATION PRESENTED BY THE CHINESE DELEGATION.**

**The President :**

*Translation :* The second item on the agenda is the recommendation submitted by the Chinese delegation concerning the election of the six non-permanent members of the Council.

This recommendation was, as you know, submitted for examination to the Agenda Committee. The latter was of opinion that, as the Assembly had already on several occasions expressed a unanimous opinion on this recommendation, it would not be necessary to submit the proposal to one of the permanent Committees for further examination and that the recommendation could be referred direct to the Assembly.

The Assembly has therefore to vote on this recommendation, which reads as follows :

*The Assembly reiterates the following recommendation adopted unanimously by the Assemblies of 1922, 1923 and 1924 :*

*"It is desirable that the Assembly, in electing the six non-permanent members of the Council, should make its choice with due consideration for the main geographical divisions of the world, the great ethnical groups, the different religious divisions, the various types of civilisation and the chief sources of wealth."*

M. Chao-Hsin Chu, delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

**M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :**

I desire at this stage of our proceedings to place again before the Assembly the views of China with regard to the allocation of non-permanent seats on the Council. The League of Nations was formed to embrace the whole world, and it is the earnest wish of all of us that this hope may, at no very distant date, be realised.

Let us recollect that in the year 1922 it was decided to increase the number of non-permanent members of the Council from four to six with a view to affording universal representation on this executive body of the League. I think I am right in saying that, at any rate at the inception of the League and for the first two or three years of its existence, one main principle was present in the minds of the delegates, namely, that, in electing non-permanent members of the Council, the greatest regard should be had to the dominant geographical divisions and the population, area, wealth and civilisation of the different constituent nationalities.

In the years 1920-1921, when only four non-permanent members of the Council could be elected, the geographical principle was observed. But in subsequent years, notwithstanding that the number of non-permanent members has been increased to six, this principle has been ignored, and of the seats allotted to non-permanent members four go to Europe and two to South America, but none to other parts of the world. In order to have proper and adequate representation of all continents, it is

advisable that steps be taken still further to increase the number of non-permanent members on the Council. I am laying stress on this point not in any selfish spirit so far as China is concerned, but as being worthy of the serious consideration of the Assembly and in the hope that this principle of the division of the seats may tend not only towards upholding the objects of the League, but to the increase of the prestige of the Council and its power to further the objects for which the League has been formed.

Further, I would draw your attention to a resolution which was unanimously adopted at the Ninth Congress of the Federation of League of Nations Societies held at Warsaw in July 1925, endorsing the geographical principle for the election of non-permanent members of the Council and urging its applicability this year in order that the very just aspirations of several hundred million people in the continent of Asia may be fulfilled.

The recommendation now put before the Assembly is by no means new. A similar recommendation has hitherto been passed with unanimity every year. I bring this matter up again in the most earnest hope that the geographical principle will be strictly observed in the forthcoming election of the non-permanent members of the Council so as to increase the prestige of the Council and to fulfil the scope of the League.

**M. Lofgren (Sweden) :**

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I think we all recognise the equity of the recommendation proposed by the Chinese delegation and I am convinced that the action of the Assembly will be inspired by its main principle, as far as may be possible. There is, however, a matter closely connected with that raised in the recommendation before us, to which attention has already been drawn from this platform, by the first delegate of Norway, in the general debate, and upon which I desire to dwell for a few moments.

The system of rotation as regards the non-permanent members of the Council has been the object of an amendment to the Covenant and several resolutions on the point have been unanimously accepted by the Assembly. Hitherto, however, such a system has not been put into practice. I desire to declare on behalf of the Swedish Government that it will have the utmost satisfaction in seeing such a system adopted as soon as possible.

I am convinced that the position and influence of the Council in face of public opinion would thereby be considerably strengthened. Such a system can be drawn up in different ways, but I wish to emphasise that, from the point of view of the Swedish Government, the essential thing is that a system of some kind should be approved without much further delay.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Prince Arfa, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

**Prince Arfa (Persia) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Persian delegation heartily supports the Chinese proposal concerning the geographical factor in the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council. It hopes that this year the Assembly will not be content simply to utter a platonic wish, but that it will act upon its own recommendation.

In Asia, apart from Japan, which has a permanent seat on the Council, there are three States Members of the League — China, Persia and Siam. These three States, which are of considerable importance from the geographical and ethnographical point of view, as well as by reason of their ancient

civilisations, ask that one of the non-permanent seats may be given to one of them. In view of their history and of the fact that their population exceeds 500 million inhabitants, they ask no more than is their due, and we hope the Assembly will be able to meet their views.

**The President :**

*Translation :* If no one else wishes to speak I shall consider this text as adopted in the form of a recommendation.

*The text was adopted.*

## 59. — INTERNATIONAL RELIEF UNION (CIRAULO SCHEME) : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Second Committee concerning the International Relief Union (Annex, Document A. 110. 1925. II).

*(Jonkheer van Eysinga, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Fernandez y Medina, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)*

**M. Fernandez y Medina (Uruguay), Rapporteur :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — The Second Committee has carefully examined the scheme drawn up by the Preparatory Committee appointed under last year's resolution.

In the Second Committee certain very important observations were submitted on the Preparatory Committee's scheme. The Second Committee unanimously agreed upon the resolution now submitted to you.

**The President :**

*Translation :* If no one else wishes to speak, I shall consider as adopted the resolution of the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

*The Assembly,*

*Having taken note of the report of the Preparatory Committee instructed to draw up concrete proposals regarding Senator Ciraolo's scheme for the creation of an organisation of international solidarity between peoples against the calamities which may befall them;*

*Noting with great interest the Preparatory Committee's proposal to set up an International Relief Union;*

*Considering that an international institution such as that contemplated in the present instance, and possibly including among its members States not belonging to the League of Nations, should be constituted by a special agreement between the various Governments; that the fifth Assembly in its resolution of September 26th, 1924, laid down that the different Governments should be consulted; and that it has not yet been possible for this consultation to take place:*

*Requests the Council to refer the scheme back to the Preparatory Committee in order that the latter may introduce any modifications which may be called for by the observations put forward in the Second Committee of the Assembly;*

*Requests the Council to submit the statutes thus revised to the Governments of all States, whether Members or not of the League of Nations, for their formal consideration;*

*Recommends that the Governments should be requested to communicate their views by a date to be fixed by the Council, in order that the Council may, if necessary, proceed to the convocation of a meeting of the duly authorised technical representatives of the aforesaid Governments with a view to the conclusion of the necessary arrangements for the definite establishment of the proposed union, if the Council considers that the replies received are such as to permit the conclusion of an Agreement to this effect.*

*The resolution was adopted.*

## 60. — WORK OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE. REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

### The President :

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Economic Committee (Annex, Document A. 92. 1925. II)

*(Sir Atul Chandra Chatterjee, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)*

### Sir Atul Chatterjee (India), Rapporteur :

Mr. President, I wish merely to draw your attention to the fact that the report before you does not contain any reference to the very important discussion initiated by the French delegation on the difficult and delicate question of convening an international conference to consider the general economic position in all the countries of the world.

The report now before you deals merely with the work of the Economic Committee of the League during the past year. This work is not spectacular. It does not receive very much attention in the Press or on the platform. At the same time, it involves very patient and laborious investigation and research. It requires great tact and judgment as well as wisdom and foresight.

The Economic Committee has performed its task in an extraordinarily effective and brilliant manner and it is to be hoped that you will endorse the views of the Second Committee in expressing your appreciation of that work. I should just like to remind you that, without the restoration of the economic conditions of different countries in the world, the humanitarian objects of the League can never be accomplished.

I have the honour to propose to the Assembly the following draft resolution, which has been adopted by the Second Committee :

#### *The Assembly :*

1. Referring to the resolution of the fifth Assembly regarding import and export prohibitions and restrictions :

*Notes the progress achieved by the Economic Committee during the past year in the study of this complex and difficult question ;*

*Expresses the hope that the draft agreement drawn up by the Economic Committee as a basis of further discussion may receive from the Governments interested all the consideration due to a problem the solution of which would contribute in large measure to the improvement of international commercial relations.*

2. Referring to the resolution of the fourth Assembly concerning the treatment of foreign nationals and enterprises :

*Declares that the Economic Committee, as a result of the systematic pursuit of its study, has*

*established a series of principles the application of which would ensure an equitable treatment of foreigners in regard to their admission to the exercise of professions, industries and occupations ;*

*Expresses the hope that States may be guided by this body of principles both in regard to their national legislation and in the negotiation of bilateral agreements.*

3. Notes that the Economic Committee will be represented in an advisory capacity at the Conference summoned by the Netherlands Government for next October at The Hague for the revision of the International Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, and reiterates the hope already expressed by the fifth Assembly that the amendments proposed by the Economic Committee in respect of unfair competition may receive the support of States Members on the occasion of that Conference.

4. With regard to the protection of foreign purchasers against worthless goods :

*Expresses the desire that the investigations undertaken by the Economic Section be actively pursued with the help of all data that can be obtained from official sources and also of any data which may be supplied by industrial and commercial organisations, in order that as complete information as possible may be collected and published.*

5. Follows with interest the studies of the Economic Committee in regard to the suppression of false Customs declarations and the progressive assimilation of laws relating to bills of exchange, and in regard to the enquiry undertaken in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation and the Financial Committee into the causes of economic crises and of unemployment.

6. With regard to the Convention for the Simplification of Customs Formalities and the Protocol on Arbitration Clauses :

*Takes note with satisfaction of such ratifications as have been deposited up to the present ;*

*Considers at the same time that the adhesion of a larger number of States is desirable in order that the beneficial influence of these two international instruments may operate to the fullest extent.*

### The President :

*Translation :* Does anybody wish to speak on these resolutions ?

*The resolutions were adopted.*

## 61. — PREPARATIONS FOR AN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Second Committee's report on the preparation for an International Economic Conference.

*(M. Belloni, Rapporteur of the Second Committee, took his place on the platform.)*

### The President :

*Translation :* The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Belloni (Italy), Rapporteur, read his report (Annex, Document A. 112. 1925. II).

### The President :

*Translation :* M. Jouhaux will address the Assembly.

**M. Jouhaux (France) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — We cordially welcome the resolution which has just been submitted to us, and we hope it will be unanimously adopted by the Assembly.

The present Assembly will thereby associate itself with the idea embodied by President Wilson in the third of his Fourteen Points, namely, that in order to restore the reign of justice all commercial and industrial barriers must be removed.

You will also be associating yourselves with a labour demonstration made in 1919 at the first Washington Conference. We asked that the great economic problems should be examined from an international standpoint and that an impartial solution on international lines should be found for them.

I may justifiably say now, after studying the situation and considering recent events, that if that labour resolution had been adopted by the International Labour Conference at Washington, where it failed by only one vote to reach a majority, many of the evils from which we have since suffered would have been sensibly lessened.

At that time, when reviewing the situation brought about by the war and the heavy legacy of misfortune and trouble bequeathed to the world, we felt that the only remedy for these problems was complete international collaboration and the co-operation of all the peoples.

We already saw the shadow of the fearful crisis of unemployment which has overtaken one country after another, and from which England is still suffering acutely at this very moment.

We foresaw the continual increase in the cost of living, the cause of that under-feeding which has plunged some countries into the very depths of human misery.

We had all these evils in mind when at Washington we demanded an impartial examination of this question and when, recalling the lines of the French fabulist, we declared that the war had left all peoples more or less infected, more or less blind, more or less paralysed, and that all countries should unite in a combined effort to mitigate their misfortunes.

To-day the Assembly will vote for this resolution, which is the first step along the path we have marked out. It will vote for it with confidence, because the sad experience which we have undergone — and which must never be allowed to occur again — proves to all that the course on which we are embarking is at least *a priori* better than that we have already followed.

You may confidently adopt it, too, because the regeneration which has taken place, the improvement which was heralded, are the result not of measures taken individually by one country against another, but of international measures adopted by the League of Nations and applied by its organs. The measures have been applied too restrictedly, it is true, and on too narrow lines; but despite the limitations to which they have been subject they have, nevertheless, borne fruit.

You may come with confidence to the International Economic Conference. You must not be afraid of the different points of view which your discussion will bring to light, because there is nothing more dangerous than to leave the peoples in ignorance of the evils which surround them and the dangers which threaten them.

If you wish the various peoples to understand the situation, if you wish their knowledge of events to awaken their courage, if you wish the course you have chosen to be understood, then warn them all frankly and sincerely of the dangers that lie before them, and explain to them the efforts they must make in order to overcome their difficulties.

Personally, I believe that from this Conference, from the clash of interests and of discordant views, will emerge a light of reason destined to illumine the whole world. It will show the points of agreement between the peoples, restore confidence in work and tranquillity of mind, and make it possible for us once more to tread the path of peace.

I hope that humanity — just as the traveller, when he has passed the cloud-capped, lightning-crested summit and is descending once more into the sunny plain below, feels a gentle peace around him — will, at last, conscious of the task that lies before it and conscious of the immensity of the work to be done, advance towards its new destiny and lay the foundations of the world upon the resplendent and sublime conception of solidarity.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Jonkheer Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

**Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — There can be no doubt that the problem of security and disarmament is closely bound up with that of the world's economic relations. M. Loucheur very rightly observed, when he submitted his draft resolution, that the most frequent cause of wars seems to be the economic struggle between nations. The delegate for France even emphasised this point before the Second Committee.

The world is becoming so small, and the economic interdependence of peoples so great, that nations must co-operate if they are to avert that economic anarchy which threatens us all. The proposal to prepare an International Economic Conference therefore deserves the League's most serious attention. Governments and nations ought from time to time to take stock of the economic position as a whole. They should draw up a balance-sheet, should verify the progress made and indicate what must be done in the near future.

The necessity is rendered still greater by the fact that it comes entirely within the scope of Article 23 (e) of the Covenant, which lays down that Members of the League will make provision to secure equitable treatment for the commerce of all Members of the League.

It would be idle to convene an International Economic Conference before the financial reconstruction of the world had made some real progress. Financial reconstruction is the basis of economic reconstruction. Happily, however, as M. Loucheur has said, this reconstruction — upon a gold basis — is well on the way to achievement. The financial reconstruction of Austria and that of Hungary, which took place with such marvellous rapidity, thanks to the League of Nations, as also that of Poland, Germany and even Russia, prove that we are not far from general financial restoration.

In 1920, the Brussels Conference drew up a balance-sheet of world economy as it existed immediately after the war. This conference was, perhaps, unable to do all that was expected of it, but its importance as regards the restoration of financial stability is beyond dispute. Even in the economic domain the resolutions and recommendations it adopted were by no means ephemeral.

Since then the Economic and Financial Committees of the League of Nations have worked in a manner which merits the highest praise, though naturally the results they have been able to obtain are limited. How often has the request been made, within the League and elsewhere, that the great international economic problems should be considered from a general point of view ?

I need not enumerate here the suggestions to which I refer. M. Jouhaux gave a detailed summary of them in his admirable speech before the Second Committee — a speech of which I have heard.

The resolution proposed by the French delegation indicates that its aim is merely to examine the economic difficulties which stand in the way of the restoration of general prosperity and to show clearly the most suitable methods of overcoming these difficulties and avoiding disputes. The task of the Conference would therefore be to diagnose the disease and endeavour to find possible remedies. M. Loucheur therefore stated that he did not seek to make the Conference lead directly to international conventions.

Economic reconstruction differs from financial reconstruction in that its success depends primarily on the action of individuals and not on that of Governments. Governments can support or hinder the efforts of individuals or communities of individuals, but they cannot themselves take the initiative. The delegates to the Conference must therefore be truly representative of economic life.

The Council will consider whether it should appoint a Committee to prepare the work of the Conference. The economic difficulties of the world will be discussed at the Conference; the possible limits of international action will perhaps be defined, and world opinion will in any case make itself heard. In my view — though I would not dream of trying to influence its work beforehand — the Conference will collect opinions upon the economic situation in every country, and will discuss the general lines on which it will be possible to promote the economic reconstruction of the world and avert the perils of economic disputes endangering peace.

As in the case of disarmament, the Council will undertake without delay — and after the exchange of views in the Second Committee there can be no doubt on this point — the preparation of this Conference, while reserving the right to decide at what time it should be convened.

Periodical international Conferences are one of the most important parts of the League's machinery. If, side by side with the international Conferences on labour, communications and, we hope, disarmament, we institute, thanks to the French proposal, periodical Economic Conferences, the League will certainly not regret the splendid step forward it will owe to the sixth Assembly.

I am therefore happy to state that my country gladly associates itself with the draft resolution now before you.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Van Cauwelaert, delegate for Belgium, will address the Assembly.

**M. Van Cauwelaert (Belgium) :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — I have the honour — and it is a great pleasure too — to repeat before this Assembly that the entire Belgian delegation accepts the resolution submitted by M. Loucheur and the Second Committee.

Rarely has a suggestion been received with such unanimous approval. Doubtless the influence and authority of its author and the affection with which his country is regarded count for much. But this approval would be inexplicable were it not that the proposal itself meets a general need, a real necessity of the day.

The economic problem has not been raised by artificial means. It is a real problem that we

cannot avoid, because we are all in a state of economic unrest. In front of us lie those disquieting shadows which great social and international upheavals always cast before them.

We have whole heartedly approved the financial reconstruction of Austria and Hungary. We are thankful whenever we see any advance towards the unification of commercial law, the simplification of Customs formalities and fairness in trade. We are prepared to preach moral disarmament by word and deed, but all work for peace might be vain unless it were founded upon economic peace.

There is no need for me to remind you of the powerful influence of material interests. Daily bread is an imperious need, and not only do economic disturbances lead to internal social unrest, but prolonged economic anæmia may easily lead peoples to lose their political stability. There is no need for me to quote examples, for many will instantly occur to you. The work so laboriously begun and so wisely and patiently continued by the League may one day be shaken to its foundations. For it cannot be denied that the economic world to-day is evolving along lines quite opposed to disarmament, and the task of the League is not merely to readjust or discipline, but to convert.

M. Loucheur fully grasps this aspect of the problem, although he referred to it with great circumspection. He laid special stress on the lack of regulation in general production, but he also noted the serious danger of excessive protection, which brings nations into conflict. As the representative of a small industrial State, I venture to lay stress on the dangers of such protection.

I quite recognise that genuine reasons can be advanced to justify the measures of defence which even traditionally free-trade countries have been obliged to take since the war. But we must above all recognise that exclusive and jealous economic nationalism constitutes an immense danger to the future peace of the world.

I am fully aware of the difficulties. I know that the League must not attempt the impossible, and that we must not let undue rashness endanger ultimate success.

The originator of the proposal has himself limited it to two aspects. He desires to avoid all problems which might lead to disastrous misunderstanding or disagreements between nations, and, secondly, he does not seek to force Governments to accept ready-made formulas or draft conventions.

The aim of the Conference must be to enlighten public opinion, to give a lead, to educate the nations and lend the weight of its authority to public and Parliamentary discussions, which are bound to benefit from the discussions and conclusions of the Economic Conference, just as they did from the Brussels Financial Conference.

If the success of the Conference depends upon the care with which it is prepared, then the Committee acted wisely in deciding to entrust its whole preparation to the Council. We must rely upon the Council's discretion as to the method of preparation, the selection of problems to be considered and the eventual summoning of the Conference.

The Council will perhaps decide that the task we have been invited to carry out is too great to be dealt with by one Conference, and that a series of Economic Conferences will be necessary. We have absolute confidence in the Council. It has shown its mettle. It is helped by technical and economic advisers whose great abilities we appreciate. We hope that the Council, in its action, in its deliberations and in its decisions will be guided by the spirit of faith, which brings to it the appeal of the nations for economic peace.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Cobián, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

**M. Cobián (Spain) :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — I have very great pleasure in informing you that the Spanish delegation now adheres to the resolution submitted by the Second Committee following on the proposals put forward by the French delegate, M. Loucheur, in a brilliant speech which you all applauded.

Let us hope that the application of this resolution will herald a new era, both as regards economic conditions and as regards world peace.

The Spanish delegation is also glad to observe the care with which this draft resolution has been conceived and worded. This care evinces the exceptional importance and gravity of the problem, and will enable all Members of the League to take an active part in the work thus begun.

The Spanish delegation expresses its sincerest hope for the success of the French proposal, which is surely destined to open out a new pathway to universal peace. We shall thus soon be able to put an end to the evils arising from the economic injustices which produce such baneful effects.

If — as I hope — we attain this happy result, posterity will always hold in grateful memory the work accomplished by the sixth Assembly.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Loucheur will address the Assembly.

**M. Loucheur (France) :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — I will endeavour to sum up in a few words the interesting discussion which took place in the Second Committee, and which will be concluded here.

First of all I should like to thank those delegates who, both in the Second Committee and here also, have expressed their approval of the draft submitted by the French delegation. I should also like to thank them for the various interesting suggestions they made.

M. Loudon, on behalf of his country, has confirmed in the Assembly what the distinguished Chairman of the Second Committee, Jonkheer van Eysinga, told that Committee—that his country has accepted our project. May I be allowed to thank Jonkheer van Eysinga for the able manner in which he presided over the work of the Second Committee and for the many helpful suggestions he offered?

But the main reason why I venture to address you once more is to point out that we are no longer at variance as to the objects we are all seeking to attain.

When, a few days ago, you listened so attentively and sympathetically to the explanation I gave on behalf of my country, I particularly urged that the work we were asking you to undertake formed a logical sequence to that which you already had undertaken at Assemblies previous to the fifth Assembly, with the object of endeavouring to give the nations the security they claim. I told you that, in our opinion, the cessation of economic conflicts was one of the principal and fundamental factors of that security.

Not a word was said in the Second Committee in opposition to this statement, which was the starting-point of our discussion. Indeed, several speakers confirmed it. And to-day, by adopting the resolution submitted to you, you are taking the first step.

There has been a certain amount of discussion concerning the procedure to be adopted. Some

delegates would have preferred the Second Committee to have decided the composition of the Preparatory Committee forthwith. Our own view prevailed, and it was agreed that the Council itself should decide on the composition of that Committee.

I should like, however, to assure the members of the Assembly here and now that the apparent difference of opinion which arose between the British delegation and our own has happily disappeared. I say “apparent difference”, because we were at one as regards our ultimate aim.

It has been agreed to invite the Council at its coming session in December to decide whether it would be desirable to set up the Preparatory Committee.

The British delegation has also agreed — and the Second Committee has consented to this course — that France may, before December, send to the Secretary-General a scheme for the constitution of the Committee; the Council will thus be able to take a decision also on this matter at the same December session and will so avoid delay.

Further, the French delegation has asked that, before the matter comes before the Council, the Technical Committees of the League should be consulted regarding the scheme submitted to the Secretariat by the French Government.

In this connection I should like now to explain frankly the part we think these Technical Committees ought to play. Some of them imagined that we wished to take the matter out of their hands and prevent them continuing the important work on which they had been engaged.

May I offer, on our own behalf, and, I am sure, on behalf of all the delegations here present, a sincere tribute to the work which the Technical Committees of the League have been carrying out day after day with such perseverance, ability, and, if I may say so, perspicacity? It is on them, indeed, that the Preparatory Committee will have to rely.

In its draft resolution the French delegation has been careful to make special reference to the International Labour Office. Is there any need, gentlemen, after the speech of my colleague, M. Jouhaux, to explain the reasons for this?

Surely no one can imagine that the vast problem of the economic organisation of the world can possibly be solved without the active co-operation of the representatives of the working class, without associating labour with our work, and, consequently, without making the International Labour Office, as it were, the corner-stone of our edifice.

The important data which the Labour Office possesses, and its extremely interesting enquiries, the results of which have been communicated to you in recent publications, will enable the Preparatory Committee to avoid all loss of time in making preliminary investigations.

All is ready, thanks to the work accomplished by the International Labour Office and the other Technical Organisations. It is on the work of these organisations, then, that we intend to base our efforts.

It would be a mistake, however, to give the world the impression that the work of these Technical Committees will merely be continued. New blood must be infused into it. Do you not think, for instance, that the representatives of certain nations which are not yet Members of the League should sit on this Preparatory Committee? Would it not be useless to attempt the economic restoration of Europe without inviting Germany to co-operate?

Indeed, we feel that all countries should be asked to take a share in this work. Let all who will join us. We shall endeavour to solve in unison a problem which we all frankly admit to be a very difficult one. The task is a difficult one! It is indeed; but is that any reason why we should flinch from it? Is it not rather one reason more for beginning at once upon work which will take us many years to accomplish?

I will not again go over the causes of the present economic unrest. I have already referred to them in the Second Committee and in this Assembly. Many of our colleagues have confirmed our opinions and have also made important additions to our arguments.

Henceforth it is vital — to quote M. Loudon — that the general interest should not be done to death by the blind conflicts of individual interests. We must realise that it is not enough for nations to pursue a domestic fiscal policy involving a certain Customs policy. They must be brought to realise that the Customs policy must first be examined, quite apart from its fiscal aspect, with a view to economic equilibrium.

Now that a Conference is to be held, many considerations will arise. We might examine, for example, whether consumption among the older nations has increased in proportion to the number of inhabitants. It might be worth while finding out what is happening in the new continents, where home consumption has enormously stimulated production.

The main object is to try to establish equilibrium between home consumption, the number of consumers, and productive capacity. These are the three terms which require to be balanced.

What can I add to the brilliant report of M. Belloni, to whom I should like to pay a heartfelt tribute? He has attempted to summarise in a few pages all the salient points of the discussion in the Committee, and he has succeeded. May I, however, refer to the observations of the Belgian delegate, M. van Cauwelaert, in the Second Committee?

Essaying to elucidate the reasons which had led France to submit her project, he noted that we had kept out of the discussions all points which might have been over-controversial and might have led to unfortunate differences of opinion. I refer to the inter-Allied debts, which must not be included in the programme of the Conference any more than the question of emigration.

He was kind enough to add that France intended to face the problem squarely. He stated finally: "If you undertake this important and difficult work you must do so with faith and confidence", and I for my part would add "enthusiasm" too.

I said the other day that pessimism is destructive and optimism alone is constructive. If there is one problem in which we shall need all our optimism, it is this one.

It is, I repeat, a difficult, almost a superhuman task. No one more than myself sees how great a task it is, how nearly impossible it will be to discover a complete solution. But we shall advance step by step along the road which leads us to peace.

To the world we must tell the truth, for the world expects from us something more than mutual congratulations and assurances of constant agreement. The world might be led to think that we were concealing from it the points on which we disagreed.

What this Assembly should rather do is to convince the world that we are all conscious of the great difficulties we are striving to overcome. Let us attack the problem with courage and sincerity. Let us tell the truth to those who have sent us here, and, since it is the representative of Italy who speaks from this platform on behalf of the Second Committee, I will conclude by repeating the words of the great Leonardo da Vinci, which our colleague quoted the other day: "*Li impedimenti a la verità si conertono in penitenza*".

Gentlemen, let us tell the people the truth; let us not shrink from our task.

#### The President :

*Translation* : If no other delegate wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution proposed by the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

#### The Assembly :

*Firmly resolved to seek all possible means of establishing peace throughout the world ;*

*Convinced that economic peace will largely contribute to security among the nations ;*

*Persuaded of the necessity of investigating the economic difficulties which stand in the way of the revival of general prosperity and of ascertaining the best means of overcoming these difficulties and of preventing disputes ;*

*Invites the Council to consider at the earliest possible moment the expediency of constituting on a wide basis a Preparatory Committee which, with the assistance of the Technical Organisations of the League and the International Labour Office, will prepare the work for an International Economic Conference.*

*The convening of this Conference under the auspices of the League of Nations shall be a matter for subsequent decision by the Council.*

*The resolution was adopted.*

*The Assembly rose at 12.20 p.m.*



# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## SIXTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1925, AT 10 A.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND

62. — COMPOSITION OF THE DELEGATION OF FINLAND.

The President :

*Translation* : In consequence of the departure of the Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs, the first deputy delegate for Finland becomes full delegate.

63. — ARBITRATION, SECURITY AND REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS : REPORTS OF THE FIRST AND THIRD COMMITTEES.

The President :

*Translation* : The first item on the agenda is the question of arbitration, security and reduction of armaments.

This general heading includes :

1. The report of the First Committee (Annex, Document A.115.1925.V).

2. The report of the Third Committee (Annex, Document A.99.1925.IX).

3. The joint draft resolution submitted by the First and Third Committees.

I therefore invite the Rapporteurs of the First and Third Committees, M. Rolin, delegate for

Belgium, and M. Benes, delegate for Czechoslovakia and also the Chairmen of the two Committees, M. Scialoja, delegate for Italy, and M. Nintchitch, delegate for the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, to take their places on the platform.

*The Chairmen and the Rapporteurs of the First and Third Committees took their places on the platform.*

The President :

*Translation* : M. Rolin, Rapporteur of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Rolin (Belgium), Rapporteur :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The First Committee submits the following three draft resolutions :

“ I. The Assembly,

“ Taking note of the declarations submitted to the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations in respect of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and of the fact that the said Protocol has not up to the present received the ratifications necessary for putting it into operation immediately ;

“ Convinced that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations ;

“ Declaring afresh that a war of aggression should be regarded as an international crime :

“ Regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to attain those objects by concluding arbitration conventions and treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Protocol (arbitration, security, disarmament) ;

“ Records the fact that such agreements need not be restricted to a limited area but may be applied to the whole world ;

"Recommends that after these conventions and treaties have been deposited with the League of Nations, the Council should examine them in order to report to the Seventh Assembly on the progress in general security brought about by such agreements ;

"Undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security and disarmament . . . ."

M. Benes has drawn up a report concerning the last paragraph.

"II. The Assembly,

"In view of the importance of making a thorough study of the views which have been expressed in the Assembly and the Council on the subject of pacific settlement of international disputes ;

"Convinced that such study will contribute to the development of a system of pacific settlement of international disputes :

"Requests the Council to submit to careful examination the proposals, declarations and suggestions made at the Assembly and the Council with a view to pacific settlement of international disputes, and to report to the Seventh Assembly upon the progress which can be made in this matter.

"III. The Assembly,

"Reserving the question whether it is at present desirable to embody in a new general Convention the provisions concerning compulsory arbitration contained in the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes ;

"Recalling the guarantees provided in the Covenant of the League of Nations :

"Calls the attention of States Members of the League to the desirability, from the point of view of their security, of concluding particular conventions for arbitration or for the judicial settlement of disputes."

"I shall not read to you the report on these resolutions but will merely ask leave to make a few brief comments and indicate the general purport of the resolutions.

Our first meetings were devoted to discussing not the Protocol itself but to summon it forth. Not all the speeches were funeral orations. Some of them which called for a general settlement of the question of arbitration, security and disarmament rather resembled an appeal for a resurrection, a sort of "Lazarus, come forth!"

In any case, one fact is clear even from the speeches which contained reservations to or criticisms of the Protocol, namely, that the problem was correctly stated last year ; that disarmament without security is impossible, and security impossible without arbitration. By arbitration, I mean the pacific settlement of all disputes, of whatever kind, without reservation, and the exclusion in all cases of aggressive warfare as a method of settling differences.

The resolution submitted to us notes that the Protocol has been laid aside for the present but that you still adhere to its principles. The second part deals with the present situation. In a resolution already adopted at the suggestion of the Swiss delegation you refer to the progress made last year in regard to the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice, which several other States have recently accepted.

The present resolution emphasises the importance of two other new facts which are considered to be specially opportune, the conclusion of conventions of arbitration and the negotiation of pacts of security.

Both of these have already been mentioned to you. I merely point out that they are new and that they constitute an important advance.

Let us, first of all, take conventions of arbitration. You will remember that Article 13 of the Covenant draws a distinction between disputes which are suitable for submission to arbitration or for a juridical settlement and those which are not. It is true that this article enumerates a number of disputes which are considered suitable for submission to arbitration or juridical settlement, but this enumeration is subject to two conditions. The Covenant only gives the list as an enumeration of disputes generally suitable for submission to arbitration or juridical settlement, and leaves each State free to decide whether in actual practice a particular dispute belongs to the class of disputes which can be settled by arbitration or juridical settlement or not.

In a great many arbitration conventions, however, Members of the League have not only renounced this discretionary power but have actually abolished the distinctions drawn in the Covenant, and now regard all disputes without distinction as suitable for submission to arbitration or juridical settlement.

This is a considerable step forward, a step which in itself shows what great progress the League of Nations has made in a few years as regards both the ideals and policies of Governments.

With regard to the pacts of security, these have been called regional agreements. That appellation is partly correct, because the object of these agreements is to maintain peace within the terms of the Covenant, and because they apply to definite regions ; but in other respects they are quite different, if only as regards their contents, from the regional agreements which the Assembly approved in former years.

The pacts of security — and in saying this I am not committing any indiscretion, since the first part of the correspondence has already been published in the Press — the pacts of security at present under consideration are the self-same conventions of general arbitration to which I have just referred, plus a guarantee.

I ask the experienced diplomats here present whether in the whole of their long careers they have ever, either before or since the war, met with conventions of this new type.

Your Committee was quite right in noting these two facts, which may in a few years radically change the political face of Europe. It was right when it decided, without offering any direct opinion on treaties with which it is not yet acquainted and which have not been submitted to it, to agree to those treaties in principle. It was right when it pointed out the desirability of spreading and extending this practice and making it general throughout the world. Finally, your Committee was right in proposing that you should ask the Council to watch developments in the matter of these treaties and submit to the next Assembly a report showing how they have modified the European situation.

Such — with the exception of the last paragraph, which deals with disarmament and on which M. Benes will speak — is the tenor of the first draft resolution submitted to you.

The other two draft resolutions also deal with arbitration.

The object of the Swedish delegation's proposal is to request the Council to examine afresh the clauses of the Protocol concerning arbitration. This proposal was based on an idea which we all approved, namely, that arbitration has a value of its own and is a desirable thing in itself.

The Committee nevertheless came to the conclusion that it could not recommend you to adopt this resolution, as there are a number of objections to it, the chief being that it might give rise to misunderstanding and to the belief that the Protocol was prematurely dead.

The essential part of the Swedish suggestion, however, namely, the study — in the light of the conventions at present being concluded throughout the world — of arbitration as a question apart, the study of arbitration as a pacific and general method of settlement desirable for all nations, is also embodied in the Japanese proposal adopted by the First Committee.

In agreement with the Japanese delegation, we propose that you should consider not arbitration only but conciliation as well, and, in view of the extremely important statements which have been made in this Assembly and in the Council and the negotiations now being conducted in Europe in this connection, that you should request the Council to consider the whole problem of the pacific settlement of disputes and make it the subject of a special study before the next Assembly meets.

The third and last draft resolution submitted to you owes its conception to the Belgian delegation and deals with arbitration conventions.

It has repeatedly been said on this platform that there can be no arbitration without penalties. The object of this draft resolution is to remind Members of the League that a convention on compulsory arbitration is at all events made possible *ipso facto* by the general guarantees laid down in the Covenant.

To all those who obtain an arbitral or judicial award in any dispute, the Covenant, in Article 13, guarantees that, "in the event of any failure to carry out such an award or decision, the Council shall propose what steps should be taken to give effect thereto". It also guarantees that the League will intervene in the event of a State resorting to war against a Member of the League which complies with an arbitral award.

The wording of the Covenant itself justifies us in deducing simply that Members of the League need only make sure, by means of conventions, that they can obtain an arbitral or judicial award in the case of any dispute whatever, in order to obtain the minimum guarantee afforded by the Covenant. This is simply the application of the provisions of the Covenant. It was advisable, we thought, to lay stress on this point, in order that full use might be made of it, and that it might be taken as a basis for the policy of the different States.

This, gentlemen, is the substance of the resolutions submitted to you by the First Committee. If you adopt them they will, we think, justify your confidence, provided each one of us takes care that, as far as his own country is concerned, they are understood and put into practice. Then, when you meet again next year, the system of treaties of arbitration and security will have been extended, and the League will, this year once again, have proved deserving of universal gratitude.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Benes, Rapporteur of the Third Committee, will address the Assembly.

**M. Benes (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur of the Third Committee :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — M. Rolin, delegate of Belgium, has given you a summary of the work of the First Committee. I have to inform you of the work of the Third Committee, so far as it concerns the

resolution relating to the three great problems with which we are dealing more particularly — arbitration, security and disarmament.

By comparison with previous years, the Third Committee has this year somewhat modest results to offer you. Apart from the Protocol of 1924 and the Treaty of Mutual Assistance, which was agreed to in 1923, you will no doubt remember Lord Cecil's important report adopted in 1922, and which contained, *inter alia*, the famous resolution No. XIV, which has hitherto formed the basis of the League's work in execution of Article 8 of the Covenant.

According to the Spanish proposal submitted to this Assembly by M. Quiñones de León on September 12th and referred to the Third Committee, the Assembly, while taking into account the present general political situation and the inter-State negotiations which it is hoped will be begun and carried to a successful issue, and while proclaiming that it still remains faithful to the principles of Resolution XIV and the Protocol, will request the Council to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the Reduction of Armaments as soon as, in its opinion, satisfactory conditions have been achieved from the point of view of general security, as provided for in Resolution XIV of the third Assembly.

The draft resolution submitted by the Netherlands delegation at the meeting held on September 11th, 1925, and the amendment submitted on September 14th, 1925, by the Hungarian delegation, which were also referred to the Third Committee, may both be regarded as amendments to the last paragraph of the Spanish resolution. The idea underlying these amendments is that the Assembly should request the Council to consider forthwith a plan for the general reduction and limitation of armaments, and also to make preparatory arrangements for a Conference on the general reduction and limitation of armaments.

In point of fact, the Third Committee only dealt with the last paragraph of the Spanish proposal and the amendments to it. Its report, which you have before you, does, it is true, touch on the political side of the preamble to the Spanish resolution, as re-drafted by the Third Committee, but its main objects are as follows :

1. To inform you of the discussions which took place in the Third Committee and in Sub-Committee, with a view to reconciling the divergent opinions expressed on the last paragraphs of the Spanish proposal and the amendments to which I have just referred.

2. To explain the exact meaning of the paragraph which, according to the Third Committee's proposal, will be substituted for the last paragraph of the Spanish draft resolution.

The Third Committee proposes that the following sentence should be substituted for this last paragraph :

"And, in conformity with the spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant, requests the Council to make a preparatory study with a view to a Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments in order that, as soon as satisfactory conditions have been assured from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the Third Assembly, the said Conference may be convened and a general reduction and limitation of armaments may be realised."

Thus the text proposed :

1. Defines the Council's present field of activity in regard to the reduction and limitation of armaments ;

2. Amends the Spanish proposal as regards the actual time when the Council's action in this matter is to develop:

3. States that it is for the Council to draw up the programme for its action.

The Third Committee suggests that you should adopt yet another resolution regarding the body to which the work in question has been entrusted. The Third Committee has examined the Fifth Assembly's resolution on this subject, and also that passed by the Council on October 3rd, 1924, for the organisation of the Co-ordination Commission which superseded the Temporary Mixed Commission. The report gives the various criticisms of and observations on that body made in the Third Committee and its Sub-Committee.

Whilst appreciating the value of these criticisms and observations, the Third Committee is of opinion that the decision rests with the Council, and accordingly submits to the Assembly the following resolution:

'The Assembly:

"Takes note of the Council resolution dated October 3rd, 1924, establishing the Co-ordination Commission;

"And invites the attention of the Council to the suggestions made during the proceedings of the Third Committee, as contained in the report submitted to the Assembly, with regard both to the designation and the composition of that Commission, and also to the necessity of determining its rules of procedure."

These, then, are the concrete proposals which I have to lay before you and the decisions which you are asked to take this year. I should like to make a few brief remarks on this subject.

When comparing the work of the Third Committee this year with that of previous years I mentioned Resolution XIV of 1922, the Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1923 and the Protocol of 1924. I said — and everyone will, I think, agree — that our work this year is less ambitious.

But the Assembly should not for this reason feel any anxiety or dissatisfaction regarding our work, our aim or our mission. This year's discussions on the Protocol, the Pact of Guarantee, disarmament and indeed several other questions as well have at times during the last three weeks caused anxiety and disappointment both to ourselves and to that section of public opinion which is favourable to the ideas and aims of the League.

In my view this anxiety is quite groundless. In the first place, though in some of the more important questions the action taken by the Assembly has been more restrained than in previous years, we cannot but admit that it has a definite achievement to its credit — the new and solemn consecration, the perpetuation, so to speak, of the inter-connection of the three great principles on which all the League's political activities will turn in the coming years — arbitration, security, disarmament. This was what M. Paul-Boncour and Sir George Grahame asserted and confirmed in the Third Committee the other day.

Last year we had prolonged and heated discussions on this subject. This year even those who are sceptical as to the Protocol accept these three great principles in their entirety. That is something gained. It is a great and positive achievement. We shall soon see what the future has in store for us when the time comes to put these principles into practice.

As regards the second fact which dispels any pessimism we may feel as to the League's future, I venture to repeat what I said from this platform

two years ago when, after the Corfu incident and after the debates, at times both complex and disheartening, on the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, I laid before the Assembly the Third Committee's report on this Treaty and on disarmament.

"I saw", I said, "a wave of pessimism regarding the League of Nations pass over Geneva. I also saw this wave of pessimism pass through our Committee in the course of our debates on the reduction of armaments. I did not then and I do not now share this pessimism. The great force of an ideal lies in the fact that it can only be attained with difficulty in the midst of disillusionment followed in its turn by success, that it leads in man to the development of the great moral qualities of energy and strength of will. The difficulties which have arisen out of our present disputes should be a new lesson to us.

"We shall, of course, be obliged to compromise still further, but so long as there are men who, while taking due account of the political realities of the moment, can still keep vital principles sacred, and who possess energy, steadfast will and immutable faith in the great principles of the League, then, though these may be momentary halts, the advance is bound to begin again without delay.

"At the end of my report I said that we could leave Geneva profoundly convinced that the struggle between ideals and the realities of present politics is a cruel and a ruthless one, but that during the coming years we should wage that struggle with renewed energy and with still unshaken faith in the ideals underlying the League."

That is what I said two years ago, at a time of temporary despondency, and I venture to repeat my words to-day. After the difficulties of 1923 came the enthusiasm of last year. This year again we halt awhile and strengthen the position we have won. This ebb and flow is the normal law of politics which you all experience every day. In the certainty that the tide will turn, I beg you to vote for this year's resolutions and prepare for a further advance next year.

The President:

*Translation:* Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire):

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I rise to support the resolutions which have been put before you by the Rapporteurs of the First and Third Committees.

They are four in number, the long resolution which had been called familiarly the Spanish resolution, two resolutions about arbitration, and one about the machinery known as the Co-ordination Committee, which has now received a new name. As to the latter point I do not propose to say anything, because the matter has been referred to the Council and I do not think there is anything which can usefully be added to what is contained in the reports on the subject.

With regard, however, to the other broad general principle, I may perhaps be allowed to recall that it is now several years since I first had the honour of addressing this Assembly on the general question of disarmament and security, and it is a matter of personal gratification that I am able to say that I have nothing to withdraw, and I think I have nothing to modify, in the opinions which I then expressed from this tribune, and

to which I still adhere. I believe now as strongly as ever that disarmament is vital to the world, it is vital to peace and it is vital to prosperity. I believe there is no duty more incumbent on the League of Nations than to work for that object.

It is imposed upon us by Article 8 of the Covenant and we must never allow ourselves to forget it. It is no less imposed on many of us by the preface to the disarmament clauses in the Treaties of Peace that were signed at Paris. I venture to say that in that great cause we can still rely upon the broad principles which the Assembly accepted in 1922. Those principles were two in number, namely, that disarmament to be effective must be general — that I believe is still true — and that security and disarmament must go hand in hand for they are essential to one another. There can be no complete security without disarmament, neither can we hope for disarmament without security. It is because the chief resolution we are considering to-day reaffirms, and reaffirms explicitly, the principles expressed in 1922 that I feel so happy and confident in supporting it from this platform.

Whatever else may be said of the last two or three years of the history of the League of Nations, it is no little gain that after all the storm and stress of the controversies that have gone on during those years, when the whole question has been examined and re-examined by every Government and every people, we still come back to the principles we then established and are able once more, after mature consideration, to reaffirm them in this Assembly.

But the resolution does more than that. I, personally, attach great importance to that paragraph in which aggressive war is formally denounced. I believe that is a most important principle to impress strongly upon the minds of the peoples of the world. Under the old system of international law, war was a right. We are now prepared to say, and to say it with all the authority of this Assembly, that aggressive war is an international crime. Further, it is of no less importance that the negotiations, the proposals for a Pact between certain countries, of which we are all aware, are definitely approved by the resolution which is before us. It is not, perhaps, sufficiently realised, though it has been mentioned, that here too we have returned to the principles of 1922 even as regards methods, for this proposal for a special Pact, which, as we know, it is hoped will lead up to a series of similar Pacts, was one of the methods contemplated in 1922. I will venture to read one sentence from the celebrated Resolution No. XIV: "This reduction" — the reduction of armaments — "could be carried out either by means of a general treaty, which is the most desirable plan, or by means of partial treaties designed to be extended and open to all countries".

I remember very well — my friend M. de Jouvenel will remember equally well — that, at that time, there was a considerable controversy of a very friendly kind as to the method which it was most desirable to pursue. It was my contention that we proceed by way of a general treaty filled up with special treaties, if I may so describe it; and the French contention, represented by M. de Jouvenel, was that we should proceed by special treaties leading up ultimately to a general treaty.

The position is now somewhat reversed. I am not prepared to admit that I was wrong. I still think that, had it been practicable, my plan, if I may so venture to call it, the plan in favour of which I argued in 1922, was the better plan. M. de Jouvenel, however, constantly assured me that, however desirable my plan might be, it would not be practicable, when it came to the point, and that his plan, more modest and more cautious, would

ultimately be found to be the one which was more easily adopted by the peoples of the world.

I congratulate M. de Jouvenel on his superior foresight. But, apart from these little personal recollections, the point is that in our present position and in the policy which is now accepted and approved by this resolution, we are not departing from the basis laid down in 1922; having tried one route in the intervening years, we have now embarked upon the other route which was contemplated in 1922; but to the earlier principles we have added that of arbitration.

I observe sometimes a little criticism of the British attitude towards arbitration. Let me repeat what has been said already in this Assembly — that there is no warmer friend of arbitration among the nations of the world than the British people and the British Government. In practice, it has always had our warmest support. The Mosul case, which has been referred to quite lately, and in which we have been ready and anxious to settle a great international dispute by arbitration, is only one of a long series of incidents of our national policy in which I may say, I think without exaggeration, that whenever we have found ourselves in a serious international dispute we have always urged arbitration. I use the word "arbitration" in the widest possible sense.

Do not let us forget that on the eve of the great war it was the British Minister who urged more insistently than anyone else that the dispute which then existed should be submitted not to arbitration in the smaller sense but to that broad discussion between the peoples which is now contemplated in the Covenant of the League of Nations. It has always been the British policy, in face of the actual crisis, the actual difficulty that may have arisen.

But I must repeat what was so very admirably said by my friend and colleague Mr. Chamberlain — that, deep down in the British nature, there is a distrust of general principles, and though they may be ready and anxious, as they always are when it comes to the point, to have recourse to arbitration, and though the idea of force and violence is utterly alien to the British method of looking at these things, yet the British are nervous and distrustful about accepting wide and general principles, the full extent of which they cannot measure and the full bearing of which on the immense interests entrusted to their charge they cannot appreciate until the time comes.

Let me say that I personally have always believed, and believe still, that, in this great edifice of the peaceful settlement of international disputes, arbitration is not the foundation but the final coping-stone of the structure. It will be the result much more than the cause of that attitude of mind on which the peace of nations really depends. Here, again, let me point out we have an instance at our very doors, the question of Mosul. I trust that the difficulty will be overcome. I need not stay to argue it here. But what is the difficulty that has arisen? It is the doubt whether both parties were really ready to accept arbitration. If there had been no doubt, there would have been no difficulty in connection with arbitration. It is because arbitration cannot be imposed on a nation, but must be the result of the spirit by which the nation is guided, that I have always held that arbitration must be the last rather than the first step in this great enterprise.

Ladies and gentlemen, may I venture to remind you that in saying that I am merely in consonance with what is taught by the history of individual nations. I take as an example my own nation's

history; but it is not different in this respect from other nations. In England the supremacy of the law, the rule that all disputes between individuals must be referred to the legal tribunals for settlement, was not the first step; it was the last. The first step was to put a stop to private war and private violence. The first step was that great step that was taken by our splendid line of Sovereigns, those Sovereigns whom we imported so successfully from France. It was the work of William I, of Henry I, of Henry II, and of Edward I which laid the foundation of the great work done by the last-named king in establishing the principle of the supremacy of the law. It was because we had arrived at a system of internal security, and to some extent, though imperfectly, to internal disarmament, that in civil life the law became the possible arbiter of all disputes.

I myself am satisfied, and I have always been satisfied, that the great thing in international life is to get rid of the conception that war is the natural way of settling international disputes, to establish firmly the principle that security and disarmament must be the rule of international life; then arbitration, the actual machinery of the settlement of disputes, will become so obvious and so inevitable that no difficulties will be found in its way. In saying this, do not let me be misunderstood. I recognise that these three great causes, security, disarmament and arbitration, are interdependent. A little security will bring a little disarmament, a little disarmament will bring more security, more security and more disarmament will undoubtedly produce more arbitration, and the more the arbitration the greater will be the prospects of security and disarmament.

The three causes are interdependent and we must work at all of them. I welcome most heartily that part of the resolution which points out that that is the duty of this Assembly.

I gather from what I have read that impatience is sometimes shown with what is called the British attitude of caution. It has even been suggested, tacitly suggested, that the British are not in earnest in these great causes. Nothing could be more foolish and nothing could be more unjust.

I have been engaged during this Assembly in promoting an effort to establish a new Convention for the abolition of slavery and other practices analogous to slavery. The British Government proposed that that Convention should be signed at this Assembly. It was pointed out to us, perfectly rightly and legitimately, that other nations desire to have an opportunity of considering this matter, and that, though they were quite in favour of our general proposal, they wanted further time, further opportunity for weighing the serious suggestions that were being made. We readily yielded to that representation. I thought it perfectly reasonable and right. I should have despised myself utterly if, because this or that nation had urged a little caution, a little delay, I had concluded that they were less in favour of the abolition of slavery than was the British Government. A desire to march cautiously does not mean a reluctance to march to the end. There is a very well-known Italian proverb, which I will not venture to try to quote in the original language, which points out that if you go slowly you may yet reach the goal of your efforts more certainly than if you try to go too fast.

May I venture with the utmost respect and deference to say this to my friends and colleagues of the Assembly. The League is now growing up. We are no longer in a period of uncertainty or establishment. The League is established. It is the greatest international fact of our day. Its general principles have been well settled. Its

foundations have been completely laid. There is no need for us now to pass resolutions of a theoretical or abstract character. It is our business henceforward to be sternly practical, to consider not only what is desirable but what can be done to forward the great causes we have at heart.

There is an English expression of which I may perhaps remind you without impertinence, because I think that it must be an English idiom as I know of no translation of it into a foreign language. We sometimes speak of "gush", that is, exaggerated expression which has no basis in reality, aspirations which forget that, if they are to be useful, they must also be practical.

There is nothing more easy than to profess the highest sentiments and the most admirable aspirations. There is a danger — do not let us forget it — that in this Assembly we may be sometimes tempted to substitute aspiration for action. That is a grave danger, a danger which besets all parties, and perhaps besets us not less, or even more, than other Assemblies; for we are here without the direct and immediate duty of carrying into effect the principles which we accept. The Assembly as a whole lays down its principles, but it is for the national Governments to carry them into effect. And there is a danger — is there not? — that some of us, especially some perhaps who are not so immediately affected by the resolutions, may pass the warmest and highest-sounding motions, leaving it to the Governments in the respective countries to carry them out as best they can.

I speak plainly, because I do not think I shall be suspected of any lack of warmth for the League of Nations or any lack of affection or belief. I believe in the League profoundly. But I do venture very respectfully to urge on all my colleagues that we have now reached a stage when it is absolutely incumbent upon us to ask, as regards every proposal, every aspiration, would my own countrymen accept this? Would they pass the necessary legislation to carry it out? Unless we are satisfied that we intend that that should be the case, unless we believe that that can in fact be achieved, we have no right to vote for any aspiration, however splendid and however magnificent.

What we need now in the League of Nations is actual, definite, positive advance, even if it is slow. It is far better to gain even an inch, if we really gain it, than to pretend that we have gained a mile when we have made no real advance at all. Therefore I welcome most heartily the proposal which is contained in these resolutions, that we should forthwith submit to careful scientific study those great principles and objects of disarmament and arbitration. It is only by preparing the ground fully and effectively that we can hope really to make an advance which shall be a real advance.

I have heard in these debates a great deal about the principles of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and of the principles of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance. I do not myself attach very great importance to the question whether what we are actually doing is more in accordance with one set of principles or the other, or whether they differ or are the same. That is not very important. The great principle is the principle of peace, and, as to that, I am quite sure that we are advancing on the right road.

I heard the other day M. Hymans defending in a Committee a phrase in a report of his about the organisation of peace and saying that he did not mean by that the old organisation of peace on the Roman basis, *Si vis pacem, para bellum*, but rather on the new basis of the League of Nations as enshrined in this resolution, namely,

the re-establishment of confidence between nations. That is what we are trying to do now; that is the principle by which the Pact negotiations of which we have heard are inspired; that is the principle on which we should work. Believe me, there is no nation more convinced of the essential importance of that principle than the nation to which I have the honour to belong. It is very many years since it was laid down that peace is the greatest of British interests. I will venture to add that peace is also the greatest of British duties. We believe that; the British people believe it profoundly. The vastly overwhelming majority of the British people are convinced of the truth of that principle. Governments may come, Governments may go, they may be drawn from the Left or from the Right, they may consist of labourers or of landowners, but, believe me, they will all have to conform to that principle; otherwise, their existence will be short indeed. Speaking, therefore, for the British Government, and through it for the British people, I say, let us go on in this work and prosper. It is a work that is dear to my fellow-countrymen and there is no nation in the world which will so genuinely and from its heart say to you, God be with you.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. de Jouvenel, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

**M. de Jouvenel (France) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I trust you will allow me to express on your behalf the unanimous thanks of the Assembly to M. Rolin for his explicit report and to M. Benes, who perhaps prepared his report with less enthusiasm than last year, but with equal clearness.

May I also congratulate the Assembly on the reappearance on this platform of the noble figure of Lord Cecil, to whom the League gladly acknowledges its great indebtedness and whom it greets as it would Lord Balfour and M. Léon Bourgeois, whom it also hopes some day to see again.

No one, indeed, can gauge better than Lord Cecil the progress we have made since 1922, or mark the stages of what both he and I are rather inclined to call a journey which begins and ends with Resolution XIV.

Lord Cecil also pointed out that, as always happens when we go round in a circle, each eventually finds himself in the position of the others; and so he cannot wholly accept the views expressed by the heads of our respective delegations at the opening of this Assembly concerning the psychological history of our nations, since, as far as the Pact is concerned, it is France which has proceeded from the particular to the general and England which has proceeded from the general to the particular. That proves that here, under the auspices of the League, a kind of exchange of temperaments is taking place. This perhaps is not the least advantage of this institution, since nations are often kept apart less by their individual interests than by their education and mentality.

The League's task, however, is not simply to promote intellectual co-operation, for this particular work has been delegated to one of its organs. What it wants is some immediate and tangible success.

How far have we advanced towards that success? M. Quinones de Leon's resolution provides the answer to this question.

I venture to speak on this point with the frank-

ness which we have more than once this year been urged to display. I desire to explain clearly what France's position is and to reveal all the difficulties and weaknesses with which we have to contend.

Lord Cecil has just told you—and I thank him for it—that the League's great weakness has hitherto been the lack of responsibility, the fact—as he also said in the Third Committee—that we could pass resolutions without binding the Government organisations concerned.

I am therefore especially glad to find the British delegation expressing this view, which has always been held by the French delegation.

I remember that, at the time of the discussion on the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, I gave up my seat on the Committee to my colleague, M. Lebrun, because, as a former Minister for War and Chairman of the Temporary Mixed Commission, he had been able to discuss this question with the responsible military authorities in France. Again, last year M. Herriot's Government sent M. Paul-Boncour here to deal with the disarmament question, not only in compliment to the special privilege of eloquence, but because M. Paul-Boncour had been appointed President of the Committee of the Higher Council of National Defence, and M. Herriot was anxious to send here, for the disarmament question, someone who would not only bind the Government of the day but who could also bind the general military and naval staffs, for whom he was qualified to speak.

I am glad to see that this view is now unanimously held and that the days of irresponsibility are past. Moreover, how could it be otherwise? The Governments are no longer sending various opinions to the League of Nations; they come here themselves. If, therefore, they bind themselves, meaning to evade their obligations, they should at least take the precaution of resigning—a condition they usually try to avoid.

Yet that is not enough, because it is only too clear that, in France, the substitution of the Painlevé Ministry for that of M. Herriot has not changed French foreign policy in the slightest; and, unless I entirely misjudge public opinion in my country, unless I entirely misunderstand the enthusiasm of its youth, the aspirations of its soldiers and the claims of its proletariat, I am certain that henceforth the principles of the League of Nations will be for ever inseparable from those of the French Republic.

It is not only because the Governments themselves have come here that the League's phase of irresponsibility is past. This year we must note a very significant fact to which, perhaps, sufficient attention has not been given, namely, that henceforth the Governments will invite the League of Nations to intervene in their international arrangements.

Has not the League been ever-present at the negotiations which have been carried on since last February? Nay, more; the whole of the negotiations have been held under the ægis of the League, since the British and the French Governments will not sign the Pact or give it executory force until Germany is a Member of the League.

Thus we find this year that the Governments of the States Members of the League cannot conclude a partial pact which is not comprised in the general Covenant of the League.

Even that, however, is not all. There is another thing I should like to say, or rather I will quote M. Quinones de Leon, on whose wisdom we can always rely. What does his resolution say?

"The Assembly,

"Regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to attain those objects by concluding arbitration conventions and treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Protocol (arbitration, security, disarmament)."

The partial pact, therefore, is inserted not only in the general Covenant but in the Protocol itself. And here we must pay a well-merited tribute to the noble attitude of Great Britain, who, although she has not signed the Protocol, has nevertheless accepted its principles.

I turn to those sceptics who believe that nothing changes under the sun, because throughout the centuries they have smiled the same unchanging smile of smug satisfaction at understanding nothing, and I ask them: When in the previous history of the world have great nations ever been found to negotiate treaties, prepare them in the secret sanctuary of the chancelleries, and then suddenly throw open the doors and invite all the nations, great and small, to enter and to say: "Before finally concluding the treaties we are about to sign, we can tell you that they are in agreement not only with the Covenant that binds us to you but also with the principles of the Protocol in which, though we have not signed it, all your hopes are embodied"?

To him who, after that, chants the funeral dirge of the Protocol we shall reply: "It is such a living force that it has breathed life into the partial treaties which, sooner or later, and whether they succeed or fail, will go back to it. It is such a living force that henceforth it will be inseparable from the three terms which, as Mr. Chamberlain and M. Painlevé, Sir George Grahame and M. Paul-Boncour have all pointed out, are inevitably linked together. It is such a living force that you are actually beginning to apply it to a part of Europe."

"Let us make no mistake. It is not a section of the Protocol, arbitrarily cut off from the other sections; it is the whole spirit of the Protocol which is being applied to the most threatened part of Europe. Thus the events of 1925, far from having dismembered the Protocol, have merely confirmed its unerring logic; and though the League has not succeeded in creating the general Protocol, it has at any rate brought into being a general system to which diplomacy will henceforth conform.

This system — arbitration, security, disarmament — will henceforward be the political system followed by my country. I venture to place arbitration in a different order from that which Viscount Cecil suggested. I place arbitration first, because I am not quite convinced by the example of William the Conqueror. It is true that William the Conqueror came to England before the law, but he has not left behind him a remarkable reputation for peace. We should therefore leave arbitration where we put it.

We have not changed our minds since last year. We still think that, however significant may be the signatures to Article 36 of the Permanent Statute of the Hague Court, this article, cut off from the Protocol, does not afford sufficient protection, for the reason which M. Politis gave us in his report last year, namely, that its elasticity affords a loophole for all kinds of reservations.

Nor have we changed our opinion since last year regarding the necessity of closing the breach in Article 15. As a matter of fact, war could pass through this breach whenever it liked, since if only

one Member of the Council refused to ratify his colleagues' report, all of them would be absolved from obligation and since a Member of the League only needs to have a friend on the Council to be able to declare war at any suitable moment.

It is quite evident, moreover, that this paragraph alone can bring back again all the bargainings, all the diplomatic intrigues, all the secret treaties from which you thought you had freed humanity.

It can send the systems on which you wished to found permanent peace to join the outworn formulas of the concert of Europe, the European balance of power and the other similar catchwords upon which politicians have momentarily based their illusions, and which, after momentarily restraining bloodshed, have eventually increased it from century to century.

But even had we abolished all the reservations in Article 36, had we closed all the doors opened by Article 15, we would still have accomplished nothing, and, indeed, have still further jeopardised the cause of international peace if we had left arbitration without sanctions, and thought that, after putting forward the ideal of justice, we could leave this ideal quite unprotected.

As M. Motta very aptly remarked the other day: "It is impossible to conceive within a State a tribunal not possessing compulsory jurisdiction", and M. Caballero, in a phrase no less happy, completed the idea by speaking of the preventive power of sanctions.

It has often been said in this Assembly, it has even been said this year, that prevention is better than punishment. Quite so! But the majority of national or international crimes are committed because the criminals hope to escape punishment. Whenever punishment is disguised, the temptation to the criminal is doubly strong.

There is one line of reasoning we must guard against. Mere agreement to submit to national or international law is not sufficient. National or international society requires more than that; it requires our wholehearted support. It requires us, if the law is threatened, to sacrifice both our interests and our comfort.

Gentleman, go outside, go into any square in any town, in any country, and every monument will tell you the same story. Look down the vista of history. All the ages will teach you the same lesson, from the time when Athens perished and let Greek civilisation perish because, instead of devoting herself wholeheartedly to the menaced cause of her allies, she merely — as Demosthenes contemptuously told her to her face — sent them a general with a decree.

Ah! history is never so young or so old as we think. Not so long ago a fabric similar to our own was once reared. Occupying the whole of Central Europe there was a league of nations containing 300 States, powerful monarchies, feeble principalities, free cities, ecclesiastical governments, duchies, republics. This league of nations like ours possessed its international court of justice; and it possessed what we do not possess — a common army.

What happened? A judgment of the court was not respected and nothing was done. Then two judgments, then three, until the judgments of the court were no longer respected at all. The States became tired of sending their soldiers to the army and their judges to the court, and the dissolving empire itself prepared the day when the God of War came and ground it to dust.

We can, of course, ignore the lessons of history. Because for one or two generations the wars waged were far from our frontiers, because the invasions of the last century gravitated to the right rather than to the left, we can believe that we are



permanently safe. We even, alas! allowed ourselves to slumber during the distant rumble of the guns at Sadowa, but we woke up to the sound of the guns at Sedan! I hope no nation will ever mistake such a fatal truce for peace.

I personally belong to a French generation which would fain hope but dare not dream. We have too many memories! We are convinced — and you yourselves cannot but be convinced also — that to establish arbitration without sanctions would be futile, that by doing so we should simply be adding to the sorrows of the world, because there is something worse than being afraid to say what is the right. It is worse to point it out and say: "Behold, this is the righteous one!" and then abandon him to his Calvary.

Just as arbitration cannot be separated from sanctions, so disarmament forms, with them, one indivisible whole. Indeed, the strength of this method lies in the fact that not only do these three terms constitute an integral and indivisible whole, but each term in itself constitutes a whole, from which we cannot subtract one iota.

It is obvious that continental nations can quite well agree to the disarmament of maritime nations, and *vice versa*. That is a form of international solidarity with which we are already familiar. We may contemplate the necessity of speeding up the disarmament of active armies and encouraging the arming of reserves, so as to place agricultural countries at the mercy of industrial countries and the smaller nations at the mercy of the larger. Lastly, we may regard the League as an institution for the disarmament of others. We may even use disarmament as a pretext to devise new formulas for insecurity, we may permit a new type of butchery by means of the latest inventions, we may allow war according to the latest fashion and, while taking precautions to prevent the invasion of frontiers, take none to prevent the destruction of capitals.

All that is possible, but I hardly think it is in keeping with the ideals of the League, which ought not to be in a position to allow or tolerate either victims of armaments or dupes of disarmament.

Clearly, there is no problem in connection with which it is more difficult or more dangerous to indulge in hasty expedients than this one, and the last part of the resolution we are about to adopt is admirably framed to protect us against such a risk. Indeed, even if we had had the Protocol, it would have been dangerous to hold a Disarmament Conference without first preparing for it, because it would assuredly have failed. We have not got the Protocol, however, and we are, as Viscount Cecil says, falling back upon Resolution XIV. We shall therefore be obliged to make the extent of the reduction of armaments depend upon the degree of security afforded by partial agreements.

That is the work which the League and its permanent organisations will prepare, since, after all, it must always be the degree of security which we must measure, and in that respect private agreements will clearly not prove adequate for long. We must not merely prevent some particular war; we must prevent all wars. A pact, therefore, is not in itself a policy: it is only the beginning of a policy. I will not, however, press the point too far. I should not like you to think that I am seeking by devious means, through the League, to drag a friendly nation further than it wishes to go. We must come to an understanding, but at the same time we must cling to our national ideals. It is just the varied nature of these ideals that makes for the richness of our common life, and, far from desiring to level out the

differences between the Latin and Anglo-Saxon mentalities to which we have referred, I trust that soon we shall also be receiving the help which the German mentality can give us. We do not come here to score off one another, but to learn to understand one another, and, while respecting the differences in our national ideas, needs and historical traditions, to determine exactly, prudently and sincerely the sum of truth which we hold in common, which will grow from year to year and will draw the bonds of international solidarity ever closer.

The task, of course, is so enormous that it is bound to be difficult. But we should not complain of the difficulties; we should count our gains. This year, not only have the Great Powers accepted the method which you defined last year by establishing the connection between arbitration, security and disarmament; not only are they adopting the policy of concluding pacts which they can insert within the general Covenant of the League; not only have they entered into an undertaking to render these pacts consonant with the principles of the Protocol, but they have given a further undertaking. They have undertaken to bring you these pacts not merely that you may carry out a vague act of registration but that you may become cognisant of them, see how they contribute to the general security, and be able freely and independently to state your opinions on them.

Soon, when this Assembly is over, a Conference of responsible Governments will meet in the moral atmosphere — if I may use such an expression — of the League. The Governments Members of the League will not change merely because they have passed from one portal to another.

They will apply to their discussions the methods which you have laid down. If they fail, they will be bound to come back to you. If they succeed, it is to you that they will bring their work in order that you may decide its future.

The Council will take these texts, place them alongside the military files which you have decided to draw up this year, alongside the economic files which you have decided to open, and this wealth of data, the like of which no country has ever seen, will be brought to you in order that here, where all nations are equal, you may freely give your opinion on them in your full sovereign right.

Such is the net result of this year's work. You need have no hesitation in proclaiming it to the countries which have sent you here. You have not at a single bound brought humanity to the heights of happiness, justice and peace, but you have traced out a pathway, right up to the goal, across frontiers, amid mistrust, and in the face of conservative tradition. You have appointed the goal, defined the methods, and fixed the landmarks so fast that none can ever remove them.

And now you can go your ways. Remember that, when once this pathway has been traced on the ground, it is the pathway that directs human footsteps, and that if you can lay no claim to the bubble reputation of miracle workers, you at least deserve the real and lasting fame of the road-makers whom Aeschylus of old described as having "tamed the earth".

**The President.** — The discussion is adjourned to the next meeting.

*The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## SEVENTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1925, AT 3.30 P.M.

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64. — ARBITRATION, SECURITY AND REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS : CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE REPORTS OF THE FIRST AND THIRD COMMITTEES : RESOLUTION.

#### The President :

*Translation :* The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the first question : Arbitration, Security and Reduction of Armaments.

I call upon the Chairman and Rapporteurs of the First and Third Committees to take their places on the platform.

M. Sokal, first delegate of Poland, will address the Assembly.

#### M. Sokal (Poland) :

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The draft resolution presented by the Spanish delegation and amended by the First and Third Committees is now submitted for discussion to this Assembly.

After all that has been said in the eloquent speeches we have heard this morning, I shall be very brief.

The Polish delegation, on whose behalf I have the honour to speak, will vote in favour of the text submitted, which it regards as expressing the desire of this Assembly that the League's work should continue without interruption.

Poland, which remains faithful to the ideas and principles of last year's Protocol, would have preferred that these ideas and principles should be incorporated in positive international law; she realises, however, the expediency of proceeding by easy stages, though without losing sight of the final goal towards which every effort of the League should be directed.

This final goal is the realisation of the threefold principle : arbitration, security, disarmament. Although the sixth Assembly has been obliged to

proceed very cautiously, we must admit that it has done useful work. Its positive achievements, which will, I hope, meet with unanimous approval, must not be underestimated. Poland notes the declaration inserted in the resolution before us to the effect that the League "undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security and disarmament". This is an answer to all those who maintain that, in view of the negotiations which are being carried on outside the League, the latter has washed its hands of the problem of security. On the contrary, we see in this declaration a sure proof that the threefold principle already laid down in the Covenant and carried further in the famous Resolution XIV still remains one of the chief problems before the League.

The reorganisation of the Co-ordination Commission, which the Council will doubtless decide to convert into a Preparatory Committee for the reduction and limitation of armaments and will probably reconstitute with a view to meeting fresh requirements, conclusively proves that the League anticipates that in the not too distant future conditions conducive to general security will be fulfilled. We share the League's conviction.

My country, which has always and at all times co-operated with the League, will gladly avail herself of any further opportunity to evince her deep attachment to the cause of peace and justice.

For these reasons, the Polish delegation will vote for the resolution now submitted to you.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Coppola, representative of Italy, will address the Assembly.

**M. Coppola (Italy) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — You have all read M. Benes' report on the work of the Third Committee.

You have perhaps observed that this report, which M. Benes has drawn up with his habitual perspicacity, contains certain observations made by the Italian delegate.

M. Benes has endeavoured to reproduce the spirit of these observations and has fully succeeded. Nevertheless, I think I should make some explanatory remarks.

What does the Italian delegation desire? In other words, what does Italy desire? She undoubtedly desires what you all desire, what all the nations desire, and what I think they have always desired — peace, and a just peace.

But there are various means of attaining this common aim, and opinions differ perhaps as to these means.

I think we are all in duty bound to place truth before unanimity, constant unanimity at any cost and on every occasion. Unanimity of this kind reminds us of the catch-words broadcast in the days of alliances, of the European balance of power, whenever a meeting was arranged between Sovereigns. On those occasions we used to read that when the Sovereigns met they had only to declare the perfect identity of their views, and you know that sometimes, indeed very often, this official identity shortly afterwards led to war. To-day, when the system of international life has changed, we must not make the same mistakes. Unanimity at any price is always the result of compromise, and compromise in its turn is the result, doubtless, of a certain amount of good-will and a spirit of conciliation; sometimes of much good-will; but also, now and again, of a certain amount of falsehood. And the taint of this falsehood is enough to spoil all the good-will. We cannot build anything durable, anything

just or moral, on a basis which contains even an atom of falsehood.

With regard to the difference of methods which may be considered, you heard from Lord Cecil and M. de Jouvenel this morning, and you will hear from me also, in so far as I am authorised and able to do so, what is the truth from our respective points of view; for each must bring his own individual truth here, in order that we may together seek the common truth, though, indeed, it is doubtful whether, outside religious matters, truth can ever be rigidly determined and defined.

Possibly truth, as Lord Cecil suggested, was concerned solely with disarmament, and it is disarmament which has been the theme of the Third Committee's discussions. It is in connection with disarmament that I had occasion to make certain reservations affecting more particularly the procedure to be employed. I said that any big scheme of enquiry carried out by large organisations specially created for the purpose and which, like all large organisations, would carry on their work automatically and perhaps go beyond the immediate requirements of the case, was in my opinion useless and even possibly dangerous.

I do not propose to repeat now what I said in the Third Committee. I will merely say once more that I regard this procedure as useless, since the field of investigation is immense and covers not only military factors and data but also involves economic factors and political and moral forces.

Among these forces, some can readily be measured, others less readily, while some can only be measured with the utmost difficulty or not at all. I went on to say that our investigations would lead either to incomplete results — in which case, any plan of disarmament based upon them would necessarily be unfair — or else to complete results which would be fair, but, in my opinion, impossible of realisation because they were complete. For these reasons, which I now briefly summarise but which I developed at greater length yesterday, I have come to the conclusion that extensive investigations would be of little use.

I also said that I thought them somewhat dangerous, especially in view of their publicity, since countries not yet Members of the League would thereby obtain full data for estimating our military strength while they themselves would not be bound to accord any such publicity. That, to my mind, constitutes a most serious danger, and one which it is essential that we should bear in mind.

We think that disarmament can only be obtained upon a political basis, or, better still, through the natural tendency of the nations to lessen their huge burden of armaments.

What, in actual fact, are armaments? They are the means whereby nations seek either to ward off dangers which threaten them or to satisfy national aspirations which they think they cannot realise, or at any rate have no hope of realising, without recourse to this *ultima ratio*.

But they are always a burden, a burden which weighs heavily on all nations and tries some beyond their strength.

What, then, in the opinion of this Assembly, is the surest means of reducing armaments?

It is to reduce, in every country, the necessity for armaments, and even to dispel the feeling that armaments are necessary.

If you can bring countries to believe that their security is assured, if you provide them with methods in which they will put their trust, if you can satisfy their national and historical aspirations by peaceful means, they will begin to feel that the need for armaments is decreasing, and they will themselves cast off their burden. Then there

will be automatic and spontaneous disarmament, disarmament effected from within and not imposed from without.

The first of these two methods is surely more in keeping with the natural requirements and spirit of history, and consequently it is most likely to stand the test of time.

We can extend the idea and apply it to the more general question of peace and to the system best calculated to ensure an equitable peace.

I will not venture here to explain the ethics of peace and war, but may I venture to illustrate my idea by a metaphor?

At certain moments in history the balance of international policies — and that other form of equilibrium, the actual balance of the forces, requirements and capacities of the various nations — has been in comparative harmony (for absolute harmony is non-existent). This situation coincides with a period of peace.

Little by little the real equilibrium of forces, capacities and requirements evolves and develops. These elements sometimes increase; at other times remain stationary; they shift and change, while the other form of equilibrium remains constant and unchanged.

What happens then?

Beneath the unchanging surface forces are at work, fissures appear, and little by little the disproportion becomes so great that the whole system collapses. This collapse means war.

What means can we employ, I will not say to abolish war, but at all events to reduce the possibility of war to a minimum?

Two methods naturally occur to us. One of these is to increase and strengthen the external structure of the balance of international politics.

This is the method which has hitherto been advocated at Geneva — not exclusively perhaps, but most frequently. This is the method which found perfect expression, from the mathematical and mechanical point of view, in last year's Protocol. But is it the surest and the wisest?

I venture to doubt it. In making the superficial and official equilibrium as rigid as possible, we may delay breakdowns in the structure — that is to say, war — but we cannot prevent them. What we really do is to increase the disproportion to which I have referred, so that when outbreaks do occur they are all the more violent because they have been repressed, just as when a boiler with a very thick casing suddenly explodes.

The second method, which is not opposed to the first, but is parallel to it, is to render the outer stratum not more rigid but more flexible, so that it can respond to the equilibrium of forces and capacities and adapt itself to them little by little.

That, in my opinion, is the only way, to prevent war.

If we desire to do this, we must be prepared to examine the causes of war and cure them. We must be prepared to seek out a system by which all the causes of war — or if not all, at least those that are most common, those that most easily arise — may be avoided and decreased.

Even if by this method war is not abolished, the number of outbreaks will be diminished and its incidence reduced as far as possible. Consequently, by this method, we shall attain the main object of the League.

Were we to employ rigid or mechanical means, we should fail. Or we might seem, indeed, to have succeeded, when in reality we had been preparing a conflagration all the more violent because it had been delayed. Or else — let us consider this hypothesis in order to complete our *demonstratio ad absurdum* — if the aim were attained, peace would not have been secured, because there is

always a spiritual element in peace. We should have brought about an immutable organisation of the world, an equilibrium which would not be in accordance with the truth of things, an unfair equilibrium — in a word, injustice, which cannot be the aim of the League.

War is an evil; of that there can be no doubt. We know it better than any, we who have taken part in it and seen its vast tragedy. War is the negation of constructive effort; it means sacrifice, it generally ends in misery. War also, we must remember, means the exaltation of heroic and lofty moral sentiments, bought at a price — a heavy price.

War is an evil, but injustice is a greater evil, because if war is a material evil, injustice is a moral evil, and moral evil exceeds material evil as moral life and moral values are more important than material life and material values.

I am therefore in favour of peace in the broader spirit; peace which will be attained primarily by reducing or abolishing the causes of war; a just peace, because it is a just peace alone that the League of Nations can seek.

We none of us believe that the League of Nations is an association for enabling the wealthy to enjoy their possessions in peace. The reason for the justification of the League's existence must be sought for among its moral aims. The essential value of the League must always be in its ethical worth. It is for the sake of its ethical worth that all of you, I am sure, and we, too, are here to-day.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Hymans, delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

**M. Hymans (Belgium) :**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — First of all, let me reassure you. I am not going to make a speech. I merely bring you an adhesion and a declaration.

The proposals submitted by the First and Third Committees are entirely in keeping with the views of the Belgian delegation. These views were authoritatively set out this morning by M. Henri Rolin, Rapporteur of the First Committee, M. de Brouckère stated them before the Third Committee, and you may possibly remember that I myself summarised them in our opening discussions.

In our opinion the adoption of this proposal means the consecration of the principles on which we are to base the system of equity and security that we are endeavouring to establish, and it will certainly mark a step forward.

I also see in it a proof of unity and harmony. Clearly, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that at the outset there was a certain divergence of views. But the process we have already witnessed in other Assemblies has again occurred. In the course of our discussions, our ideas, instead of drifting farther apart, have been brought closer together, and on the whole we end with an agreement which was just now referred to as a compromise — and after all is not a compromise an agreement on essentials? — an agreement which is a fresh expression of the spirit of this Assembly. I think I may repeat to-day what I said at the beginning of our opening discussion — there can be no stopping, no going back; the work of the League of Nations continues.

Having explained the reasons for our adhesion without dwelling upon the actual wording of the proposals at present before us, I now have a declaration to make to the Assembly.

I have frequently had occasion to explain to you the Belgian Government's policy. In Belgium, as elsewhere, Governments change. That is a

phenomenon which is not confined to Belgium. But the international policy of Belgium does not change. It is a national policy to which all parties subscribe. We have three parties in Belgium. Sometimes they are in coalition, and sometimes in opposition; but they are in agreement upon the principles of our foreign policy, which remains unchanged.

The Belgian Government profoundly believes in arbitration and in its practical value, and desires to do its share in establishing a system for the pacific settlement of international disputes. I have consequently been instructed to adhere to Clause 36, Paragraph 2, of the Statute of the Court of Justice in the following terms :

"On behalf of the Belgian Government, I recognise as compulsory, *ipso facto* and without special agreement, in relation to any other Member or State accepting the same obligation, the jurisdiction of the Court in conformity with Article 36, paragraph 2 of the Statute of the Court, for a period of fifteen years, in all disputes which may arise after the ratification of the present declaration with regard to situations or facts subsequent to this ratification, except in cases where the parties have agreed or shall agree to have recourse to another method of pacific settlement."

I thought it my duty to inform the Assembly of this resolution, because in my view it is evidence of our faith in the work of justice and of pacification which the League of Nations is pursuing.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Löfgren, delegate for Sweden, will address the Assembly.

**M. Löfgren (Sweden):** Speaking on behalf of the Swedish delegation, I wish to begin by expressing our sincere thanks to the First Committee and its distinguished rapporteur, M. Rolin, for the interest and the good-will with which they received our modest initiative with a view to renewed efforts for promoting the principle and application of compulsory arbitration.

I beg to offer a special tribute of gratitude, due to the merits of his case, to His Excellency M. Adatei for his friendly and victorious competition. The Swedish delegation is willing to accept without hesitation the amended and extended scheme proposed by the Japanese delegation and supported by the Committee. We have all the more reason to adopt this attitude since the draft resolution now laid before us has obvious advantages over our own. M. Adatei's amendment represents so entirely the views which have inspired the politics of Sweden as a Member of the League that I make a point of shortly emphasising their importance.

First, the draft resolution proposed by the Japanese delegation and recommended by the Committee aims at fortifying and strengthening the means of conciliation as a method of pacific settlement and is not restricted to compulsory arbitration.

Secondly, the First Committee in its resolution asks for an early report from the Council, and this request must imply that the Council is asked to take immediate steps for submitting the combined problem of conciliation and arbitration to a careful examination.

As regards the method specially suggested in the Swedish proposal with a view to hastening, if possible, a more general adhesion to a uniform system of compulsory arbitration, the resolution before us ensures that it will be carefully examined, without preference but also without prejudice.

The Swedish delegation cannot reasonably claim, and does not ask for, better terms than a fair test of its contribution to an eventual, it may be a temporary, solution of the problem.

To these expressions of rare and precious contentment, I only wish to add a few words. The Rapporteur has raised against the Swedish proposal the criticism that, if accepted in its original form, it might have given rise to misunderstanding. I agree that the wording of the original draft resolution proposed by the Swedish delegation was rather limited and might be misunderstood if not considered in the light of the motives which prompted it.

I hope to remove every possible misunderstanding by stating now that the Swedish delegation desires that the coming examination may be as wide and as extensive as possible. The Geneva Protocol of last year may be taken as the starting-point of the continued efforts of the League for arriving at a final solution of the great problem. But I quite agree with the view that the examination must not be limited to a critical survey of the special provisions of the Protocol concerning arbitration. There are other elements which may be taken into consideration. The French initiative, tending to an international treatment of economic questions, might, for instance, give new and widened prospects even in the field of arbitration, and it is to be hoped that it will lead to successful results.

Let me conclude by making this statement. From the point of view of the small nations, it is an absolute condition of the establishment of any general system for the organisation of a stable peace that arbitration, above all, is the foundation of such a system. It was with a certain feeling of disappointment therefore that I heard of the limits within which Lord Cecil would confine arbitration. Any system which aims at establishing security and disarmament without providing for arbitration would necessarily be founded on shifting sands. Without arbitration the definition of the aggressor would be made very difficult, if not impossible.

Lord Cecil declared with some emphasis that the great country he represents is firmly attached to the principle of arbitration and that Great Britain intended to apply the principle from case to case. It is a great thing when a great country declares its adhesion to the principle; but for a small State not able to enforce its will it is of the most vital importance that arbitration should be applied not only from case to case when the Powers agree thereto but that the small nations can be assured in advance that all disputes, even those concerning the vital interests of the rulers of the world, will be submitted to peaceful settlement.

The essential thing for the small nations, therefore, is that the League of Nations shall not abandon the movement in favour of the development of arbitration. For the present, we cannot do very much for security nor perhaps for disarmament; but we have at least been able to provide for the continued examination of arbitration. The resolutions of this Assembly will not, I think, give reason to complain of too audacious action or exaggerated aspirations; but I hope they will not fail to make their contribution to our progress towards a lasting peace.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. de Palacios, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

**M. de Palacios (Spain) :**

*Translation :* The Spanish delegation<sup>†</sup> desires publicly to express its gratitude to all the delegations present at the Assembly, and more particularly

to the Chairmen of the First and Third Committees, to M. de Braouckère, who presided over the Subcommittee of the Third Committee, and, in particular, to the Rapporteurs, M. Benes and M. Rolin, for the zeal they have shown in connection with the proposal submitted by M. Quiñones de León during the general discussion with which the present session opened.

You already know the scope and purport of our proposal. It was not a matter of explaining Spain's view. My Government, in signing the Protocol, publicly proclaimed its attitude. In the opinion of the Spanish Government, the principles of the Protocol point to the right road. During the last Assembly, however, the Spanish delegation, acting on instructions from its Government, had already had occasion to express doubts as to the system of special agreements.

But circumstances now are different. The system of a general agreement is not feasible, but we have considered the possibility of arriving at the same result through special agreements. The proposal submitted by the Spanish delegation, therefore, is an endeavour to express the opinion held by all the delegations here present. Since the introduction of the amendments, for which we have to thank the authors of the various proposals, I think I may say we have attained our object. The system of the trilogy, which I need not explain in detail, since you are all acquainted with it, is once more confirmed in the resolution which I trust the Assembly will unanimously adopt. I venture to hope that such unanimity will not — as one speaker here expressed it — be merely official unanimity. I consider that the proposal, as now drafted, is sufficiently elastic to allow of its adaptation to circumstances and to enable really effective action to be taken by the League.

The amendments — fortunately few in number — which have been embodied in our proposal do not effect its actual substance.

The Spanish Government thought that it might declare a war of aggression to be an international crime, since it made this declaration when signing the Protocol. For reasons of a legal and political character, it was thought advisable to amend the wording of this part of the proposal while leaving the substance intact, and we accepted the formula that a war of aggression should be regarded as an international crime.

The prominence given to the principle of arbitration, which forms the subject of one of the paragraphs of this proposal, is quite in keeping with the Spanish Government's advocacy of these methods; and the amendment — the importance of which I fully realise — in the last paragraph of the Spanish resolution, to the effect that the Assembly, in conformity with the spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant, requests the Council to make a preparatory study with a view to a Conference on the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, without waiting for the favourable conditions necessary for convening the Conference — this amendment, I say, represents a formula which reconciles and harmonises the different views of various delegations.

I trust that the liberty accorded to the Council to decide when the various preliminary studies shall begin will make it possible to carry on this work for the realisation of peace uninterruptedly, avoiding dangerous side-paths, and adopting methods that will be really satisfactory.

I agree, therefore, with our Chairman M. Hymans, that the sixth Assembly, if it adopts this draft resolution, will neither be at a standstill nor going back; it will be adapting the spirit of the League to the realities of international life.

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does any other delegate wish to speak ?

The Assembly has noted the reports submitted by the First and Third Committees, the texts of the draft resolutions submitted by the First Committee, and the joint draft resolution submitted by the First and Third Committees. I call upon the Assembly to vote on these draft resolutions, which read as follows :

*The Assembly,*

*Taking note of the declarations submitted to the Council and the Assembly of the League of Nations in respect of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes and of the fact that the said Protocol has not up to the present received the ratifications necessary for putting it into operation immediately ;*

*Convinced that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations,*

*Declaring afresh that a war of aggression should be regarded as an international crime,*

*Regards favourably the effort made by certain nations to attain those objects by concluding arbitration conventions and treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Protocol (Arbitration, Security, Disarmament) ;*

*Records the fact that such agreements need not be restricted to a limited area but may be applied to the whole world ;*

*Recommends that, after these conventions and treaties have been deposited with the League of Nations, the Council should examine them in order to report to the Seventh Assembly on the progress in general security brought about by such agreements ;*

*Undertakes again to work for the establishment of peace by the sure method of arbitration, security and disarmament ;*

*And, in conformity with the spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant, requests the Council to make a preparatory study with a view to a Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments in order that, as soon as satisfactory conditions have been assured from the point of view of general security as provided for in Resolution XIV of the Third Assembly, the said Conference may be convened and a general reduction and limitation of armaments may be realised.*

*The Assembly,*

*In view of the importance of making a thorough study of the views which have been expressed in the Assembly and the Council on the subject of pacific settlement of international disputes ;*

*Convinced that such study will contribute to the development of a system of pacific settlement of international disputes ;*

*Requests the Council to submit to careful examination the proposals, declarations and suggestions made at the Assembly and the Council with a view to pacific settlement of international disputes, and to report to the Seventh Assembly upon the progress which can be made in this matter.*

*The Assembly,*

*Reserving the question whether it is at present desirable to embody in a new general Convention the provisions concerning compulsory arbitration contained in the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes ;*

*Recalling the guarantees provided in the Covenant of the League of Nations :*

*Calls the attention of States Members of the League to the desirability, from the point of view of their security, of concluding particular conventions for arbitration or for the judicial settlement of disputes.*

*The resolutions were adopted.*

#### 65. — PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

##### The President :

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fifth Committee on the protection and welfare of children and young people.

I call upon M. Sugimura, delegate of Japan, Rapporteur, and M. Garay, delegate of Panama, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, to take their places on the platform.

M. Sugimura, delegate of Japan, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

##### M. Sugimura (Japan) :

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — The report and draft resolution submitted by your Fifth Committee (Annex, Document A. 98. 1925. IV), on the question of the protection and welfare of children and young people are before you, and in order to save time I will not read them, nevertheless, I venture most earnestly to urge the adoption of the report and resolution, and, in order that your hearts and minds may be better attuned to this question, which touches humane and moral issues, may I give you a brief account of its outstanding features ?

The social work of the League is sometimes criticised on the ground that it never leads to anything. People go so far as to maintain that the League should be primarily a political organisation and should leave other international institutions or charitable associations to deal with humanitarian questions. Such assertions seem to me to be the outcome of a regrettable ignorance of the great successes already achieved.

Since the League first began its humanitarian work, real and tangible improvements have been made in the systems and policies of civilised States concerning the traffic in women. The isolated measures of individual Governments have been supplemented by loyal and successful co-operation and united action. Idealists are no longer advancing in open formation ; they realise that union is strength and that solidarity is necessary to arouse the conscience of the world.

Is not this fully proved by the fact that not only States Members of the League, but other civilised nations — particularly the United States of America — have contributed towards this world-wide work by sending eminent representatives and by granting generous subsidies ? It is gratifying to find that so many nations in the different continents — nations of most varied customs, traditions, systems of morality and civilisations — have joined forces, with that sense of the responsibility of the human conscience which is the spiritual treasure of all mankind.

In the Advisory Committee the delegates and assessors have nobly devoted themselves to this common humanitarian work. They have endeavoured to cultivate that spirit of true humanity which rises above nationality, creed or race. Indeed, the moral and spiritual benefits of our work are even greater than its positive and immediate benefits ; they herald the dawn of a

new world. This light of conscience will awaken all the peoples of the world to a comprehension of the high ideals of humanity.

The League, in addition to its work in regard to the traffic in women, has recently undertaken other work in connection with the protection and welfare of children and young people. That, to my mind, is a great event. Those who have only witnessed the sufferings of men have seen nothing — let them witness the sufferings of women. But even those who have witnessed the sufferings of women have seen nothing : let them behold the sufferings of children !

This the League has understood. It has a twofold task — that of keeping peace, the peace of to-day, and that of preparing the peace of to-morrow. Parents who neglect their children will never prosper. A nation which does not protect its future generations is bound to fall. The League, too, must watch like a mother over the fate of future generations which to-morrow will decide the fate of the world.

To care for neglected children, to bring up young people in the love of peace and justice, that is one of the League's chief tasks, and just as I look back to our past with real satisfaction, so I look forward to our future with perfect confidence.

##### The President :

*Translation :* Mlle. Vacaresco, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

##### Mlle. Vacaresco (Roumania) :

*Translation :* Mr. President, my dear colleagues — Since this is an age which demands that our speeches shall be swift — swift as electrical waves in the ether — I shall endeavour for a few moments to borrow the thunderbolt and the lightnings and speak to you on a subject which is very near my heart and which has already, in its main outlines, been defined in this hall.

A woman never likes to mention dates, particularly when they refer to herself, but I must admit that among the women delegates to the Assembly I am one of those who have been here longest.

I was present when the good and the wicked fairies gathered around the cradle of the League. The wicked fairies predicted so much evil for the child that it was sent to live in the healthy air of hospitable Switzerland.

"She shall be deaf", said one fairy ; "blind", said another, and they all pronounced a malediction which really went beyond all bounds. "She shall be dumb", they said. But we have given daily and striking proof that they were wrong.

I have, then, seen the gradual rise of the League, I have seen the varying countenance of its annual sessions ; a countenance glowing with ardour, merging gradually into a countenance of wisdom ; a countenance now betraying anxiety and now suffused with triumph ; but always turned towards the breeze that blows from the open sea, towards the winds that are wafted from Heaven.

I assure you that when pessimists and detractors bring their tales to me they find they have made a mistake. I have seen the radiant modern city of our dreams emerge slowly from the mists in which the scepticism of some and the indifference of others sought to plunge it. I have seen its buildings grow in strength and its so-called Utopias rapidly become powerful realities.

Utopias they called our work on opium and our efforts to break up the white-slave traffic ; and yet we have been able to save so many victims of that baneful drug and to protect so many would-be victims. We have been laughed to scorn ; it has been said that we should soon find ourselves drifting like abandoned hulks on an ocean of harmful

liquor or buried under an avalanche of that soft and diabolical snow—cocaine.

A Utopia they called the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, and yet this Committee has already achieved noteworthy results in many parts of the world. In my country—to mention only one instance—where Government help will be so effective, it is through intellectual co-operation, and under the guidance of intellectual co-operation, that the ideals of the League, and a keen desire to see the League's prestige enhanced, are spreading in our schools and training future generations who will understand these ideals and live up to them. Throughout the whole country, from the medical student to the law student, from the public school-boy to the pupil teacher, from the village schoolmaster to the town schoolmaster, all are learning to think in terms of the world, for the welfare of the world in general and human thought in particular, and are teaching others to do so.

"Intellectual co-operation!" they sneered, with that irony with which ignorance is wont to obscure the truth. And yet, true to their traditions as the meeting-ground of dreams and deeds, Paris, the City of Light, and Rome, the Eternal, have eagerly accepted and kept aflame the torch which the League of Nations held out to them. Soon, in Paris, housed in a French building, the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation will begin its universal life in an international atmosphere and will enjoy to the full that freedom in taste and that taste for freedom which have always been characteristic of the great French nation.

Further, the League has undertaken, before the world, and I might almost say before Heaven, the magnificent, the sublime task of succouring the unfortunate. When, in all its youthful strength, and bold in its compassion, it came into being, there were eyes that turned to it, the eyes of the masses who with common inspiration were seeking the light of life; the unfortunate set their hopes in the League, and the fortunate—who after all are merely those condemned to a more refined form of suffering—looked to it for sympathy and help.

The poet has said that to be admired is nothing, to be loved is all. It is not as a subtle politician or as a legislator that the League of Nations will be loved. It is—and I trust I shall offend no one in saying so—by the work of your Fifth Committee, your Health Committee and your Committee on Intellectual Co-operation that you will gain the world's affection.

These are the organisations which have earned for you your vast, your marvellous popularity, of which your adversaries, and even many of your friends, are still unaware.

Praise be to the League for these Committees!

In a statement displaying a breadth of view and practical ability admired by all, the British delegate, the Duchess of Atholl, told us of all the thought and care bestowed by the Assembly on this question of the protection of children which the Fifth Committee has had transferred to it, bodily and not without difficulty, from its noble birthplace, Belgium, in order that it may be raised to the high status of a League organisation.

I heartily concur in all the views expressed by the Duchess of Atholl, whose knowledge of Parliamentary procedure and whose prestige as a Minister, combined with her charm and her great ability, have won all our hearts.

We should remember, too, that when the time is ripe, when the right stage has been reached, when fresh needs have arisen, the question of the protection of children, though it will not quit its ancient home, though it will still remain within the province of the Committee where it first saw

the light, must inevitably, and in natural course, be drawn into the sphere of intellectual co-operation. The psychological moment will come when intellectual co-operation will have to take the child in hand, the hour "when stream and rivulet meet", when protection alone will not be enough, when we must teach as well, and this can be done through the intellectual co-operation movement, which keeps in constant touch with schools and institutions in every country.

But to this, we are told, there are two objections. We are told that the Committees may overlap, though that danger, I think, is remote. We are also told that if the investigations are too detailed and the counsels we give are too direct, national sovereignties may be infringed.

Certainly we shall always and in all circumstances defend our own national sovereignty, than which nought is dearer to our hearts. It is true that on all occasions every country, whether a Member of the League or not, is both entitled and bound to oppose any attempt to interfere with this established right, the scope and significance of which are more fully recognised here than in any other centre of human activity. But to erect the danger of its infraction into a barrier to progress would surely be contrary to our unanimous desire that the protection afforded to children should be increased and extended. Frankly, I can see no signs of such a danger.

As regards the first objection, I never remember, during the whole of my six years' apprenticeship here, having found any serious instance of overlapping. On the contrary, I have always admired the sound judgment displayed and the smooth manner in which questions have been transferred from one of these Committees to its sister Committee, whether to be consolidated or to be treated from a new standpoint or to have their character stamped more indelibly upon them.

To return to national sovereignty. I am afraid we are all a little over-sensitive on that point. Safe within the fortress of the Covenant, it is surely so well defended that aircraft themselves could not fly over it without invisible wings. Yet there are regions higher than those into which the boldest aviator would venture—regions to which the League of Nations alone is permitted to soar.

In any case, can it really be called interference in a nation's private affairs if we ask it whether its children are growing up in the way they should go?

Is it impertinent to enquire what are the needs of those poor little ones, those fragile beings who, if they were snatched from vice, from crime or from death, would become good citizens, men and women worthy of the name? Are we abusing the rights which compassion and love of our neighbour give us when we say: We who are wont to look into the heart of things, we call to them, these poor, frail, little ones? We see them drifting aimlessly, with tottering steps, bearing in their veins perhaps some terrible hereditary taint. We hear them weeping bitter tears in the dark night, beside the laughter and the toys in the happy nurseries they have never known.

We meet them, lonely, wan and haggard, in the swarming by-ways of cities, holding out their hands, into which the passer-by places the mite of pity—yes, and also the wages of sin. Tattered, fever-racked, what do they know of life save its bitterness? They cower and tremble; above all, they do not understand. And it is this unconsciousness of the cruelty of fate, this dreadful childlike ignorance of the world, which should wring our hearts and move us to compassion. The child born for the light, born to be surrounded by protectors, the child with its little hands and little feet; it stumbles,



it falls, it is picked up. But what if there is no one there to pick it up, the child, the star-crowned child, hope of our hopes? Are we wrong in watching with heavy hearts for the ills that follow in the wake of the war? Are they not so many that, when we try to remedy them, we know not whither first to turn?

Think, too, of all the problems that stand as lions in our path—economic problems, problems of raw materials, problems, therefore, affecting our daily bread, the problem of maintaining peace and rebuilding hearths and homes.

The whole world, the human soul itself, is simply a vast humming hive of industry. And in the phantom-ridden whirlwind in which we are striving to prevent the shipwreck of the alliance we dream of establishing among the peoples, the races, the nations of the world, are we to forget the child—the child whose fate since the war has become a matter of international duty?

Here the population is too large, there too small. Here child-culture, a science still in its infancy, is unknown; there children are put to work at an age when the frail structure of their limbs is not yet set. This is more particularly a matter for the International Labour Office.

Then there are the child-emigrants of whom the Duchess of Atholl spoke, terrified infants carried away on long mysterious journeys; children abandoned at every milestone, children left sobbing by the frozen wayside where the cross-roads meet, a legion of the lost, sent by their parents to an unknown fate. We are answerable for them all, we are laying up a vast burden of debt to them, and some day they will come and claim their own with usury. They will claim our very souls if we fail to save them, soul and body.

I will say no more. We are not here to while away the hours; idle talkers who never pass to acts. The Assembly furnishes constant proof of the contrary. We implore it to continue and develop this movement for the protection of children. Apart from the weight which its decisions will add to our recommendations, apart from the sums already provided, money is coming in and will continue to come in, and with it good-will and the zealous work of the Advisory Committee is an earnest of still better work. We know the League will not abandon this, the noblest of all its tasks. Not in vain is it set on the shores of a lake through which impetuous waters flow, a lake which is both the image and cradle of the League, hiding under the calm, pure mirror of its surface and eternal current of world unity and world-wide pity, which it mingles with the waves of its own imperishable destiny.

#### The President :

*Translation* : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall put to the vote the resolutions proposed by the Fifth Committee, which read as follows :

I. *The Assembly expresses its approval of the work accomplished by the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People. It desires, at the same time, to emphasise the view expressed in the resolution of the fifth Assembly in regard to child welfare, that "the League can most usefully concern itself with the study of those problems on which the comparison of the methods and experience of different countries, consultation and interchange of views between the officials and experts of different countries and international co-operation may be likely to assist the Governments in dealing with such problems". The Assembly therefore hopes that the Commission will not lose sight of the limits of its competence as thus defined.*

*The Assembly is also of the opinion that it is desirable that, when collaborating with other organisations of the League of Nations, the Advisory Commission should conform to Resolution 4 of the fifth Assembly on the subject of duplication of work.*

#### II. The Assembly,

*Considering that the Council, in accordance with a resolution of the fifth Assembly, invited the Health Organisation of the League to consider any measures within its competence which it would be desirable and practicable to undertake for the protection of children from the hygienic point of view; and*

*Convinced of the importance of this form of child welfare work :*

*Decides to request the Health Organisation to investigate infant mortality from the point of view of feeding in infancy ;*

*Requests the Council to instruct the Health Committee to undertake this investigation and to enquire into the advisability of constituting a sub-committee which would be able to call upon the co-operation of specialists in various countries in questions concerning child hygiene and which would be requested to initiate the investigation of this and of any other questions connected with child hygiene the consideration of which might be deemed expedient.*

*The resolutions were adopted.*

#### 66. — REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS : MANUFACTURE OF ARMS, OF AMMUNITION AND OF IMPLEMENTS OF WAR : REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

##### The President :

*Translation* : The next item on our agenda is the consideration of the report of the Third Committee on the reduction of armaments (manufacture of arms, of ammunition and of implements of war).

*(At the invitation of the President, M. Nintchitch, Chairman of the Third Committee, and M. Guerrero, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)*

##### The President :

*Translation* : The Rapporteur, M. Guerrero, delegate of Salvador, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur, read his report (Annex, Document A. 109. 1925. IX).

##### The President :

*Translation* : Does anybody wish to speak on the resolution before us, which reads as follows :

*The Assembly adopts the declaration inserted in its Final Act by the Conference for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War which met at Geneva in May and June 1925, declaring that the Convention concerning the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War "must be considered as an important step towards a general system of international agreements regarding arms and ammunition and implements of war, and that it is desirable that the international aspect of the manufacture of such arms and ammunition and implements of war receive early consideration by the different Governments";*

*The Assembly invites the Council to continue the preliminary work on the subject of the control*

of the private manufacture of arms, ammunition and implements of war so that a draft Convention may be prepared as speedily as possible and that the Council may summon an international Conference to consider it, if possible, before the next Assembly.

It is of opinion that the co-operation of a representative of the United States Government in the preliminary work for this Convention is indispensable to the success of the Conference and begs the Council to invite the said Government to co-operate as soon as it considers such a step possible.

The resolution was adopted.

67. — REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS: YEAR-BOOK OF GENERAL AND STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON MILITARY, NAVAL AND AIR ARMAMENTS: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President:

*Translation:* The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Third Committee's report on the question of general and statistical information on military, naval and air armaments.

The Rapporteur, M. Guerrero, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur, read his report (Annex, Document A. 108. 1925. IX).

The President:

*Translation:* Does anybody wish to speak on the resolution, which reads as follows:

*The Assembly declares that the Year-Book of General and Statistical Information regarding the armaments of the various countries is of great assistance in connection with the work for the reduction and limitation of armaments, and it trusts that the Secretary-General will arrange for the continuation and enlargement of this publication on the lines laid down in the resolution of the fifth Assembly.*

The resolution was adopted.

68. — PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE NEAR EAST: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President:

*Translation:* The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Fifth Committee's report on the protection of women and children in the Near East (Annex, Document A. III. 1925. IV).

*(At the invitation of the President, M. Garay, delegate of Panama, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and the Duchess of Atholl, delegate of the British Empire, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)*

The President:

*Translation:* The Duchess of Atholl will address the Assembly.

The Duchess of Atholl (British Empire) (Rapporteur): — Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The report which I have the honour, in the name of the Fifth Committee, to present to the Assembly has been distributed to the members and I shall ask the Assembly to consider it as having been read. As the report is necessarily somewhat official, perhaps some delegates might be inclined to think it a little Anglo-Saxon in its brevity, and I will ask your permission to supplement it with a few words.

First of all, with regard to that part of the work of the Committee for the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East which is carried on at Constantinople, I have to report that the Fifth Committee has learned with deep regret that there is a possibility that Dr. Kennedy may not be able to continue the great work which he and Miss Mills have been doing for some years at the League of Nations "Neutral House". Should Dr. Kennedy confirm the resignation which we understand he has offered, the Committee earnestly trusts that this will not affect the continuation of a work which it regards as of great value. The Committee therefore asks the Assembly to vote a sum of 30,000 francs for this work at Constantinople.

With regard to the work carried on by Miss Jeppe at Aleppo, I wish, if I may, to impress upon my fellow delegates the very great interest which is taken in this work by the women of my country, and, I believe, by the women of many other countries as well. A former speaker this afternoon has spoken of the sufferings of women and of children. I wish to say quite frankly that many women in Great Britain know of no women and no children throughout the whole world who have so great a claim on the sympathy of the Members of the League of Nations as these unhappy Armenian women and children whom Miss Jeppe has been trying to help at Aleppo for the past four years. The Fifth Committee therefore regards this work as a very essential and a very valuable one.

Let us admit, however, that this work is difficult — this work of helping to free Armenian women and children who are captive in the homes of another race. Let us admit that it is work which requires to be executed with great tact and discretion. I therefore crave the indulgence of the Assembly, while I briefly explain to you some of the principles on the basis of which Miss Jeppe directs this work. She carries it on through agents established in various districts between Aleppo and the Turkish frontier, in any district, so far as the funds at her disposal permits, from which it is to be expected that fugitive women and children may come. The duty of these agents is to assist the fugitives to escape.

The first point that I would like to impress upon the Assembly is that these agents seldom or never cross the Turkish frontier. Their work is carried on within mandated territory. The second point that I would like you to remember is that Miss Jeppe only assists Armenian women and children, not woman and children of any other race. If an Armenian woman comes to the frontier accompanied by her children, children whom she has borne to a Turkish or a Kurdish father, Miss Jeppe refuses to take those children, who are Turkish subjects. The children must go back to their father and the mother must go with them unless she is ready to be separated from her children.

The third point that I would like to ask you to bear in mind is that no Armenian woman is pressed to come. Miss Jeppe only lets it be known, in those mysterious ways in which news percolates in Eastern countries, that at Aleppo there is a home founded and maintained by the League of Nations, a great body that seeks, so far as it can, to be a father to an orphaned people, a home where, if unhappy Armenian women and children can reach it, they will be warmly welcomed and lovingly tended; that they have a very great chance, through this home, of being restored to their relatives from whom they have so long been separated and that if they should unhappily be unable to hear news of their relatives they will not be abandoned but will be helped to earn their own livings.

Those are the three points which I would like to ask members of this Assembly to bear in mind

as to the principles upon which this work is based.

With regard to that last point—that Miss Jeppe never abandons a woman or child who comes to her but seeks, if she cannot restore them to their friends, to give them such training as will enable them to be self-supporting—it was in connection with that aim that Miss Jeppe last year founded an Armenian village.

The Fifth Committee clearly understands that in future all work of that kind, all colonisation, will be done by the mandatory Power, and it relies on the representatives of that Power to allow such of Miss Jeppe's protégés as are not able to rejoin their relatives to earn their livelihood in any such villages or colonies as may be established hereafter, because the Armenian women passionately desire, having recovered their freedom, to live near their own people.

I would like also to urge on the Assembly the great need that the Fifth Committee feels for prosecuting this work as long as possible and for prosecuting it with the greatest vigour possible.

I think we all recognise that this work cannot be carried on for ever. It is ten years since many of these women and children were, in the moving words of a member of the French delegation last year, dragged from their hearths and homes and handed over defenceless to their oppressors. As the years have passed on some of them have died with broken hearts, others have died from lack of care in illness, others again may have become resigned to their fate or hopeless of escape, yet others may have children and may feel that they do not wish to leave them.

On the other hand, as the years have passed, Miss Jeppe's work has become better known, greater confidence is now felt because of the work which she has accomplished in the course of these years in which she has been at work—and this is rather an important point to remember—Miss Jeppe has got into touch with more and more Armenian families scattered throughout the various countries, so that she is to-day in a better position to put the fugitive Armenian woman in touch with her relatives than was the case two years ago. In my view, one of the most successful features of Miss Jeppe's work is that she has been able to restore to their friends about three-fourths of the fugitives who have come to her.

I would remind you that last year Miss Jeppe, in submitting her report to the League, spoke of 5,000 or 10,000 women whom she thought it might be possible to rescue in the next four or five years. To-day Miss Jeppe speaks of a much smaller number. She speaks of 2,000 whom she thinks she could save, though possibly it may take two or three years to accomplish the task. I venture to urge upon the Assembly the necessity for doing everything possible in the coming year to enable Miss Jeppe to get into touch with as many as possible of these 2,000 women who may wish to enter her home. A year or two hence it may be too late, the opportunity may have passed. In any case, 2,000 is but a fraction of the number which Miss Jeppe estimates as living under the conditions of virtual slavery, or of humiliation and outrage.

The Fifth Committee, therefore, earnestly hopes that the Assembly will vote the credit asked for to enable this work to be continued with the greatest possible thoroughness in the coming year, and the Committee relies on the great Power under whose authority this work will be carried on to continue to give to Miss Jeppe the encouragement and support which has been of great assistance to her in the past.

It is unnecessary for me to appeal in this matter to my fellow women delegates. No woman, happy

in her freedom, the freedom to live in her own country, in her own home, surrounded by those whom she loves, can contemplate without a shudder the lot of these women and children. To my fellow men delegates I would only say that I ask them for one moment to compare the lot of these women, these children, with the lot of their own sisters, their own wives, their own daughters, and I have no doubt what their answer will be.

I therefore have the honour, in the name of the Fifth Committee, to submit to the Assembly the following resolutions :

1. *The Assembly approves the reports submitted by Dr. Kennedy and Miss Karen Jeppe. It expresses its high appreciation of the work they and their assistants have accomplished.*

2. *Whereas the Commission for the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East set up in fulfilment of the resolutions adopted by the first and second Assemblies is in practice composed of two distinct missions in Constantinople and in Syria respectively, the Assembly decides that these missions shall be divided and that separate credits shall be voted to Dr. Kennedy for the "Neutral House" at Constantinople and to Miss Jeppe for the protection of women and children in Syria.*

3. *The Assembly decides that the "Neutral House" of the League of Nations at Constantinople shall continue for another year. Should Dr. Kennedy be unable to continue his present appointment, it invites the Council to take all the necessary measures for the continuation of this work.*

4. *The Assembly decides that, under the supreme control of the Power which holds a mandate in Syria under the League of Nations, Miss Jeppe will continue for another year her work for the protection of women and children. It requests the mandatory Power to continue to give its aid and patronage to Miss Jeppe.*

5. *The Assembly decides that the sum of 45,000 francs shall be allocated for the work of Miss Jeppe and the sum of 30,000 francs for the work of Dr. Kennedy during 1926.*

*A report on their work will be submitted by them to the seventh Assembly.*

**The President :**

*Translation :* Does anyone wish to speak ?

I put the resolutions submitted by the Fifth Committee to the vote.

*The resolutions were adopted.*

#### 69. — ERECTION OF AN ASSEMBLY HALL AND OF ANNEXES FOR THE USE OF THE SECRETARIAT : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The net item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fourth Committee's report on the construction of an Assembly Hall and of Annexes for the use of the Secretariat (Annex, Document A. 116. 1925. X).

*(At the President's invitation, M. da Costa (Portugal), Chairman of the Fourth Committee, Baron Lehmann (Liberia), Chairman of the Sub-Committee, and M. Réveillaud (France), Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)*

**The President :**

*Translation :* The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

**M. Réveillaud (France), Rapporteur :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In order to save time, I beg those delegates who are specially interested in the construction of the building kindly to refer to the written report I have submitted on behalf of the Fourth Committee. There they will find full details and also the reasons which prompted the settlement proposed by the Committee for this delicate question.

They will find one point which is somewhat technical to explain to the Assembly. I refer to the arrangement we have made to carry forward the large credits needed for this work over a sufficiently large number of financial periods to avoid placing too large a burden upon our budgets at one time.

Here are the conclusions of the Committee's report: As, in the architects' opinion, the sum voted last year by the Assembly and the land placed at our disposal were not adequate or suitable for the construction of an Assembly Hall, the Committee considered that, in view of the urgent necessity of erecting this Hall in the immediate neighbourhood of the Secretariat, only one site was at present suitable for this purpose, namely, that on the other side of a street which the delegates know very well and along which the tramway passes, the street which ends at the Quai Wilson. This site is thus partly adjacent to the present offices of the Secretariat.

At the end of our report you will find a sketch in which the site in question is shaded.

The frontage of this site upon the Quai Wilson is greater than the present frontage of the Hotel National on the same Quai, even if the Armléder property is included. The site is therefore very suitable for the erection of a building such as we might have in mind.

This property is known locally as the "Château Banquet". It extends from the Lake to the rue de Lausanne and has an area of about 46,000 square meters, whereas the area of the site which is the property of the League is about 13,000 square meters.

In that respect, therefore, we shall be able to cover all possible requirements even in the distant future.

The Committee definitely proposes that you should purchase the site and approve an estimate not exceeding two million francs for the purchase of the site, eight million francs for the erection of the Assembly Hall, and 1,700,000 francs for the necessary extension of the offices of the Secretariat, which, after careful examination, has been approved by the Supervisory Commission.

If you agree to this scheme the arrangement suggested is as follows: The International Jury of Architects which it was decided to form last year will meet immediately after the December session of the Council, that is to say, early in January. This Jury will decide upon the estimates and the conditions of the competition, which will be a great international competition open to all the Members of the League.

From six to eight months will be necessary for the plans to be drawn up, and for plans to reach here from the most distant countries.

By making all possible haste, and barring unforeseen contingencies, you will, I hope, have the satisfaction of being able to conduct your proceedings in your own building by September 1928, but I am afraid not before.

I have given all these details because a section of the Committee—an extremely important section, considering the names and the standing of those

concerned—felt that it would be unwise to take a hasty decision which would prevent us selling the Hotel National or finding a site which would perhaps be more suitable.

Your Committee suggests that, as it is impossible for the Jury of Architects to meet before next January, you should utilise the intervening period to put the Hotel National up for public sale.

In this way, the wishes of those who favour this method of solving the question will be met and the procedure will be as follows: If the Secretariat does not receive an acceptable offer, our main decision will remain, that is to say, the necessary steps will be taken forthwith to begin work on the Pictet site, to which I referred just now.

If, on the other hand, it is found possible to sell, a small Committee, which will be appointed by the Council, and will probably be composed of delegates who have attended this Assembly and therefore know what is wanted, will re-examine the whole problem and will be able to come to a speedy conclusion.

Before concluding, I venture to make two remarks which, I think, are apposite because they explain why we are asking you to vote as the Committee suggests. The first is that the erection of a new hall and its annexes has been greatly advanced by the fact that at the end of 1924 we had a budget surplus of ten million Swiss francs.

Those who have not closely followed the rather technical discussions of our Committee may be inclined to regard this fortunate and perhaps unforeseen circumstance as due to the combined efforts of the Secretariat, to whom I am happy to pay a tribute, the Supervisory Commission, presided over by our eminent colleague, M. Osusky, and the Fourth Committee as a whole. These efforts have indeed been crowned by success and have ensured the good administration of our finances; two years ago M. Motta paid a high tribute to them, and it is quite right that they should duly be made public.

Nevertheless, this surplus is largely due to the payment by certain States of contributions in arrears. I am convinced that the real significance of these large payments of arrears is that the scepticism of the first year, which affected even the budget, has been succeeded by a juster conception of the political and moral value of the League. Hence the general eagerness of the nations to pay their share of the annual expenses, which, though a somewhat materialistic way of expressing what they feel, is nevertheless a welcome token of their confidence in its destinies.

I now come to my second observation, which indeed I made yesterday. Although we of the Fourth Committee usually scrutinise with care even the smallest of the credits we are asked to approve, not a single member questioned the need for a new Conference Hall. There was no suggestion to adjourn the matter, nor was there any question as to the desirability of keeping the permanent seat of our League at Geneva.

Before the estimate of 11,700,000 francs—more than double that granted last year—was passed, it was debated, at great length and point by point, at the numerous meetings of the Sub-Committee, and the competent organs were called upon to submit all the relevant data; but what I specially desire to say now is that in adopting these estimates we rejected everything that was in the nature of a makeshift. The chief concern of most of the delegates was rather that our efforts should lead to the erection of a building worthy of the League.

If the budget specialists themselves, with their dry-as-dust minds, have surrendered, need we seek further proof, or is it too much to conclude that, in the opinion of those who have come and seen,

the League, even without waiting for a house built of stone, has won for itself a sanctuary in the hearts of all?

May I now read the short resolutions with which our report concludes and on which you will be asked to vote :

1. *The Assembly approves the report of its Fourth Committee on the erection of the Assembly Hall and Annexes for the Secretariat, and votes for this purpose a credit of 11,700,000 francs, made up as follows : 8,000,000 for the erection of an Assembly Hall, 2,000,000 for the purchase of the site, and 1,700,000 for the Annex to the present Secretariat building.*

2. *The Assembly invites the Council to appoint a Committee to report to the Council, should the building at present occupied by the Secretariat be sold within the period and under the conditions laid down in the Fourth Committee's report, whether any changes as regards the selection of the site and the arrangement of the various buildings should be made in the decision adopted in paragraph 1 of the present resolution.*

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Motta, first delegate for Switzerland, will address the Assembly.

**M. Motta (Switzerland) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—Switzerland, the seat of the League of Nations, is especially glad to see the resolution on which the Assembly is about to vote. I wish to convey to you the gratitude of the Canton and City of Geneva and also of the Swiss Confederation.

I am sure that the solution you have reached takes due account of all the interests involved. I wish to offer my sincere thanks to the Chairman of the Fourth Committee and the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, but I especially desire to mention the distinguished Rapporteur, who has applied himself to the examination and solution of this question with all his sense of justice and equity and his great liberal-mindedness.

My hope is that the new building will prove to be the tangible evidence of the confidence we all share in the prosperity of the League and the great future that lies before it.

**The President :**

*Translation :* If no one wishes to speak on the draft resolutions submitted to the Committee, I shall consider the resolutions adopted.

*The resolutions were adopted.*

## 70. — COLLABORATION OF THE PRESS IN THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE · RESOLUTION.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the report of the Sixth Committee on the Collaboration of the Press in the Organisation of Peace (Annex, Document A. 114. 1925. VII).

*(At the invitation of the President, the Rapporteur, M. Hymans, delegate for Belgium, and the Chairman of the Sixth Committee, M. Guerrero, took their places on the platform.)*

**M. Hymans (Belgium) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I have the honour to be the Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, which has examined the

Chilian delegation's suggestion that a Committee of experts should be summoned to provide for the co-operation of the Press for the organisation of peace. I will now read the resolution which the Sixth Committee asks you to adopt :

“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 the 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 risks of international misunderstanding ;

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

As you will see, the aim of this resolution is to enable the League to help the Press with a view to perfecting its technical methods, and promoting the work of moral disarmament and the organisation of peace, to which the Press can lend such powerful aid.

From the outset, this proposal was sympathetically received by the Assembly and by the Committee which examined it.

The Press is a great power, which has already, if I may say so, a permanent seat on the League. But like all great powers, it is very jealous of its autonomy and independence. There is therefore no intention of destroying or restricting the freedom of discussion, the freedom to guide opinion, which is characteristic of the Press, and without which it cannot subsist or serve any useful purpose.

It is therefore proposed that the Assembly should simply invite the Council to call together, when it considers it opportune, a Committee of Experts to examine all the steps necessary to introduce improvements in regard to Press information, to co-ordinate its action and to help it in its arrangements with the various Governments for the despatch of news, telegrams, etc.

It is essential that the League should in no way seek to organise a semi-official press for its own propaganda. The Press must remain independent ; all we desire is to help it.

With this object the Sixth Committee, of which I have the honour to be the Rapporteur, has adopted the text I have just read, which the Assembly is now asked to ratify. You will understand, I am sure, without further explanations on my part, the idea which your Committee had in mind, and which so fortunately led to the step taken by the Chilian delegation.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Plaisant, delegate for France, will address the Assembly.

**M. Mareel Plaisant (France) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The French delegation gladly accepts the Chilian delegation's proposal to call together a Committee of Experts with a view to perfecting the organisation of peace by means of work done on behalf of and by the Press.

I must first of all congratulate the author of this brilliant suggestion, the Chilian delegate, and

M. Hymans, who gave it special prominence in his report.

But there is one thought that at once occurs to us : Is it possible that we, who have only existed for a few years as a League of Nations, should already be able to give advice to the Press, with its age-long traditions? At this moment, when it has displayed every solicitude on our behalf, when it is ever striving under diverse circumstances to throw more and more light upon all our work, our first duty is to pay it a tribute of gratitude for the invaluable help it has already afforded on behalf of peace by guiding us and extending to us its warm sympathy.

But the Press to-day makes demands, and has the right to demand even more.

The Press has not only stimulated our work, but is itself a creative force, and has more than once initiated those acts of intrepid daring which are omens of new promise and forerunners of progress.

International in composition, diverse in character, varied in talent, the Press may well be said to delineate the characteristic genius of each individual nation, as revealed in our discussions.

But it must also reveal us in an atmosphere of impartiality and spiritual unity which should show that the League has but a single soul.

The proposal submitted to us will greatly simplify the task of the Press, abolish present difficulties, facilitate its methods of obtaining information and transmitting news, and, lastly, ensure a wider dissemination of the thoughts and ideas which are broadcast here as from the world's most public platform.

In our opinion, if the Chilian proposal leads to a meeting of experts open to all, it will have served a most useful purpose. But do not let us forget that freedom is the very lifeblood of the Press. Our political history is as it were the outcome of all the vicissitudes which have followed upon the victory of the written word.

There is, therefore, no question whatever of this Committee being able to interfere in any way in the affairs of the Press. The Press lives in freedom and must develop in freedom.

But we may hope to remain more faithful to its echo if we possess every means of giving purity and strength to its voice. We shall then be able to say that we have worked with it, just for as long as it has never ceased to work for us.

We are here as delegates of our Governments, and similarly the journalists, who represent public opinion, may be said to be the delegates of the outside world, and by their assiduity and their activity, extending as it does beyond the periods when we meet, they constitute a kind of permanent assembly of the League.

Let us hope that the Committee which is about to meet will give greater resonance to this echo, will extend the scope of its influence, and that the Press, through this vast concourse of minds, will also contribute its share of concord towards the work of peace.

**The President :**

*Translation :* I call upon M. Yañez, delegate of Chile, to address the Assembly

**M. Yañez (Chile) :**

*Translation :* On behalf of the Chilian delegation, I accept with great pleasure and profound gratitude M. Hymans' lucid report, which is a model of wisdom.

This report was unanimously accepted by the Sixth Committee after a long and most interesting debate. I am convinced that its adoption by this

Assembly will mean the beginning of a new era for the conscience and ideas of the world.

I have now only to express my thanks to M. Plaisant for the tribute he was kind enough to pay to the Chilian delegation and to myself.

**The President :**

*Translation :* If nobody wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee, which reads as follows :

*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 the 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 risks of international misunderstanding ;*

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

*The resolution was adopted.*

## 71. — INTERNATIONAL MUNICIPAL CO-OPERATION : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

**The President :**

*Translation :* The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Fifth Committee's report on international municipal co-operation (Annex, Document A.122.1925.IV).

*(At the invitation of the President, the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, M. Garay (Panama) and the Rapporteur, M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) took their places on the platform.)*

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) will address the Assembly.

**M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) :**

*Translation :* Many important subjects have been discussed during this Assembly. Indeed, the importance of the work, the vitality of the League and the loyalty of the Members are proved by the eagerness of the various delegations to make some contribution, great or small, to the building up of that great edifice, the League, by submitting resolutions, recommendations and suggestions to the Assembly in order that the League's aims and ideals shall be made known.

With this idea the Cuban delegation tabled a proposal before the fifth Assembly for international municipal co-operation, the object of which is to spread from country to country both this ideal and also that of international co-operation in general.

As the report is before you, I shall only give a brief summary of it, trusting that those who have not read the report have been made acquainted with the question by the delegates who took part in the Fifth Committee. The problem is a very complicated one, and formed the subject of long and interesting discussions in the fifth Assembly.

All delegates were in agreement as to the principle involved, but a number of objections were raised, the speakers expressing a fear that the very complexity of the subject might lead to difficulties. Its scope, therefore, had to be limited.

This year the Fifth Committee, which had been instructed to consider the question, noted a resolution adopted by the fifth Assembly to the effect that the matter should be referred to the Secretariat for examination, and asking the Secretary-General to submit a report to the sixth Assembly. The Fifth Committee has studied the Secretariat's report, has subjected the question to further consideration, and has made considerable progress.

During the discussions in the Fifth Committee, certain delegations again expressed their fears that inter-municipal action might possibly lead to encroachments upon the national sovereignty of individual States and might prove objectionable to Governments. Moreover, there is already a certain amount of unofficial co-operation, apart from the work carried out by the technical organisations of the League. It would be better, they said, to co-ordinate this than create new organs or run the risk of overlapping.

While, therefore, approving in principle the motives actuating these suggestions the Committee thought it unnecessary for the present to embody them in too definite a form. It concluded that it would be better merely to submit to the Assembly, in the form of a resolution, a summary of the various principles agreed to by the Committee, laying particular stress on the fact that international co-operation, based upon the co-operation of municipalities in various countries, though a question of the greatest interest should never be allowed to overstep the bounds of national sovereignty.

As I have already said, I think that this new and lofty idea for promoting the well-being of the citizens of the whole world, an idea which is essentially in harmony with the spirit and traditions of the League, is bound to meet with your approval. The Assembly, therefore, will, I trust, approve the following draft resolution, which I now have the honour to submit :

“ The Assembly,

“ Endorsing the report on International Municipal Co-operation, submitted by the Secretariat in accordance with the resolution adopted by the fifth Assembly on September 20th, 1924.

“ Decides to call the attention of the different Governments to the advantages which close co-operation, national and international, between the municipalities within the strict limits of national sovereignty presents from the point of view of the aims of the League of Nations ;

“ And requests the Council to authorise the technical organisations of the League to give favourable consideration, so far as they may find it practicable to do so, to requests for assistance or co-operation addressed to them by the various non-official international organisations which deal with municipal questions.”

This draft resolution, as submitted to you by the Fifth Committee, is, I think perfectly clear, and I hope it will meet the views, both of those who desired to extend the scope of the question and of those who thought it should be restricted.

Some of us may feel that the resolution does not go far enough but it is a mistake to ask for too much at a time and insist upon the immediate acceptance of new ideas, no matter how important they may be.

As Lord Cecil, the British delegate, said this morning, we must always, before submitting and

supporting resolutions, consider whether they are feasible.

There can be no doubt that the sole purpose of any fresh idea zealously advocated here is to serve the cause of the League, but, although I agree with the representative of France that we must attack this question boldly, I would venture to suggest that it also calls for circumspection.

**The President :**

*Translation :* M. Lugo Viña, delegate of Cuba, will address the Assembly.

**M. Lugo Viña (Cuba) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Cuban delegation desires to repeat the declaration which it made during the discussion in the Fifth Committee on the question of inter-municipality, and to define afresh, and beyond all possibility of doubt, what exactly is the underlying idea and the real scope of its suggestion concerning the much-discussed subject of international municipal relations and co-operation.

I desire, before entering upon the subject, to thank the President of my delegation for appointing me to interpret our views, since I was the promoter of this scheme and its advocate in Europe and America.

Inter-municipality, as described by me in a number of speeches and as defined and advocated by the Cuban delegation, is, in actual fact, simply a kind of supplementary diplomacy which, bound up as it is with one of the organic factors in the constitution of the State, can only come into play as an auxiliary factor in State administration. Inter-municipality, as thus understood, can never be prejudicial to national sovereignty, but is rather calculated to extend it at home and abroad. The Cuban delegation solemnly declares — as it has already declared in discussion in the Committee — that by reason of this very fact such a movement, placed under the guarantee and control of the State, would be quite beyond suspicion, and would certainly not make for disintegration, because, in view of its subordinate character, it can never go outside its proper sphere of action. In the complicated machinery of public administration, inter-municipality is not intended to promote isolated action, which might in some cases be hostile to or at variance with State policy. Its sole purpose is to contribute, in a supplementary and dependent capacity, towards the promotion and development of national activities, always within the natural limits of these activities or in the vast experimental field of international interchanges.

Municipalities, which are the real framework of each nation, reflect within their urban limits practically every aspect of national life. With urban development, which is becoming increasingly complex and intense, there has sprung up a new science, “municipal science”, and a new need, that of studying and where desirable profiting by foreign experience.

These two aspects — the one purely scientific and the other essentially practical — show that municipalities are not simply traditional administrative institutions governed by precedent. They also constitute a powerful factor in national progress and expansion. Some municipalities to-day act as administrators for populations greater than that of whole nations, and, if these nations, in order to maintain their development on a level with that of other countries, need the experience acquired through international contact, naturally these great modern towns are obliged continually to reorganise their methods and municipal procedure.

Inter-municipality, which leads to the interchange of technical information and improvements, is essential to urban and hence to national progress. Such interchange, which is still informal, must in future be properly organised. That, then, is the purpose of inter-municipality, which has no objects outside the limits of administrative life. Therefore, all reservations which may be made, any misgivings which may be felt, are removed by the indisputable fact that inter-municipality, in order to develop, must be a movement collaborating with, and assisting, the State and its sovereignty, which it claims neither to lessen nor deny.

The Cuban delegation, however, is satisfied with the discussions which have taken place concerning its proposal, and I, as author of the proposal, share that satisfaction.

The agreement at which we have arrived, and which is embodied in the present resolution, certainly does not represent the full ideal to which inter-municipality aspires. Inter-municipality, however, is only in its infancy, and it must not and cannot hope to arrive at perfection in a day. The investigations and enquiries to which the Cuban scheme has given rise have served to acquaint nations with the work accomplished by the Union internationale des Villes, which promotes inter-municipality by intercommunal correspondence and the exchange of information at congresses in which the town councils of different countries meet. They have also served to reveal the value of the scheme and will make its realisation practicable in the near future, if, as I hope, the recommendations contained in the draft resolution submitted to this Assembly, after having been approved here, are taken up by the Governments Members of the League. The League is a promoter of reforms, generous ideas and new ideals, and, among these, inter-municipality may one day reach a stage at which it will help to make those experimental international interchanges, which have already begun to be organised on a more satisfactory basis by the League, the surest and most lasting factor in international harmony.

Moreover, the various proposals submitted to this Assembly suggest a means for the universalisation of the League — the logical outcome of its democratic spirit. It must be our object in future carefully to instruct the masses regarding the existence of this legal and social organisation,

in order that they may form a correct estimate of its composition, ideals and purpose, and may support and contribute towards the development of its noble activities.

No organisations can contribute more effectively to the attainment of this object than the municipalities, which form the direct link between the State and the masses, which collect and synthesise their aspirations and determine the general trend of new ideals. Thus guided by the State, the municipalities, in conjunction and in harmony with the League, can pursue a progressive and democratic policy whereby the ideals of the League will be implanted in the very conscience of the masses.

Having thus defined our attitude, it only remains for us to acknowledge the welcome accorded, to our great satisfaction, in three consecutive Assemblies, to the suggestion submitted by Cuba and now placed by the League under the safeguard of the national sovereignty of each of the States represented here.

The President :

*Translation* : I put to the vote the resolution proposed by the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows :

*The Assembly,*

*Endorsing the report on International Municipal Co-operation, submitted by the Secretariat in accordance with the resolution adopted by the fifth Assembly on September 20th, 1924 :*

*Decides to call the attention of the different Governments to the advantages which close co-operation, national and international, between the municipalities within the strict limits of national sovereignty presents from the point of view of the aims of the League of Nations ;*

*And requests the Council to authorise the technical organisations of the League to give favourable consideration, so far as they may find it practicable to do so, to requests for assistance or co-operation addressed to them by the various non-official international organisations which deal with municipal questions.*

*The resolution was adopted.*

*The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.*



# VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE  
SIXTH ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

## EIGHTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th, 1925, AT 9.30 A.M.

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### 72. — ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES OF THE LEAGUE : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President : Ladies and gentlemen — I have, up till now, in order to expedite the proceedings of the Assembly, mostly made use of the French language. As a homage to my fellow

members of the British Empire and of the Dominions beyond the Seas, I shall speak this day the language of the majority of my own Canadian compatriots. I stated last year that Canada was the only nation in this Assembly which has the two official languages of the League of Nations.

The first question on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fourth Committee on the Allocation of Expenses. (Annex. Doc. A. 125. 1925. II). I call on the Rapporteur, M. Carl Enckell, delegate of Finland, and the Chairman of the Fourth Committee, Dr. da Costa, delegate of Portugal, to take their places on the platform.

(*Dr. A. da Costa (Portugal), Chairman, and M. Carl Enckell (Finland), Rapporteur of the Fourth Committee, took their places on the platform.*)

The President : I call up on M. Enckell, Rapporteur, to address the Assembly.

M. Enckell (Finland), Rapporteur :

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have the honour, on behalf of the Fourth Committee, to submit to the Assembly the report on the allocation of expenses drawn up by His Excellency M. Adatci, my eminent Japanese colleague, who, to his great regret, is prevented by indisposition from speaking to-day.

In 1924 the fifth Assembly adopted a resolution requesting the Council to ask the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses, presided over by M. Réveillaud, to continue its researches, with the object (in view of the difficulties of drawing up a definitive scale at a time when the exchange fluctuations were so pronounced) of preparing a fresh provisional scale to be submitted to the 1925 Assembly and to come into force as from 1926 for a period to be decided upon.

You know from previous discussions how delicate and difficult has been the task entrusted to the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses. I am glad, therefore, to have this opportunity of

confirming the tribute paid by the Fourth Committee to the conscientious and impartial work done by M. Réveillaud and his colleagues, with the able assistance of the Secretariat.

It has been along these lines that the Allocation Committee, on the request of successive Assemblies, has pursued its work.

The budgets for 1923 of all the 54 Member States have been analysed and all "abnormal items" of expenditure eliminated. Under normal items of expenditure are included: Defence, General Administration, Financial Administration, Justice, Posts and Telegraphs, Colonies, Economic Administration, Public Works, Education, Church, Health, Social Administration, Pensions and miscellaneous items. The various items have been grouped in different ways by the Allocation Committee after converting the national currencies into dollars so as to form a series of indices which could guide the Committee in making its decisions. The Allocation Committee, however, as it indicated in its last report, did not find it possible to employ these indices with any sort of mathematical precision nor claim that they alone constitute by any means an unerring guide of capacity to pay.

M. Réveillaud explained at length to the Sub-Committee the various difficulties with which the Allocation Committee was faced. Thus some States are much more highly socialised than others, with the result that the magnitude of certain items of their expenditure is a measure rather of their social policy than of their national income; in some countries a greater part of the total administration is undertaken by the central and in others by the local governments. To compare the various budgets of a federal with the single budget of a unitary State necessarily involved a number of highly technical problems, some of which are scarcely solvable. Finally, the exchanges of the world are even now by no means stable and were subject to still greater fluctuations in the year 1923, which was the year taken by the Allocation Committee as the basis of its work, so that the conversion of the national currencies into dollars unavoidably entails the possibility of error.

The Allocation Committee endeavoured, therefore, to check the preliminary conclusions to which these budget figures seemed to point, by certain other economic data — the production of cereals and minerals, international trade, etc. The economic data, however, no less than the financial, were found to be open to a number of objections, although no doubt of certain value as a corrective.

But I would remind the Assembly that the Allocation Committee, after so many years of active and patient study, in the possession now of so great and varied a mass of evidence, has acquired an experience and knowledge which enables it to sift its evidence with special skill and to speak with quite exceptional authority.

Some delegations have enquired whether it would not be desirable to publish the data on which the Allocation Committee's conclusions were based; but I think that the Assembly will agree with me, in view of what has just been said, that such a procedure would be more likely to lead to confusion than enlightenment. For it is impossible for the casual reader or even for the careful student of all this mass of data to know the particular weight which should be attached to this or that figure or to apprehend the considerations which induced the Committee, after so many laborious sessions devoted to this subject, to attach particular importance to this or less importance to that set of facts.

I would also remind the Assembly that the scale of allocation now before it is not a rectification of the old scale but is based on quite distinct principles. The reduction which was made, therefore, in the allocation of certain States on account of the devastation which was suffered during the war disappears. That reduction was made on the grounds that the former allocation was based on indices of pre-war wealth, which no longer applied to those countries which had materially suffered during the war. The present allocation, on the other hand, is based, as I have already indicated, on post-war data, which automatically reflect the losses which have been incurred.

The Fourth Committee and its Sub-Committee, in their earnest desire to give satisfaction to all the States Members of the League, went thoroughly into all the arguments submitted by certain delegations. They arrived at the conclusion that the proposed modifications would upset the delicate balance of the scale and would inevitably entail further changes, the fatal result of which, from the point of view of the scale, it was easy to imagine.

This very difficulty is in the opinion of the Committee the best proof of the nicety of the balance which the Allocation Committee has achieved. The Fourth Committee recommends, therefore, that the scale should be adopted without change, and I venture to appeal in its name to the delegations of all States to support that recommendation in the common interest of all the Members of the League.

There is one point in connection with certain of the observations made before the Sub-Committee which I think, however, demands a word of additional explanation. States very naturally tend to compare the contribution demanded from them with that demanded from their immediate neighbours with whose economic conditions they are familiar, and it may happen, as it no doubt does in the case of Lithuania, that the percentage difference between the units ascribed to each is not in proportion to the real difference in capacity to pay. The Fourth Committee is fully conscious of that fact; but unless fractions and minute fractions of units are to be demanded this discrepancy is unavoidable. Nobody claims that countries asked to pay two units are necessarily or presumably twice as rich as those asked to pay one.

A further question remains to be mentioned. The Allocation Committee in its report suggests that the Assembly should put this scale into force for the years 1926, 1927 and 1928. The Fourth Committee ventures to endorse this proposal and suggests that the Allocation Committee should continue to exercise its functions simply with a view to following the economic development, so that it may be in a position to present in 1928 the results of its researches on which a future scale of allocation may be based.

In view of the various considerations which have been set out above, the Fourth Committee ventures to submit the following resolutions for adoption by the Assembly:

"The Assembly,

"I. Requests the Council to ask the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses to follow the economic development of the various Member States with a view to submitting a revised scale to the Assembly of 1928.

"II. Approves for the years 1926, 1927 and 1928 the scale for the allocation of the expenses of the League annexed to the present resolution."

*Scale of Allocation of the Expenses of the League for 1926, 1927 and 1928.*

| Country                                 | Units |
|-----------------------------------------|-------|
| Abyssinia                               | 2     |
| Albania                                 | 1     |
| Argentine                               | 29    |
| Australia                               | 27    |
| Austria                                 | 8     |
| Belgium                                 | 18    |
| Bolivia                                 | 4     |
| Brazil                                  | 29    |
| Bulgaria                                | 5     |
| Canada                                  | 35    |
| Chile                                   | 14    |
| China                                   | 46    |
| Colombia                                | 6     |
| Costa Rica                              | 1     |
| Cuba                                    | 9     |
| Czechoslovakia                          | 29    |
| Denmark                                 | 12    |
| Dominican Republic                      | 1     |
| Estonia                                 | 3     |
| Finland                                 | 10    |
| France                                  | 79    |
| Great Britain                           | 105   |
| Greece                                  | 7     |
| Guatemala                               | 1     |
| Haiti                                   | 1     |
| Honduras                                | 1     |
| Hungary                                 | 8     |
| India                                   | 56    |
| Irish Free State                        | 10    |
| Italy                                   | 60    |
| Japan                                   | 60    |
| Latvia                                  | 3     |
| Liberia                                 | 1     |
| Lithuania                               | 4     |
| Luxemburg                               | 1     |
| Netherlands                             | 23    |
| New Zealand                             | 10    |
| Nicaragua                               | 1     |
| Norway                                  | 9     |
| Panama                                  | 1     |
| Paraguay                                | 1     |
| Persia                                  | 5     |
| Peru                                    | 9     |
| Poland                                  | 32    |
| Portugal                                | 6     |
| Roumania                                | 22    |
| Salvador                                | 1     |
| Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kingdom of) | 20    |
| Siam                                    | 9     |
| Spain                                   | 40    |
| South Africa (Union of)                 | 15    |
| Sweden                                  | 18    |
| Switzerland                             | 17    |
| Uruguay                                 | 7     |
| Venezuela                               | 5     |
|                                         | 937   |

In conclusion, I feel sure that I shall be carrying out the wishes of all the members of the Assembly by expressing to M. Adatei our sincere thanks for his remarkable report and our warm wishes for his speedy recovery.

**The President.** — M. Galvanauskas, delegate of Lithuania, will address the Assembly.

In conclusion, I think I shall be interpreting the views of all the members of the Assembly in addressing to our eminent colleague, M. Adatei, our sincere thanks for his admirable report and our best wishes for his speedy recovery.

**M. Galvanauskas (Lithuania) :**

*Translation :* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — We have just heard the Rapporteur's statement on the allocation of the expenses of the League for the coming years, more particularly for the year 1926.

I regret that I do not take the same view as the Rapporteur concerning the scale of allocation. It has been said on this platform that we should not simply pay one another compliments, but should speak plainly, in order that improvements may be effected in the general organisation of the League and progress made, especially in budgetary questions.

This Assembly is composed chiefly of eminent persons with wide political and diplomatic experience. All of them, therefore, realise the importance of the budget from the point of view of the State. We all know the discussions and debates which take place before even the smallest items are voted when the cost has to be borne by the inhabitants of the country.

What care is devoted to the study of these questions! What excitement, what passions, are sometimes aroused by the discussion of a budget, before equilibrium can be established and agreement reached on a system of taxation, more or less acceptable to the country!

I do not mean that the League has done nothing in this direction, but I cannot entirely concur in the approval which has been expressed here.

I should like first to remind the Assembly of the past history of our scale of allocation. In 1923, the Assembly instructed a special Committee to lay down sound and scientific bases for the establishment of this scale. This preparatory work has now been going on for years.

The report submitted to the Assembly in 1924 by this Committee on the Allocation of Expenses stated that any scheme for the establishment of the scale on the basis of the actual budgets of the various countries was fraught with difficulties, chief among which was the fact that exchange fluctuations in the various countries were so pronounced.

In any case, even after the question had been studied for two years, no very definite conclusions were arrived at which could serve as an equitable basis for establishing the scale.

To-day, however, the currency has been stabilised in a number of countries, and, even where this is not yet the case, fluctuations are not such as to preclude the possibility of forming an accurate estimate of budget revenue and expenditure, particularly the latter.

Moreover, the Allocation Committee itself declares that, although it analysed the budget of fifty-four countries, it did not find it possible to employ these indices as a guide.

I agree that if the scale is to be established on sound bases it is not enough simply to consider the budget; many other factors must be taken into account.

The most important of these factors is, to my mind, the actual territory of the country. I do not mean that this can be taken as an absolute criterion, but it should at all events be regarded as an essential element in determining the scale.

The second factor is population. I fully realise that in many countries the actual figures for population are not necessarily an index of the financial or economic situation. Population is none the less a most important factor and should be duly estimated in determining the general situation of a country. An industrial country or a country possessing great natural resources may be said, on these lines, to be better off than

one which has neither natural resources nor large industries.

The third factor to be taken into consideration is the national wealth actually accumulated in a country. This has already been assessed in many countries, or had at all events been so before the war. Even if it is not possible at present to ascertain it with mathematical precision, a relatively accurate estimate can be formed.

The fourth factor is the trade of a country, as shown by its export and import returns. This is not an absolute factor but an index of the country's progress and wealth.

Undoubtedly, the most important factor and the one which the Allocation Committee must have considered first of all is the budget. This affords the most accurate index of the economic and financial situation of a country. If you analyse the budget thoroughly, if you take the items occurring under expenditure which are to be found in every State budget for Administration, Defence, Posts and Telegraphs and so on, you will find these a sufficiently sound basis for establishing a more equitable scale than the present one.

In order to show how far removed this present scale is from actual realities—a fact which is self-evident—I should like to give an example. Suppose that there are two countries which are in practically the same geographical position, which are practically equal from the point of view of historical development and economic progress. For them—their budgetary and political positions being equal—the surest index is obviously population.

Take, for example, Lithuania and Poland. Lithuania, I find, pays practically two units as compared with Poland's one unit per million inhabitants.

There appears to be no real justification for this.

If the budgets were compared—I have not got them before me—the result would perhaps be far less overwhelmingly in favour of Poland. The units allocated to Lithuania were fixed when it was hoped that the territory of Vilna—at present under Polish administration—would be restored to Lithuania.

Lithuania at that time, despite the difficulties of her economic, financial and political situation, agreed to accept the four units, since they would have corresponded to her territory and population as determined by her rights and treaties. The territory of Vilna, however, is still occupied by Poland, and Lithuania has continued to pay her four units, although she has more than once drawn the Committee's attention to this point.

I might quote other data, proving that Lithuania pays per million inhabitants practically as much as Great Britain. I do not know the actual statistics which may exist in the Secretariat—indeed, no Government knows them yet, since they have not been published by the Committee—but it is obvious that the wealth of Great Britain per million inhabitants is greater than that of Lithuania.

There are, no doubt, other considerations with which I am unacquainted relating to industrial countries, but, so far as agricultural countries are concerned, I find that Lithuania is paying two units while other countries are only paying one unit per million inhabitants.

We paid our share, however, even during the hardest times. We, too, felt the effects of the fall of the German mark, which was in circulation in our country. We have passed through all kinds of political difficulties the echoes of which have been heard by this Assembly. I have no hesitation in declaring that these difficulties were quite different in character from those encountered by countries to which special facilities were granted.

We paid, I repeat, without demur. The Lithuanian Government has, however, pointed out the anomaly and the injustice of the situation to the Committee responsible for establishing the scale. We have as yet received no satisfaction. My Government is not even in possession of the records of the work of the Allocation Committee. The latter, no doubt, considers that it might be dangerous to publish this report, since those to whom it was communicated might disagree with its conclusions. The Governments to whom it would chiefly be of value, however, have statistical bureaux and experts quite as efficient as those of the League. If these records had been published, all the Governments would have at their disposal a fairly sound basis for calculation, and one which, even if not mathematically precise, would at all events be logical. I have been told that a sounder basis than the one hitherto employed has now been found. But it must be remembered that if only one unit is deducted from the share of any one State the whole scheme collapses.

This being the case, I cannot possibly agree to the Committee's proposals. I cannot accept the new scale for three years any more than I can accept the number of units allocated to my country. The Lithuanian Government will thoroughly examine this scale. Not wishing, however, to take the responsibility of wrecking the League's budget for this year by opposing the Committee's proposals, the Lithuanian delegation will abstain from voting.

**The President.** — If no other delegate desires to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions proposed by the Fourth Committee, which read as follows :

*The Assembly,*

*I. Requests the Council to ask the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses to follow the economic development of the various Member States with a view to submitting a revised scale to the Assembly of 1928.*

*II. Approves for the years 1926, 1927 and 1928 the scale for the allocation of the expenses of the League annexed to the present resolution.*

*Scale of Allocation of the Expenses of the League for 1926, 1927 and 1928.*

| Country                   | Units |
|---------------------------|-------|
| <i>Abyssinia</i>          | 2     |
| <i>Albania</i>            | 1     |
| <i>Argentina</i>          | 29    |
| <i>Australia</i>          | 27    |
| <i>Austria</i>            | 8     |
| <i>Belgium</i>            | 18    |
| <i>Bolivia</i>            | 4     |
| <i>Brazil</i>             | 29    |
| <i>Bulgaria</i>           | 5     |
| <i>Canada</i>             | 35    |
| <i>Chile</i>              | 14    |
| <i>China</i>              | 46    |
| <i>Colombia</i>           | 6     |
| <i>Costa Rica</i>         | 1     |
| <i>Cuba</i>               | 9     |
| <i>Czechoslovakia</i>     | 29    |
| <i>Denmark</i>            | 12    |
| <i>Dominican Republic</i> | 1     |
| <i>Esthonia</i>           | 3     |
| <i>Finland</i>            | 10    |
| <i>France</i>             | 79    |
| <i>Great Britain</i>      | 105   |
| <i>Greece</i>             | 7     |
| <i>Guatemala</i>          | 1     |
| <i>Haiti</i>              | 1     |
| <i>Honduras</i>           | 1     |
| <i>Hungary</i>            | 8     |

| Country                                 | Units |
|-----------------------------------------|-------|
| India                                   | 56    |
| Irish Free State                        | 10    |
| Italy                                   | 60    |
| Japan                                   | 60    |
| Latvia                                  | 3     |
| Liberia                                 | 1     |
| Lithuania                               | 4     |
| Luxemburg                               | 1     |
| Netherlands                             | 23    |
| New Zealand                             | 10    |
| Nicaragua                               | 1     |
| Norway                                  | 9     |
| Panama                                  | 1     |
| Paraguay                                | 1     |
| Persia                                  | 5     |
| Peru                                    | 9     |
| Poland                                  | 32    |
| Portugal                                | 6     |
| Roumania                                | 22    |
| Salvador                                | 1     |
| Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kingdom of) | 20    |
| Siam                                    | 9     |
| Spain                                   | 40    |
| South Africa (Union of)                 | 15    |
| Sweden                                  | 18    |
| Switzerland                             | 17    |
| Uruguay                                 | 7     |
| Venezuela                               | 5     |
|                                         | 937   |

**M. Galvanauskas (Lithuania) :**

*Translation :* I maintain my former reservation. I do not consider the scale which has been established as binding for my country. My Government retains an open mind on the subject.

**The President.** — The Lithuanian delegate's statement will be placed in the record of the meeting.

*The resolutions were adopted.*

### 73. — AUDITED ACCOUNTS AND BUDGET OF THE LEAGUE, AND OTHER FINANCIAL QUESTIONS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

**The President :** The second question on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fourth Committee on Financial Questions. I ask M. Cavazzoni (Italy), the Rapporteur, to come to the platform.

*(M. Cavazzoni, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)*

**The President :** The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

**M. Cavazzoni (Italy), Rapporteur.**

*Translation :* Ladies and gentlemen — It would ill become me to inflict a long speech upon you, and still less to read to you my report, which is already in your possession. I would merely draw your attention to an observation already made by my predecessor at the last Assembly, and add thereto my own personal point of view.

M. Vasconcellos stated in his report that "the finances of the League of Nations had attained their majority. The sound, healthy and orderly manner in which the finances are managed reflects credit on the entire institution..." The financial year for 1923 closed with a net surplus of 2,774,854 gold francs. But the Rapporteur was careful — and rightly so — to add :

"It must, however, be emphasised that this satisfactory situation was not attained until this year, and then only as the result of prudent and economical administration ; it is absolutely essential that the same policy should be followed, unless the success of the organisation which it has taken such great care and energy to build up should be endangered."

My eminent predecessor's hope has fortunately been realised, chiefly owing to the admirable work done by the responsible organs of the League during the financial year 1924. The following factors also contributed towards this success : (1) the payments effected by the States Members of the League for the financial period 1924, which represented for the first time 83.2 per cent of the sums due (a remarkable increase on the percentage for 1923, which amounted to only 61.7 per cent ; (2) the payment by several States of overdue contributions amounting to over 8 million gold francs out of the sum of almost 13 millions then outstanding.

I would further ask you to note that, thanks to the efforts of the Secretariat, the Supervisory Commission and the Auditor, the administration of the League is at present proceeding on satisfactory lines and in accordance with more definite and soundly established rules.

Finally, we are glad to note that the League's financial position shows a credit balance for the three organisations together amounting to the very considerable sum of 9,395,721.35 gold francs. *The Working Capital Fund*, which is designed to meet deficits due to delays in the payment of contributions, amounted on August 31st to 4,352,423.11 gold francs. Moreover, the purchase of the Hotel National was concluded a year in advance, and it was thus possible to allocate a large item of revenue not included in the budget to the fund for the building of the new League premises.

The brief information I have just laid before you shows what very considerable results have been obtained. We must not stop there, but must continue to pursue the same policy. May I now, before I finish, submit a few purely personal remarks on the work of the Fourth Committee ?

The speeches in that Committee may have appeared this year less animated, less impassioned, than in the past. It might even seem as if the work done by the Committee had been of less importance. What has actually happened is that the fervour of our first efforts, the laborious work of bureaucratic and administrative organisation, the careful preparation of the Technical Organisations and the initial efforts of the early years have happily been succeeded by a period of stabilisation and consolidation. Thus, thorough and exhaustive as our examination has been, our work, and my own task, was comparatively simple.

The work is going on regularly and is just as important as before, although the calmness of the proceedings may make it appear less striking.

The Technical Organisations are dealing regularly with economic and financial questions, with health and social questions and with labour. The consolidation and development of these manifold activities and good works are above criticism and quite beyond dispute.

The Governments of the States Members of the League might perhaps devote closer attention to the studies and work undertaken and results obtained in the matter of the technical questions to which I have just referred.

It is difficult to form any judgment upon individual spheres of activity from the meeting of this or that committee of experts or from the results of a conference. The results should be considered

as a whole. They can lead, I think, to none but favourable conclusions.

Let us consider certain suggestions of general importance which have been submitted in this connection. I might cite as an example the last proposal for the convening of an International Economic Conference, a proposal affecting interests of vital importance, not only from the point of view of economic restoration but also from that of world peace.

I have no real right, during a debate on the budget, to discuss the principles underlying the League's activities, but I am doing so because even the driest figures, if considered in relation to those principles, may help to guide us in the future.

In any case, we have no intention of increasing our expenditure, but we think that, while submitting our budget, it would perhaps be right to emphasise the value of the League's so-called technical activities.

It is the technical aspect of this work that is most apparent, but in actual fact any help given to the nations faced with the greatest difficulties in the work of reconstruction, any assistance in the promotion of health and social questions or the moral and material progress of peoples, any joint effort to find a solution for the difficult problems of transport, economy and finance — all this in actual fact gradually leads up to a frame of mind favourable to the improvement of international relations.

It is by these means that we may hope to procure the success of vaster schemes more purely political in character, and thus help to ensure for the world the benefits of peace.

My task is at an end. It is now for you, ladies and gentlemen, to show that you are satisfied with the results obtained by passing the budget which I now have the honour to present.

The Fourth Committee submits for your approval the following resolutions :

1. *The Assembly of the League of Nations, in virtue of Article 38 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League, finally approves the audited accounts of the League for the sixth financial period, ending December 31st, 1924.*

2. *The Assembly, in virtue of Article 17 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League :*

*Approves, for the financial year 1926, the general budget of the League, of the Secretariat and of the Special Organisations of the League, of the International Labour Organisation and of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the total amount of which, including supplementary credits, is 22,980,633 gold francs<sup>1</sup> :*

*And decides that the said budgets shall be published in the Official Journal.*

3. *The Assembly adopts, in so far as they have been approved by the Fourth Committee, the conclusions of the various reports of the Supervisory Commission submitted to its consideration, and at the same time expresses to the Supervisory Commission its thanks for the services it has so well rendered.*

4. *The Assembly adopts the conclusions of the report of the Fourth Committee.*

The President : M. Zumeta, first delegate for Venezuela, will address the Assembly.

M. Zumeta (Venezuela) :

Translation : The Venezuelan delegation in no way desires to start a discussion on points

<sup>1</sup> This sum was subsequently reduced by the Assembly to 22,930,633 gold francs, see page

of procedure. It merely wishes to declare that, since the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly also apply to Committees, and since, when the vote was taken by roll-call in the Fourth Committee, several delegations not only stated that they would, but actually did, vote against the credits for an enquiry into the production of opium in Persia and the increase of 100,000 francs for the settlement of Russian refugees, the Venezuelan delegation makes every reservation concerning the inclusion of these two credits in the 1926 Budget ; as, however, it desires to show a spirit of conciliation, it will abstain from voting.

The President :

M. Fernandez y Medina, delegate for Uruguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Fernandez y Medina (Uruguay) :

Translation : We agree with the Venezuelan delegation regarding the principles which should govern votes on budgetary questions in the Assembly and in the Committees. Nevertheless, with regard to the credit for an enquiry in Persia which gave rise to so much discussion, the delegations opposed to this credit have authorised me to state that if it is reduced to 100,000 francs they will accept it, in that spirit of conciliation to which the delegate for Venezuela has referred and which has always been a rule of conduct among the delegations.

The President : I ask the delegate for Persia, Prince Arfa, to inform us if he accepts this reduction.

Prince Arfa (Persia) :

Translation : In view of the budgetary difficulties, I consider that a credit of 100,000 francs will suffice for the moment. I hope, moreover, that the Council will be able to obtain resources from elsewhere. In any case, Persia will accord the Commission of Enquiry every facility.

The President : M. da Costa, delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

M. da Costa (Portugal), Chairman of the Fourth Committee :

Translation : In accordance with the opinion of the Fourth Committee, of which I had the honour to be Chairman, I wish to say that we accept this reduction from 150,000 francs to 100,000 francs for the enquiry to be carried out in Persia.

The President : Does any other delegate desire to speak on this subject ?

If no other delegate desires to speak, I shall consider the resolutions as approved, with the amendment proposed by the Uruguayan delegate. (Assent.)

#### 74. — CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President : The third item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fourth Committee on Contributions in Arrears, and I will ask M. Barboza Carneiro, delegate for Brazil, to take his place on the platform.

(M. Barboza Carneiro, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

M. Barboza Carifeiro (Brazil) :

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Fourth Committee has examined the delicate question of contributions in arrears due from certain Members of the League.

The Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to examine with the utmost care the different cases communicated to it by the Secretary-General. Various documents were placed at the Sub-Committee's disposal, and it was able to obtain all the information necessary to enable it to reach a decision upon the different aspects of the question. Its task was greatly facilitated by the valuable help of Sir Herbert Ames, Financial Director, to whom I should like, on behalf of the Committee, to offer our most hearty thanks. The Sub-Committee came to the conclusion that the Secretary-General had taken all the necessary steps to carry out the resolutions adopted by the fifth Assembly on September 26th, 1924. It found that much progress had been made, but unanimously recognised the urgent need for the Secretary-General to take further steps with a view to settling the few cases still outstanding.

The Fourth Committee, after examining the confidential report presented by the Sub-Committee, has done me the honour of requesting me to submit the following draft resolution :

*The Assembly,*

*Having considered the report which was submitted to it by its Fourth Committee :*

(1) *Decides to approve the settlement of the Argentine Republic's debt ;*

(2) *Expresses the satisfaction with the efforts made by certain Members to pay their debts to the League ;*

(3) *Makes a pressing appeal to Members whose contributions have not yet been paid to take the necessary measures for the settlement of their debts to the League of Nations and requests the Secretary-General to make further urgent representations to these Members ;*

(4) *Invites the Secretary-General to report to the Council on the results of these representations at its session of June 1926, in order to enable the Council to examine the question of contributions in arrears and report to the seventh Assembly.*

**The President :** Does any delegate desire to speak on this report ?

If no one desires to speak, I shall regard the resolution as adopted.

*The resolution was adopted.*

**75. — TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS : (a) WORK OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ; (b) COMMITTEE OF ENQUIRY TO VISIT CERTAIN OPIUM-PRODUCING COUNTRIES : REPORTS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.**

**The President.** — The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fifth Committee regarding (a) the work of the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium, and (b) the Committee of Enquiry to be sent to certain opium-producing countries. (Annexes. Documents A.123, 1925, IV and A.127, 1925, XI.)

I call upon M. Veverka, delegate of Czechoslovakia, Rapporteur, and M. Garay, delegate of Panama, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, to come to the platform.

(M. Garay, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and M. Veverka, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

**The President :** The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

**M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur :**

*Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The reports which I have the honour to submit to you are only a short summary of the facts. Actually they represent a portion of the unremitting work of the Advisory Committee, which has done yeoman service in the noble struggle against the greatest scourge that has ever menaced humanity.

The immensity of the problem with which we have undertaken to deal is—and I should like to emphasise this point—the sole criterion by which we can gauge the amount of work and above all the length of time still required to bring our task to a successful conclusion. I say this for the benefit of idealists who chafe at our slow progress.

The scourge which we seek to abolish and which threatens to become universal can be effectively combated only by a common, loyal and united effort—by solidarity. I venture to say that on the part of all sacrifice is also essential. No material interest, no secondary political consideration, no question of race, must be allowed to stand in the way. For some time now this problem has ceased to be a merely humanitarian or regional one; it has become a universal problem, the solution of which is vital for the progress and well-being of the world.

The two opium Conferences have again demonstrated the difficulty and complexity of this problem. They have also shown that the psychological moment has arrived to attack the scourge. The traffic in opium must be abolished, or else we must accept the consequences, which will mean the eventual degeneration of the human race. Time and good-will are necessary. On the one hand, the experts often blame the idealists for their precipitancy and lack of technical experience; on the other, the idealists often tax the experts with timidity and lack of idealism.

I am inclined to believe that no positive result will be attained until these two elements, technical experiences and idealism, backed with courage, unite in fighting the danger. The peril will be vanquished by those who are bold enough to face it squarely and experienced enough to be able to fight it to the bitter end.

I am firmly convinced that the two Opium Conferences have cast much light upon the subject. They represent, as it were, the "diagnosis" stage. The stage of realisation and achievement should now follow. This is the path the Advisory Committee, whose work I have ventured to outline, is following, and the Fifth Committee congratulates it on all that it has done.

The other report now before you shows that progress has been made as regards the decrease of the production of opium in some of the producing countries. I trust that it will be approved by the Assembly, because we must do everything in our power to decrease production. But I frankly say that the only way to lessen the danger will be for all other producing countries to enter into a loyal engagement not to increase their production, and not, by seeking to win new markets, to increase the misery of the human race.

I cannot pass in silence over the serious social aspect of this question. The poor man, sunk in depths of misery, exhausted by the rough labour of the day, will only abandon opium and drugs, which procure for him an artificial paradise, when

we have assured for him a modest paradise perhaps, but still a paradise on earth:

I admit that to do this we must consent to heavy sacrifices, but that has always been the price paid for the fulfilment of noble ideas.

That we may more readily bear these sacrifices, think of the multitude of sufferers, the innumerable victims of the past, and, sadder still, the future victims who rise before us and implore our aid. Think also that the League of Nations works under the moral supervision of all nations, and that the public opinion of the world, which follows our work, must not be deceived, for the measure of such deception would only be comparable to the hopes which these wretched outcasts and victims have placed in our work.

Accordingly, I have the honour to submit the following resolutions:

I. *The Assembly adopts the report of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and other Dangerous Drugs, together with the resolutions embodied therein.*

II. *The Assembly urges on all States which have not already done so to ratify or to adhere to the agreements and resolutions adopted by the First and Second Conferences.*

and then as a conclusion to the second report, the following resolutions:

I. *The Assembly,*

*Having considered the resolution contained in the Final Act of the Second International Opium Conference with regard to the appointment of a Commission of Enquiry in certain opium-producing countries:*

*Recommends that such a Commission should be sent to Persia to study:*

(a) *The existing situation with regard to the cultivation of the poppy;*

(b) *The replacement of a proportion of this cultivation by other crops.*

II. *The Commission shall consist of not more than three persons to be appointed by the Council: a person having the necessary qualifications to act as Chairman, an expert on the agricultural side of the problem to be nominated after consultation with the International Institute of Agriculture, and a person having experience of business conditions and markets in the East and knowledge of transport problems.*

III. *The Assembly is of opinion that such an enquiry would require for its work the sum of 100,000 gold francs and decides that this sum be voted for the purpose.*

**The President:** M. da Costa, first delegate for Portugal, will address the Assembly.

**M. da Costa (Portugal):**

*Translation:* Mr. President and colleagues — We are asked to adopt two reports, the first of which concerns the enquiry in certain opium-producing countries, particularly Persia.

With regard to this proposal, the delegate for Portugal, my colleague, M. de Vasconcellos, was one of those who in the Fourth Committee opposed the estimate of 150,000 francs; but we agree with M. Fernandez y Medina's proposal to reduce this estimate to 100,000 francs. We therefore withdraw our opposition to the second report.

With regard to the first report, I have to state, on behalf of my Government:

1. That Portugal, as a signatory of the Hague Convention of 1912, participated in the Opium

Conferences of 1924 and 1925 convened at Geneva under the auspices of the League;

2. That the Portuguese Government signed the agreements and resolutions adopted by these two Conferences subject to the reservations necessitated by practical considerations, and the obligations consequent upon earlier agreements concluded under the provisions of the Hague Convention;

3. That the Portuguese Government has already submitted the agreements and resolutions of the two last Conferences to Parliament for ratification;

4. That Portugal approves the second resolution submitted to this Assembly by the Fifth Committee, more especially because it was the Portuguese delegate who first proposed it to this Committee;

5. That this vote appears to us at present to be the sole legitimate and really useful vote for the humanitarian aims we are pursuing, for this Assembly must show full confidence in the results of the two Conferences, in which States which are not Members of the League took part;

6. That the Portuguese delegation refuses to vote for the first resolution submitted to us, but has nevertheless decided to support all proposals to give the Council of the League the widest powers to carry out to the full, by every possible means, all the resolutions adopted by the two Conferences.

**The President:** If no other member desires to speak, I will declare the resolutions before you as approved.

*The resolutions were adopted.*

#### 76. — ARMENIAN REFUGEES : LOAN FOR THEIR SETTLEMENT IN ARMENIA : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

**The President:** The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the Fifth Committee's report on the question of a loan for the settlement in Armenia of Armenian refugees (Annex Document A. 126, 1925, II). I invite M. de Brouckère, delegate of Belgium and Rapporteur, to take his place on the platform.

*(M. de Brouckère took his place on the platform.)*

**The President:** The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

**M. de Brouckère (Belgium), Rapporteur :**

*Translation:* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Fifth Committee has entrusted me with the task of submitting to you a report on the question of the settlement of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus. If we merely had to consider the business side of the question, our task would be a simple one but, seen from a different angle, it presents many difficulties, and I feel that my responsibility at the moment is almost too heavy.

The business side of the problem can be resolved into the appointment of a committee of enquiry and investigation and to the renewal of a credit of 50,000 francs which was granted last year. But behind all this there is a work of humanity, a work which affects many wide human interests, a work which, in one of its aspects at least, concerns the honour of the League, and which, if



properly conducted and developed, can create immense forces for peace in a region particularly exposed to war.

The details of this question, as with most other questions, are very complicated. The Fifth Committee and its Sub-Committee have found it far from easy to study them all with the requisite care and conscientiousness. But, if I confine myself to saying only what is necessary to enable you to understand the proposal which is to be submitted to you, the whole problem can be put in a nutshell.

And what is the problem ?

The Fifth Committee proposed to you last year — and the Assembly accepted the proposal — that an enquiry should be held regarding the possibility of settling Armenian refugees in the Caucasus.

The first scheme was not prepared with sufficient care and seemed hardly realisable. You decided that the International Labour Office, in agreement with Dr. Nansen, should conduct an enquiry, and you placed a credit of 50,000 francs at their disposal.

Dr. Nansen went to the Caucasus, accompanied by experts. He has drawn up a report which has been communicated to you, and from it we can deduce the following information, which is definite and extremely clear.

First of all, there is a large stretch of irrigated land in the Caucasus which is admittedly very fertile. Secondly, cotton has been widely and very successfully cultivated there during the past few years.

Further, in recent years new irrigation works have also been successfully undertaken and a considerable area of very good land has thereby been placed at the disposal of the numerous refugees who have already returned.

Lastly, a scheme has been prepared, and worked out in its main details, which does not appear to offer greater technical difficulties than other schemes which have proved successful. This scheme, if carried into practice, would allow the settlement of about 25,000 refugees on 33,000 to 34,000 hectares of new land. Of this number, 10,000 are to be selected from amongst the hundreds of thousands of refugees who have returned to the Caucasus in the last few years and who have been settled under unsatisfactory conditions. Of the remaining 15,000, 10,000 are living in precarious circumstances in Greece and 5,000 in an even worse situation in Constantinople.

From what I have said, you will see that the execution of these irrigation schemes will result in saving 25,000 human lives.

I do not mean that the 25,000 who can be settled in the Caucasus would all be doomed if we are unable to carry out Dr. Nansen's schemes; but I do mean that death is daily taking heavy toll of the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of hapless Armenian refugees scattered throughout the world; that whatever we do, death will inevitably sweep many of them away; but that, if we succeed in partially relieving the congestion in districts where Armenians are now concentrated, by settling 25,000 of them in conditions safeguarding their welfare and ensuring them a livelihood, we should then have saved 25,000 human lives.

It is often said that reports such as the one I am submitting to you now only represent one of the League's minor activities. Perhaps 25,000 human lives in these days are not of much value, taken at their market price. To save 25,000 human lives is an operation of minor importance. An operation of the opposite kind would hardly suffice to bring fame to a divisional general. But these 25,000

human lives, added to hundreds and hundreds of thousands of others, to hundreds and hundreds of thousands of prisoners in Russia, refugees in Constantinople and many others still, total up to a high figure, and the day will come when this small side of the League's activities will have saved as much blood as was shed during the Great War.

The Assembly will forgive me if I detain it a few moments longer.

The question, as I have explained, is very simple and would not appear to offer much difficulty; but yet — and this is why I refer the matter to you — there is one difficulty, a difficulty which you have already foreseen. To carry out this work, money is necessary. The experts tell us that the undertaking will cost about £900,000 sterling. To save these human lives money must be found.

How? A subscription has been mentioned, but the sum is too large to be obtained from charitable sources. A loan must be raised, and it will not be made easier by the fact that the lenders will have to be told that it is intended to save lives and to accomplish a humanitarian work.

Financiers, business men, may be warm-hearted, but money certainly is not. Money only runs downhill, and so can hardly rise to the heights of human solidarity.

In order to find this money, guarantees will have to be provided. What guarantees can we hope to secure? First of all, there are the revenues from the land cultivated by the refugees. According to the information given to the Fifth Committee, this revenue should be considerable. There is also the guarantee which the Government of the Armenian Republic could afford and this guarantee could be covered in various ways. Either a guarantee given to the lenders, the Armenian Government borrowing in its own name, or guaranteed interest payable, perhaps to an agricultural loan company which would issue the loan. The Russian State Bank might provide this guarantee or perhaps the guarantee — and this is a point which should particularly appeal to many financiers — could be given by an agricultural loan company dealing on a co-operative basis with the farmers settled on the land.

There may be other guarantees which could be afforded by a number of public or private authorities. But here I will stop. It should be clearly understood — and the Rapporteur must say this so as to prevent any misinterpretation of a Government's intentions — it should be clearly understood that there is nothing in our report which can pledge any Government in advance.

Since the financial difficulties appear to be serious but not insuperable, what exactly is the proposal of the Fifth Committee? It requests — and you will realise how extremely important this is — it requests the Council to appoint commissioners, a limited number of commissioners, not a large number of persons more or less interested in the scheme, but four or five commissioners who would be authorised, as soon as they are certain that the work can be carried out, to begin negotiations and conduct the necessary enquiries. Finally, when their preparatory work is finished, they will be authorised to submit a scheme to the Council, but will not proceed with it until authorised to do so by the Council itself.

There is nothing in all this which involves the Assembly or its Members in any undue responsibility.

Before concluding, I would venture to mention one or two more objections which have been raised, and to point out at the same time some of the difficulties which arise.

Of the objections which have to be met I will merely mention two. First of all, it has been said the task will be a very difficult one, so difficult that it would be better not to undertake it.

If it is the technical difficulties which are meant, I think I may state, after carefully studying the problem both this year and last year, that the difficulties in question are not insuperable.

There are, of course, technical difficulties. Indeed, I have already referred to them. There is the financial difficulty, which might even be held to render the scheme "impracticable", if—as some people do—we take the word "impracticable" to mean everything that has never yet been done.

But I venture to point out that now, in this Assembly of the League, we are actually carrying out work which, according to the above definition, was so utterly impracticable that until now these people have hardly dared to dream of it. This proves that, with steadfastness and perseverance, we can overstep such a narrow definition of the possible.

This has been the spirit actuating every Assembly. It is admirably crystallised in a phrase which we first rediscovered here and which has since made remarkable headway. I refer of course to Danton's famous phrase in which he mapped out the path of the French Revolution; and, as if to prove that, among the various races gathered together here, those fundamental differences of temperament to which so many allusions have been made do not really exist, these words were first quoted in this Assembly by an Englishman. Since then they have often been repeated and have indeed become a sort of watchword among the delegates. I have often heard them quoted at previous sessions, but, curiously enough, they have not once been spoken this year. I want, therefore, to repeat them now in order to show that we are maintaining our traditional optimism, an optimism founded not on a blind faith that all will be well but on a firm determination to make sure that all shall be well. Indeed, whenever the difficulties of this scheme are mentioned to me, I shall always repeat these same words of Danton: "De l'audace, encore de l'audace et toujours de l'audace".

This year, as far as the problem in question is concerned, boldness will be all the easier, because we need only, so to speak, be vicariously bold. It is the Commissioners who will have to face the difficulties; for the present, we assume no responsibility for them.

There is one thing more which I venture to add. We have been told not only that the problem is a very difficult one but that it is not really our business at all. It is not for the League, we are told, to cure all the ills from which the world is suffering. The League must not exceed its proper duties.

I consider, however, that this matter is our business for two reasons:

First, because the Covenant has entrusted us with the mission of establishing co-operation between all nations and also of aiding the most unfortunate;

Secondly, because the Armenian people is in a special position with regard to the League.

We must not forget all the promises which were made to these people, all the resolutions voted here, all the decisions of the Council. It is a melancholy business to review them all, and I do not propose to do so. I merely venture to read from one of them two lines, which summarise all the rest.

The second Assembly passed a formal resolution recalling the fact that "the first Assembly, on November 18th, 1920, entrusted the Council with the duty of safeguarding the future of Armenia".

This constitutes an engagement which we must never forget.

In analysing this proposal as Rapporteur, I said: "There is nothing in our report which can pledge any Government in advance". But before I leave this platform, may I remind you of a provision in the constitution of our League, a provision which lays down that, though each nation here has only one vote, it has three delegates, all of whom may speak. The intention was that, in addition to official statements, each delegate should be able, to a certain extent, to state his individual view by speaking in a personal capacity.

If no Government is pledged, I shall be careful not to pledge mine, but it seems to me that, after so many resolutions and votes, the personal responsibility of those who have taken part in these discussions is definitely engaged. If at any time our countries are asked to assume financial responsibility, I do not hesitate to say that if the matter is presented on favourable conditions I shall do all in my power to induce my Government to accept it; and I shall use the argument that where the delegates have voted on behalf of their Governments in this matter, not only are those delegates morally bound by voting these resolutions but their Governments also.

If by means of financial help, guarantees or support of any kind—the form of such support to be determined by each Government at its discretion—it were at last possible to foresee, if not the certainty at least the possibility, of fulfilling part of the promises made; of restoring to Armenia, if not her political independence, at least several thousand of her subjects, furnished with the means to resume their national life, and if under these circumstances the attitude of the League were indifferent or hostile, it would indeed be a black day for the League.

In one of the pointed and witty speeches which Her Grace the Duchess of Atholl made during the meetings of our Committee, she told us that in her country, among the many associations for public welfare, there was one which had set itself the task of preventing people from throwing paper about the streets. Well, ladies and gentlemen, it has always seemed to me that the League of Nations is in a way an association of this kind, and that the highest ideal it has set itself is henceforth to prevent scraps of diplomatic paper littering the face of the earth.

**The President.** — Dr. Nansen, delegate for Norway, will address the Assembly.

**Dr. Nansen (Norway):** Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The wonderfully eloquent speech which we have just heard reminds me of the definition of the difference between the difficult and the impossible. The difficult is that which can be done at once: the impossible is that which takes a little longer.

At the beginning of this Assembly most people thought that the proposals which were made on behalf of the Armenian refugees were quite impossible of realisation. The number of people who think so now is much less. We know that we still have great difficulties to overcome, but much progress has been made. During the past few weeks, the discussions in the Committee have been prolonged and exhaustive. The consultation with experts — experts on agriculture, irrigation and finance — were not merely formal but really went deeply into important aspects of the question. I believe that, as a result, the whole Committee is satisfied that the scheme is capable of realisation and of conferring great benefits. The machinery proposed by the Committee is not only acceptable, but I believe it is to be strongly recommended.

We hope that the Assembly and the Council will carry into effect in the best possible way the machinery for carrying on these negotiations which are still necessary, for meeting the difficulties of the Governments, and for facilitating working arrangements and the raising of funds.

Under the plan proposed no one will be asked to back Soviet bonds, and I very warmly welcome that part of the resolution. I fully realise that Governments are not able at this moment to pledge their guarantees. We trust that their point of view will change in the future as it has done in the past as regards similar matters. I may remind you of the prisoners of war, the Russian refugees in Constantinople, typhus in Poland, and many other similar questions.

We believe that the Governments will adopt our point of view as soon as they understand the real facts of the case. We know that the principle is sound, because the British Government acted in the same way three years ago when it was faced with the problem of 7,000 Armenian refugees in Mesopotamia. It sent these refugees to Armenia, because it thought that Armenia was the only place to which to send them — to the Armenian Republic, under the same government which now exists there. This scheme was a perfect success.

No solution of the present problem can be found in Syria or elsewhere. The Republic of Erivan is the only region in which we shall be able to build up a national home for the Armenian people. This will be a real Armenian home; all Armenian parties, of whatever political colour they may be, are agreed upon that point, and they have renewed their assurances of support before the Fifth Committee. They believe that a country as large as Belgium, but only inhabited by 1,200,000 people, is capable of absorbing all the Armenian refugees now in Europe.

The discussions in the Fifth Committee have also shown that there are great difficulties to be faced in securing the necessary funds, because of the conditions in Armenia; it is clear that those funds can only be secured after long and difficult negotiations. If, however, as a result of those negotiations, the Western Powers should agree to give their guarantee, the fund can certainly be raised, and easily raised. This is a test case. The Assembly, and later the Governments, can thereby show whether their promises mean something or not.

I will not quote the resolutions of the Assembly of previous years nor the words of Allied statesmen; but they are in this book, which contains declarations by all Allied statesmen, giving an account of what the Armenian people suffered during the War for the Allied cause because of their allegiance to the Great Powers which they looked upon and believed to be their protectors. I could quote Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Balfour, Lord Cecil, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Wilson, M. Pichon, M. Orlando, M. Luzatti and many others.

In discussing the question of disarmament people often say that the real difficulty is to be found in the Near East. Perhaps they are right; but here I think is the way to remove some part at least of that difficulty. In his memorable speech, Mr. Chamberlain uttered the other day the following remarkable words: "But there is another disarmament which is not less important, which indeed is more urgent, for it is a necessary preliminary to the physical disarmament of nations. It is the moral disarmament of the world. It is, as the President said to us in his opening speech, the need of creating a new international soul and a new international morality. Unless we find some method to allay the distrust, to remove

the suspicions, we shall never succeed in achieving the great programme which we have set before us".

I think this is certainly right. It is also certain that it is not enough to say so: we must also act. We cannot wait for this new international soul to develop of itself. We must do things in order to create it. This is one of the first steps towards securing moral disarmament between the peoples, towards creating that new international soul and that new international morality, because it wipes out ancient wrongs, because it brings reconciliation instead of distrust and proves to the world that promises are not made in vain. I feel firmly convinced that this scheme will be carried through and that it will be a great success. This work has to be done and the League must give its best assistance.

The President: I now invite Mrs. MacKinnon, delegate for Australia, to address the Assembly.

Mrs. MacKinnon (Australia): Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I should not have thought of addressing the Assembly to-day, even in support of a cause which I have so much at heart as that of the Armenians, had not Dr. Nansen asked me to do so. I will not detain you long.

First of all, I should like to congratulate Miss Jeppe on having obtained again the consideration and sympathy of the members of this great Assembly. We in Australia have known of her splendid work for many years.

I want to say that in my country we have no such splendid record of service in favour of those poor refugees as has Great Britain, from which country, during the past few years, the enormous sum of £1,000,000 has been provided by various societies, such as the "Save the Children" Fund, the Lord Mayor's Fund and others. Our work does not compare favourably. We send our few thousands, most of which is devoted to the upkeep of the Australian Orphanage at Antilyas. The women in this audience may like to know that our experience of the children in that orphanage has been perfectly wonderful. They are industrious, grateful and affectionate and show every possible attribute of good citizenship.

Let me tell you one thing which will appeal to every woman here. For months after they are taken in, the little children put under their pillows at night — and it takes months to break them of the habit — a little of their evening meal, because they have lived in such a state of fear that they have never known from whence their next meal would come.

It has undoubtedly been more difficult to raise money in Australia for such causes since we have lived, during the whole period of our young life as a nation, under the protection of a great and gracious Motherland, and since we have the feelings of a people who come from a country where for nearly a thousand years we have been free. During that period of a thousand years, or for at least two-thirds of that time, the Armenians have lived in such a state of misery, persecution, suffering and have been subjected to such atrocities as might well freeze our blood even to hear of them.

I do not wish to harrow your feelings, but I would ask you whether we are not indebted to this people. Those of us who are Christians, and indeed, the whole world, cannot but admire a people whose greatest offence has been that it has clung to the faith of its fathers. I would add that in Central Europe it should never be forgotten that when John Ziska and the champions of Christendom held the gates of Vienna against

the oncoming Moslems there were with them many thousands of Armenians who fought to the death and who are recorded in history as having been excellent and valiant soldiers of the faith.

I do not wish to go in detail into the scheme which has been presented to you. Everybody who has worked for the Armenians knows the heartbreaks we have experienced. No sooner have we established them in one place than the Turks have swept over that place and the Armenians have been scattered once more. It has seemed as if it was not possible to find a watertight scheme by which to deal with this intricate and difficult problem. There are, however, two or three points in the scheme which has been put before us by Dr. Nansen and his experts which seem to me to be all to the good. First of all, I would mention the character of the Armenian himself. He has been so misrepresented in the past. We have judged him so much by the petty hucksters. What nation would like to be judged by the petty hucksters who are, as it were, the flotsam of the population? First and foremost, the Armenian is a peasant, with the defects of a peasant perhaps, but also with his splendid qualities. The Armenian is intensely thrifty, he is industrious and he can live on what we might think was very little indeed. These facts have been reiterated by Dr. Nansen.

The other good point of the scheme is that it is formulated and inspired by a man of Dr. Nansen's calibre whose temperament is such that he does not slur over the difficulties but surveys the whole scheme, difficulties and all; he overcomes those difficulties and achieves what other people would say was the impossible. He meets the difficulties as they arise, he bends them to his will, and behold, Muscovite, Armenian and Turk will, I believe, really do as he wishes! Dr. Nansen will, before he leaves us, perhaps, experience the great joy and satisfaction of seeing not merely fifteen or twenty thousand Armenians settled in Erivan but a large number of them, with, at last, a national home assured by the League of Nations, free from the Turks, and in which they can live in comfort and security.

**The President:** M. Montigny, delegate for France, will address the Assembly.

**M. Montigny (France):**

*Translation:* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The French delegation has requested me to inform you that it will be very happy to vote for the draft resolution now before us. As the hour is very late, I will not make a speech, but I feel it my duty to express to Her Grace the Duchess of Atholl our gratitude for the very able manner in which she presided over the work of the Sub-Committee.

It is due to her firm yet enlightened leadership that this difficult question has been solved.

After our experience of the eminent services rendered, to the Fifth Committee, by the Duchess of Atholl, I should like to say, if the head of my delegation will allow me, that I think those delegations which do not as yet include women delegates are depriving themselves of a vast wealth of understanding and sympathy.

**The President:**

Viscount Cecil, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

**Viscount Cecil (British Empire):** Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In the first place, I am charged by the Duchess of Atholl to express on her behalf and on behalf of the British delegation our warm thanks to M. Montigny for the generous

and, my delegation thinks, well-justified, compliment which he has paid to the Duchess.

I desire to say only one word on behalf of the British Government in connection with the question before us. We approve and support the report which has been presented by the Fifth Committee. I myself am very pleased to observe with what care and restraint the report has been drafted. It seems to me to be a model of what such a document should be.

As regards its substance, it is not the first time that from this tribune I have recognised the overwhelming appeal of the Armenian nation. No one who has considered its history for the last ten years can doubt that the Armenians have a very urgent claim on the support and generosity of the civilised world. This claim has always been recognised by the British Government.

Although I can make no pledges, no promises on behalf of my Government, I can say with great sincerity and truth that I am certain that the British Government will give its most careful and sympathetic consideration to the proposals made here and it will earnestly hope that those proposals will be carried to a successful issue.

**The President:**

Does anybody else wish to speak?

I put to the vote the resolutions submitted by the Fifth Committee, which read as follows:

*The Assembly,*

*In view of the resolution adopted by the fifth Assembly at its meeting on September 25th, 1924, inviting "the International Labour Office, in collaboration with Dr. Nansen, to institute an enquiry with a view to studying the possibility of settling a substantial number of Armenian refugees in the Caucasus and elsewhere";*

*In view of the reports by Dr. Fridtjof Nansen and by the experts who were sent with him to Armenia;*

*In view of the fact that these reports are unanimous as to the possibility of carrying out irrigation works which would allow of the settlement in Armenia under good conditions of at least 15,000 Armenian refugees, now in Greece and Constantinople, as also of 10,000 refugees already repatriated, on condition that the sum of about 9,000,000 gold roubles (900,000 pounds sterling) is forthcoming for the execution of the necessary work;*

*Desirous of availing itself of every practical opportunity of giving effect to the resolution, so often renewed by former Assemblies, regarding the return of Armenian refugees to a national home:*

*Invites the Council to appoint at once not more than five Commissioners whom it would empower:*

(a) *To ascertain finally the technical possibility of the proposed undertaking;*

(b) *To exchange views, as may be necessary, with the organs of the League of Nations, the Government of the Armenian Republic, and the other Governments, the associations and private individuals whose help would appear useful for the realisation of the scheme;*

(c) *If their findings are favourable, to propose to the Council the constitution of a Body of Trustees to whom its statutes would give especially the following powers:*

(1) *To conclude with all authorities public and private all necessary contracts for the execution of the plan for settling the refugees; to accept, if necessary, from the Armenian Government a concession of the areas to be irrigated.*

- (2) To negotiate, if necessary, the issue of a loan; and, in that case, to act as trustees of the funds, and to assure the financial service.

The Assembly invites the Council to place at the disposal of the Commissioners the sum required in 1925 for the execution of the above resolution, this sum to be entered in the Budget under Unforeseen expenditure.

It decides to enter an item of 50,000 francs in the 1926 Budget for the same purpose.

The resolution was adopted.

## 77. — MEASURES TO HELP REFUGEES : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President: The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the report of the Fifth Committee on measures to help refugees (Annex Document A. 128. 1925).

I invite the Rapporteur, M. Bandeira de Mello, delegate for Brazil, to take his place on the platform.

(M. Bandeira de Mello took his place on the platform.)

The President :

The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Bandeira de Mello (Brazil), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I have the honour to lay before you the results of the Fifth Committee's work on the measures for the relief of refugees. I must remind you that, in conformity with the decision of the fifth Assembly, the protection of refugees, which has so far been carried out by the High Commissioner, has now been transferred to the International Labour Office, with, however, the cordial collaboration of Dr. Nansen.

The Fifth Committee examined the reports with great interest and duly appreciated the admirable work done by the International Labour Office on behalf of these unfortunate people.

The Refugee Service of the International Labour Office began its programme by establishing in various countries advisory committees and selection committees, which classified the refugees according to their occupations, so as to be able to transmit to them any offers of employment.

The difficulty of settling these workers in Europe has been greatly increased by the unemployment crisis. The possibilities of emigration overseas have been considered; but serious difficulties arose in connection with the identity certificates, as several South-American countries have not yet accepted the Nansen passport.

Moreover, some South American countries, whilst agreeing to take immigrants, have imposed severe restrictions, particularly in regard to the question of morality and the occupational qualifications of the workers.

As many of these emigrants are indigent and have no means of paying for their transport and settlement, it was suggested that a working capital fund should be created to cover these requirements.

The International Labour Office has succeeded in surmounting all these difficulties and has settled about 18,000 refugees in thirty different countries. Thanks to the aid thus afforded them, these refugees have thus been able to reconstitute their homes and resume a normal way of life.

This magnificent work achieved by international co-operation and solidarity redounds to the honour of the League.

In view of all these difficulties, the Fifth Committee suggests that the countries directly concerned might hold an inter-governmental Conference.

The report submitted to you gives detailed information regarding the suggestions made by the different delegations and embodied in the Fifth Committee's resolution which is before you.

The President. — The Duchess of Atholl, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

The Duchess of Atholl (British Empire). — Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—I do not wish to detain the Assembly, but as Chairman of the Sub-Committee of the Fifth Committee, which discussed the scheme before you, I should like to say that that scheme was very carefully examined by the Sub-Committee and that, though a reservation was made by one member of the Sub-Committee, all the others were, I think, convinced that, if advantage was to be taken of the openings which are believed to exist in South America for these refugees whom we are so anxious to help, it would be necessary for the League to appoint agents in South America. It is for this reason that the Assembly is asked to vote a credit of 100,000 Swiss francs more than was asked for last year.

We are encouraged to hope that the appointment of these additional agencies will lead to the placing of a considerable number of refugees, because the International Labour Office in the course of nine months' work only has succeeded in placing 18,000 of these refugees in employment in various countries in Europe with the aid of its agents in those countries. We feel, therefore, that the appointment of these two additional agencies in South America is necessary if we are to hope for real practical results from the survey which the Assembly authorised last year.

It was suggested, in the course of the discussions, that the unemployed from some countries in Europe where unemployment is severe might possibly be assisted as well as the refugees to some of these openings for employment in South America. I was extremely sorry, however, to have to point out on behalf of my delegation that, much as we sympathise with the lot of the unemployed—we have only too good a reason to do so, because we have such a large number in our own country—yet we felt that to extend this service for the refugees to unemployed generally would be to make a very large extension of the service, and would, in reality, be asking the League to intervene in a question which is a responsibility for individual Governments.

Apart from the question of these agencies which we desire to see established in South America, there is the question of a fund to help the refugees to get to South America. This is a very urgent question, because, up to the present, Dr. Nansen has been administering for this purpose a small revolving fund, which, I am very glad to know, is the remains of a fund provided by the British Government for the repatriation of Armenian refugees. There is now nothing with which to help the refugees to get to South America and to take advantage of the openings which actually exist there at the present moment.

It is therefore urgently necessary to obtain some money whereby the refugees can be transported to South America. It was proposed in the Sub-Committee that the Assembly should be asked to advance from its Working Capital Fund a sum of £100,000 for this purpose, and this proposal was accepted by the Sub-Committee. It was not approved, however, by the Supervisory Commission, and therefore this money will have to be found in some other way.

Two other methods have been suggested: (1) That the Governments of those countries in which the refugees are at present established should advance the money to enable the refugees to go to South America; and (2) that a special tax should be put on the identity certificates issued to refugees. This latter proposal has, I understand, been approved by several refugee organisations.

The Fifth Committee is therefore very anxious that the Council should consider the possibility of summoning at the earliest possible date a Conference of the Governments specially interested in this question, to see whether this working capital fund could be set up by means either of contributions from the Governments which are anxious to see the refugees settled or by a tax on identity certificates, or by both these means.

I know that the Governments of many of those countries in which there are large numbers of refugees have contributed very generously to their support. We fully recognise that this is a pressing problem in some countries, and notably in Greece. I should like, however, to suggest to these countries that if they can find it possible to help this fund by making advances to the refugees they will be doing a very great service to these unfortunate people and, I hope, ultimate good to their own countries, because they will relieve themselves of a continuing obligation which hitherto they have had to meet.

I therefore earnestly hope that the Assembly will support the proposals made to it in the name of the Fifth Committee, because we hope that by the help of these agencies it will be found possible next year to reap some practical benefit from the survey undertaken last year in South America, and so assist some more of these unhappy people to establish themselves and their families in security, and we trust in prosperity.

**The President.** — M. Suvich, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

**M. Suvich (Italy):**

*Translation:* Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In the Fourth and Fifth Committees the Italian delegation did not vote for the additional credit of 100,000 Swiss francs over the sum voted last year.

Nevertheless, the Italian delegation is anxious to act in accordance with the League's traditional spirit of conciliation, which should as far as possible be safeguarded, and accordingly withdraws its opposition on the understanding, given to the Fourth Committee by the representative of the International Labour Office, that the new scheme for settling refugees will, before being put into execution, be approved by the Governing Body of the Labour Office.

The Italian delegation desires to join in the expression of thanks to all who have contributed towards the success of this work, and to the Governments which, at considerable sacrifice, have up to now maintained these refugees in their own territory and provided them with the necessities of life.

**The President.** — Does any other delegate desire to address the Assembly?

If no one else desires to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions proposed by the Fifth Committee, which read as follows:

*The Assembly,*

1. *Having read with great interest the report of the Refugee Service of the International Labour Office on the work accomplished for the refugees during the first seven months of 1925, indicating the possibility of developing on an extensive scale the placing of refugee workers in employment in various parts of the world:*

*Wishes to record its deep gratitude to the Governments which have afforded their valuable co-operation in this connection by means of financial contributions, the collaboration of their technical services or by visa and transport facilities;*

*Expresses its great appreciation of the work accomplished by the Refugee Service of the International Labour Office in co-operation with Dr. Nansen, and notes the urgent necessity of finding employment for Armenian refugees living in Greece.*

2. *Taking note of the proposals in the report for the continuation and extension of the Refugee Service and, in particular, of the statement that an additional sum of 100,000 Swiss francs is required for the establishment of two additional agencies of that Service in South America, while recognising that it is an entirely temporary service, decides to include in the budget of the International Labour Office for 1926 the sum of 303,000 Swiss francs for the Refugee Service.*

3. *In view of the fact that the Governing Body of the International Labour Office has not yet had an opportunity of examining these proposals, recommends that the report should be submitted as soon as possible to the Governing Body for its consideration, and authorises the Council to enter into negotiations with the Governing Body, if necessary, for determining the measures by which effect can best be given to the report.*

4. *The Assembly urges the Council to arrange for the convocation of an Inter-Governmental Conference as soon as possible for the purpose of examining the suggestions put forward in the report for the creation and administration of a revolving fund of not less than £100,000 sterling to assist the migration of Russian and Armenian refugees, and of effecting an improvement in the present systems of refugee identity certificates.*

*The resolutions were adopted.*

#### 78. — PROTOCOL OF AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

**The President.** — I take the liberty of reminding the members of the Assembly that the Protocol of an Amendment to Article 16 of the Covenant, adopted by the Assembly on September 21st, 1925, is open for signature in Room 68 at the Secretariat.

*The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.*

# VERBATIM RECORD

## OF THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

### NINETEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th, 1925, AT 2.45 P.M.

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President : MR. DANDURAND.

#### 79. — QUESTION OF SLAVERY : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

**The President :** The first item on our agenda is the consideration of the report of the Sixth Committee regarding slavery. (Annex, Document A. 130. 1925. VI).

I invite the Rapporteur, Lord Cecil, first delegate of the British Empire, and M. Guerrero (Salvador), Chairman of the Committee, to take their places on the platform.

*(M. Guerrero, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)*

**The President :** Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

**Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) :** Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have to present to you the report of the Sixth Committee on the question of slavery. I am not going to read the report, but I may perhaps point out to you a very slight but rather important emendation

that has been made in the text. The fourth paragraph of the report on page 3 reads : "In principle, the Committee was most decidedly opposed to the use of forced labour for other than public purposes, but at the same time it recognised that, owing to special conditions in certain colonies, it might be" — the rest of the words in the sentence should be left out and replaced by the following words, "impossible to abolish it forthwith". Apart from this, the report stands as it is printed.

The present international position with regard to slavery is that, except for one single paragraph in the Convention of St. Germain of 1919, there is at present no general international provision on the subject. It is true that the Brussels Act is probably still in force in certain cases, but the extent to which it is in force is doubtful, and it certainly does not extend to all or nearly all the nations of the world. In these conditions the report, the very admirable report of the Temporary Slavery Commission appointed by the Council in pursuance of a resolution of this Assembly, is exceedingly well founded.

The Assembly owes a great debt of gratitude to that Commission, and, if I may say so, not least to its distinguished Chairman, M. Gohr. I hope and believe that all those who take an interest in this question will study the report and will learn a great deal both as regards the present position of affairs and as to the possible remedies which may be adopted, partly international and partly by the nations concerned.

When this report came up for consideration it was possible to deal with it here in one of two ways. We might have drafted one of those vague and general resolutions which are sometimes passed, expressing admiration for and sympathy with the report, which would not, in my view, have been of very great service.

Instead of that, at the suggestion of the British Government, a different course has been followed. The Sixth Committee has drawn up a Convention, which it hopes will ultimately be signed by all the nations, and which contains definite and specific

proposals. They are necessarily rather general in character because they deal with a general situation; but they are proposals such as the Governments concerned may examine and then decide whether they are prepared to adopt them or not. The Governments will have to decide whether they are going to bear their part in promoting the reform of this great evil, for, though at one time the British Government had proposed to ask the nations represented at this Assembly to sign that Convention forthwith, it now suggests, or rather the Sixth Committee suggests, that the proposal should be generally approved in the terms of the resolution, which I will read before I conclude, and should be then sent to the Governments, who will consider it, and, we hope, be prepared to state definitely at the next Assembly what their position is with regard to it and give instructions and full power to their representatives to sign the Convention with or without alteration.

It is possible, of course, that during the twelve months which they have for reflection the Governments, or some of them, will see objections to some of the provisions. It is possible they may desire to cut them down. It is also possible, and I trust more probable, that they will be prepared not only to accept the proposals now made, but to go even further. In this connection, I should like to draw attention to three proposals which Dr. Nansen submitted to the Committee, but, unfortunately, mainly owing to the very late date at which they were submitted, it was impossible for the Committee to take any decision upon them. Those three proposals are: (1) that any question as to the interpretation or application of the Convention shall be submitted to the Permanent Court of International Justice; (2) that a report, in some form or another, shall be made annually of the progress that the nations have been able to make in carrying out the Convention; and (3), with respect to the conditions of forced labour, that that matter should be remitted to the International Labour Office.

Those are proposals which will, no doubt, be considered by the Governments concerned; and either at the next Assembly or earlier they will be able to state their attitude towards them.

Now as regards the contents of the Convention itself, it deals with three aspects of this evil. In the first place, there is the slave trade. This evil has of course been condemned for very many years, and it was naturally thought right to insert in the Convention a provision for its complete and immediate abolition so far as it still exists by land or sea. With the object of intercepting this trade, we invite all the Powers directly interested in its suppression, those, for instance, having warships in certain seas, to consult together and to consider the best method of making their action effective.

I pass now to slavery, which includes not only slavery properly so-called, but all analogous conditions such as what is sometimes called domestic slavery or serfdom, debt-slavery and other similar conditions which approach very close to and are, in fact, a form of slavery, but are not usually included in the simple term of slavery. With respect to all those, we ask for their abolition, we ask all the nations to agree to their abolition, which will be carried out, as all reform must necessarily be carried out, as progressively as may be possible, and as soon as possible.

Thirdly, we deal — and for the first time in international agreements — with the question of forced labour. Forced labour, in some form or another, is admitted, I suppose, in every State for public services, on the demand of the Government of that State. I do not think that there is any nation, civilised or uncivilised, which does not

possess powers enabling the Government, for certain purposes and under certain restrictions, to require forced or compulsory labour on the part of its citizens. In uncivilised or semi-civilised countries that demand must necessarily be and obviously is much more frequently made than in civilised countries. In civilised countries, of course, a number of social services are organised, which do not exist in an uncivilised country, and those social services have to be carried out, if necessary, by compulsory labour on the part of the citizens. It is therefore inevitable that, for public purposes, forced or compulsory labour must be admitted, and the Convention therefore recognises this and says that, in principle, this is the only kind of forced labour that ought to be admitted.

So as regards forced labour for private profit or for purposes other than the public services properly so-called, such labour is treated in the Convention on exactly the same lines as slavery, namely, it is provided that this form of labour should be discontinued as soon as possible. The Sixth Committee, however, did not think that this was quite enough, for, undoubtedly, very great evils are connected with forced or compulsory labour, in particular when such labour takes the form of recruiting a number of persons who are but little civilised, carrying them away from their families and homes to a distant place, herding them together there and compelling them to work for private profit.

This kind of forced labour, which unfortunately exists to a great extent in certain countries, is a fearful evil, and very closely resembles or may very closely resemble slavery itself. We propose that this kind of labour should be abolished forthwith. No form of forced or compulsory labour involving the removal of the labourer from his home should henceforth be allowed. We say also that even in those cases where forced labour, by reason of native or other customs, has been allowed to exist, but where there is no question of compelling the labourer to leave his home, such labour can only be permitted in the face of an emergency, some flood or natural disaster which, in order to avert a public danger, may require the assistance of everyone. In all cases, such forced or compulsory labour must always receive adequate remuneration. Certain cases may also exist where by tribal customs long continued some species of forced labour has been allowed among native races.

These are the three kinds of forced labour with which the Committee dealt. We say that the so-called recruited labour, labour which involves the transport of the labourers from their homes, must be abolished altogether; that, in other cases, forced labour must only be allowed in emergency and for temporary purposes, and that in all cases all forms of forced labour for other than public purposes must be stopped as soon as possible.

Further, two general provisions are included in the Convention to apply to all forced labour, whether for public or for private purposes: one of these provisions states that in no case must such labour be allowed to degenerate into slavery, and the other that in all cases the labour must be under the direct responsibility of the central authorities of the territories concerned.

Such are the broad lines of the Convention which the Sixth Committee submits to this Assembly. I personally have no doubt that, if this Convention is accepted by the nations and carried into effect, it will constitute one of the greatest advances towards complete human freedom that has ever been made. I believe that it will free tens or hundreds of thousands of unhappy beings from conditions which closely resemble slavery and which



now exist. It will be of untold advantage to humanity in general. I am, therefore, the more surprised to hear that in certain quarters this very great effort is being subjected to criticisms, on the ground that the effort does not go far enough, and that, as it does not go far enough, it would be better to do nothing at all.

Ladies and gentlemen, this is the most fatal of all doctrines. Let us never forget the French proverb: *Le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*. That is a profound truth. We must advance in this world step by step. We must do what we can to improve the conditions of mankind, and if we are to refrain from taking one step forward because it is not two steps forward, then, believe me, we shall make no progress whatever.

I hope I am not unduly suspicious if I suggest to you that sometimes those who desire to do nothing are precisely those who pretend that they will not take even one step forward because it does not go far enough. I have seen these tactics pursued in other similar cases, and I venture respectfully to warn the Assembly and the public against it.

I trust that you will now accept the resolution which I propose to read to you.

"The Assembly,

"Considering that the Members of the League of Nations have undertaken, in virtue of Article 23 (b) of the Covenant, to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control:

"Having examined the Report of the Temporary Slavery Commission which has been communicated to all the Members of the League of Nations; and

"Being of opinion that a Convention is the best way of giving effect to the suggestions made in this Report and of accomplishing the work undertaken by the League of Nations for the suppression of Slavery:

"Decides to recommend for approval the annexed draft Convention:

"And requests the Council to communicate this draft to all States Members of the League and to such other States as the Council may specify, with a view to the conclusion of a Convention which will be as far as possible in conformity with this draft, and to invite the above-mentioned States:

"(a) To forward to the Secretary-General not later than June 1st, 1926, any observations they may desire to make regarding the provisions of this draft:

"(b) To appoint at a later date Plenipotentiaries who will meet at the time of the opening of the seventh Assembly to re-examine, if necessary, the articles of the draft Convention and to sign immediately the text of the Convention which has been agreed upon; and

"(c) To make every effort to adopt at once all possible measures in conformity with the provisions of the draft Convention in question;

"(d) To assist one another forthwith in the abolition of the slave trade, slavery and conditions analogous thereto, by all practicable means, and in particular by the conclusion of special agreements and arrangements."

The President: M. Montigny, representative of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Montigny (France):

*Translation:* Ladies and gentlemen—On behalf of the French delegation I should like to explain very briefly our reasons for voting for the resolution submitted by Lord Cecil. I wish to congratulate Lord Cecil on having proposed to the Assembly the draft Protocol examined by the Sixth Committee. In doing so, I must at the same time pay a tribute, I will not say to his conciliatory attitude, but to his deep understanding throughout of the various interests involved.

You will have appreciated the clearness with which he has explained the present situation. I should like, in turn, to offer a few suggestions to the Assembly.

The League was right in taking up the question of slavery and kindred forms of servitude. The Temporary Slavery Commission has done most important, most interesting and I would even say most reassuring work, since the raising of this question by the League might quite possibly have caused some confusion and misunderstanding among the public. The public might have thought that you felt bound to take up this problem because slavery was still a common and widespread evil which you could not ignore. Unfortunately, abuses still exist, but the report submitted to the League by the Temporary Commission contains a number of reassuring passages which prove that slavery itself has happily become a rarity throughout the world and that the sources of slavery are, as it were, practically dried up everywhere. Indeed—and these details are of very great value—Chapter II of this report states that the chief sources, indeed the only sources, of slavery are (more particularly in Africa) raids properly so-called—tribal warfare and individual captures.

Tribal wars, we learn from the report, are now becoming rarer and rarer. Whereas they once formed the main source of the local supply of slaves in Africa and also provided slaves for exportation, this source has now been practically dried up owing to the occupation and pacification by the colonising nations of the countries under their control.

It is stated, moreover, that the abominable practice of capturing individuals has virtually ceased, since justice has been regularly established and the natives understand the facilities provided for them to obtain redress for wrongs committed against them.

This means then that two sources of slavery have practically disappeared.

As regards the third source of slavery, the raids, which occur chiefly in the Sahara Desert, the report states that these have now been made practically impossible owing to the measures of supervision and repression adopted by the neighbouring Powers, Egypt, Italy and France.

The report also states the very important fact that the number of slaves actually captured in the Sahara does not appear to exceed twenty annually.

It is therefore clear from this report that, although slavery is still to be met with in exceptional circumstances—and I agree that if there were only ten slaves on the surface of the globe the matter would still be sufficiently serious to merit the attention of the League—the evil is, at all events, very limited in extent.

One further reflection occurs to me on reading this document. These sources of slavery—tribal wars, raids and the capture of individuals—have practically disappeared, and—according to the statement of the Temporary Slavery Commission, which is composed not of politicians but of experts without political bias—it is owing to the civilising

action of the Colonial Powers that the terrible curse of slavery has been brought to an end. I should like to emphasise that point now, at a time when an attempt is being made, by the dissemination of certain doctrines, by raising controversies and through the medium of the Press, to cause unrest among the natives by persuading them that it is the measures taken by the Great Powers to introduce civilisation that have retarded their progress and made them the victims of cruel oppression. These reports and the expert investigation of the question prove that the Powers which bear the heavy material burden of their colonies have never failed in the work of civilisation which they have undertaken.

After this digression, let me say that France fully concurs in the object of the Advisory Committee, that is to say, the total abolition, once and for all and throughout the whole world, not only of slavery, but of all intermediate states between slavery and freedom.

We think that the League should, in the near future, bring into force a Protocol giving a legal sanction to these principles.

I will doubtless be said that such a Protocol might have been drafted and adopted this year. That would perhaps have been premature, since, as the report now before you states, it has been impossible for the Governments Members of the League to study before this session the draft submitted by the British delegation: no matter how sincerely and urgently all the Members of the League may desire to remedy existing abuses, there are delicate and complex questions, *de facto* situations, which cannot be ignored, and the seriousness of which the Rapporteur frankly admits when he states in his report that, in certain cases in the past, the attempt to do away with slavery and other similar conditions in an abrupt manner, although noble in its inspiration, has resulted in unforeseen and regrettable hardships for the individuals whose condition it was sought to alleviate, and even in grave social upheavals. In these circumstances the Sixth Committee felt that the abolition of slavery, however desirable, could only be successfully brought about with due regard to the maintenance of order and the well-being of the peoples concerned.

Therefore, gentlemen, although the Sixth Committee has not been able to produce definite results this year, it must not be thought that there has been any desire, in any quarter, to delay the proceedings.

France will loyally support any further efforts of the League to abolish the evils of which I have spoken. She can point with pride to the fact that, as far back as 1848, she was one of the first countries in the world to abolish slavery in her own colonies, and she has always taken steps to carry out the measures mentioned in the report to prevent the capture of prisoners, raids and tribal wars within her territory. France was also one of the first Powers to demand that a clause providing for the equitable treatment of populations should be embodied in the Covenant.

It is hardly necessary for me to recall these facts, however. You all know that my country has a long tradition, I might even say a long colonial creed, and that, far from encouraging oppression, abuses or barbarous traditional customs and usages, we have always aimed not only at ensuring the material progress and security, the health and well-being of the native populations under our control, but their education, moral progress and intellectual emancipation.

France will never forget that "liberty" is the first word in the motto of the Republic.

The President : Does any other member wish to speak? If no one wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee and which reads as follows :

*The Assembly,*

*Considering that the Members of the League of Nations have undertaken, in virtue of Article 23 (b) of the Covenant, to secure just treatment of the native inhabitants of territories under their control ;*

*Having examined the report of the Temporary Slavery Commission which has been communicated to all the Members of the League of Nations ; and*

*Being of opinion that a Convention is the best way of giving effect to the suggestions made in this report and of accomplishing the work undertaken by the League of Nations for the suppression of slavery ;*

*Decides to recommend for approval the annexed draft Convention ;*

*And requests the Council to communicate this draft to all States Members of the League and to such other States as the Council may specify, with a view to the conclusion of a Convention which will be as far as possible in conformity with this draft, and to invite the above-mentioned States :*

*(a) To forward to the Secretary-General not later than June 1st, 1926, any observations they may desire to make regarding the provisions of this draft ;*

*(b) To appoint at a later date plenipotentiaries who will meet at the time of the opening of the seventh Assembly to re-examine, if necessary, the articles of the draft Convention and to sign immediately the text of the Convention which has been agreed upon ;*

*(c) To make every effort to adopt at once all possible measures in conformity with the provisions of the draft Convention in question ;*

*(d) To assist one another forthwith in the abolition of the slave trade, slavery and conditions analogous thereto, by all practicable means and, in particular, by the conclusion of special agreements and arrangements.*

*The resolution was adopted.*

## 80. — ELECTION OF NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President : In accordance with our agenda, the Assembly will now proceed to the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

The following is the relevant passage from the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly :

"Where several seats are to be filled, the election shall be made by voting a list of names. Any ballot paper containing more names than there are seats to be filled shall be null and void.

No Member shall be elected at the first or at the second ballot unless it has obtained at least the absolute majority of the votes. If after two ballots there still remain seats to be filled, a third ballot shall be held upon a list consisting of the candidates which obtained most votes at the second ballot, up to a number double that of the seats still to be filled, and those Members shall be elected which obtain the greatest number of votes.

If two or more Members obtain the same number of votes and there is not a seat available

for each, a special ballot shall be held between them; if they again obtain an equal number of votes, the President shall decide between them by drawing lots."

In accordance with this procedure, you are about to elect six Members to sit on the Council during the year 1926. On the voting tickets must be written the names of States and not the names of delegates representing such States.

**M. Chao-Hsin-Chu (China):** In connection with the procedure for the election of non-permanent Members of the Council of the League, allow me to remind the Assembly of the recommendation which was unanimously passed here just two days ago regarding the applicability of the geographical principle to the allocation of such non-permanent seats. I have the honour, Mr. President, to request that the Assembly should be reminded of this recommendation before the ballot is taken, in the hope that this geographical principle will not be overlooked.

**The President:** I will ask M. Mensdorff, delegate of Austria, and M. Caballero, delegate of Paraguay, to act as tellers.

(M. Mensdorff and M. Caballero took their places on the platform.)

**The President:** We will now proceed to a secret ballot by roll-call.

(The vote was taken by roll-call and secret ballot. The Secretary-General proceeded to count the votes.)

**The President:** The result of the ballot is as follows:

The following States voted:

Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, British Empire, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Esthonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Salvador, South Africa, Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Siam, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela.

The following States were absent:

Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru.

|                                      |    |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Number of votes cast . . . . .       | 49 |
| Blank papers . . . . .               | 1  |
| Absolute majority required . . . . . | 25 |

The votes obtained by the States were as follows:

|                          |    |
|--------------------------|----|
| Brazil . . . . .         | 43 |
| Uruguay . . . . .        | 40 |
| Czechoslovakia . . . . . | 35 |
| Spain . . . . .          | 35 |
| Sweden . . . . .         | 34 |
| Belgium . . . . .        | 32 |
| China . . . . .          | 26 |
| Persia . . . . .         | 9  |
| Netherlands . . . . .    | 8  |
| Chile . . . . .          | 4  |
| Switzerland . . . . .    | 3  |

|                                                     |   |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---|
| Cuba . . . . .                                      | 2 |
| Denmark . . . . .                                   | 2 |
| Poland . . . . .                                    | 2 |
| Portugal . . . . .                                  | 2 |
| Siam . . . . .                                      | 2 |
| Colombia . . . . .                                  | 1 |
| Finland . . . . .                                   | 1 |
| Greece . . . . .                                    | 1 |
| India . . . . .                                     | 1 |
| Latvia . . . . .                                    | 1 |
| Liberia . . . . .                                   | 1 |
| Roumania . . . . .                                  | 1 |
| Salvador . . . . .                                  | 1 |
| Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes . . . . . | 1 |

Brazil, Uruguay, Spain, Czechoslovakia, Sweden and Belgium have obtained the absolute majority of votes required and are therefore elected non-permanent Members of the Council. It is my happy duty to offer them my congratulations.

**81. — ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL: PROPOSAL BY THE VENEZUELAN DELEGATION.**

**The President:** M. Zumeta, first delegate of Venezuela, asks leave to address the Assembly.

**M. Zumeta (Venezuela):**

*Translation:* There is every indication that the present choice has been determined by the very legitimate desire which has so far led the Assembly to maintain the *statu quo* in the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, a desire shared by the Venezuelan delegation. At the same time, it is clear that, whether the amendment to the Covenant on this point is ratified in the near future or whether a system of rotation is agreed to, the present arrangement cannot continue.

The Venezuelan delegation has reason to believe that its views are shared by most of the members of this Assembly, and proposes to embody these views in a recommendation on the following lines:

"The Assembly.

"Noting that the non-permanent Members of the Council at present in office have been re-elected for a year:

"Considers the meaning of this re-election to be that it is subject to the non-permanent part of the Council being renewed as from the election of 1926 by application of the principle of rotation."

**The President:** Is there any opposition to this recommendation?

**M. de Palacios (Spain):**

*Translation:* The Spanish delegation will not oppose the adoption of the recommendation, but as it has not been able to obtain instructions from its Government, it will not vote.

**The President:** Does any other Member of the Assembly desire to speak on this recommendation? If no one wishes to speak I will declare the recommendation adopted.

*The recommendation was adopted.*

82. — CLOSE OF THE SESSION: SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT.

Ladies, gentlemen and dear colleagues — Our work is finished. Before vacating the Chair to which you elected me, I should like first to discharge a duty and, secondly, to attempt to indicate the lessons which this Assembly has taught us.

On behalf of all the delegations, I express our thanks to the Swiss Republic and to the Canton and City of Geneva. Switzerland has become the home of noble schemes of international pacification. It is in the peace-inspiring atmosphere of this country that the lofty ideas of universal reconciliation have been born. Animated by the spirit of hospitality, of reason and of discipline, the Swiss democracy offers us an example of the fraternal union of peoples differing in race, language and religion.

Secondly, our thanks are due to the Secretary-General, Sir Eric Drummond, who, with his wide and rich experience, has controlled the complicated machinery of the League's organisations. I would ask him to convey to all his collaborators, whatever their position, our great appreciation of the value of their daily help.

The many reports submitted to us by the six Committees are proof of the breadth of view and the ripe wisdom of those who have helped to prepare them.

We are particularly glad to pay our tribute to the active sympathy extended to us by the Press. The Assembly regards the Press as an all-important factor in world peace. It has passed a resolution proclaiming the necessity of the co-operation of the Press in preparing for that moral disarmament which must precede material disarmament. In its capacity as a coadjutor of the League in the work of peace and the creation of a "new conscience" for humanity, the Press will be able to spread far and wide such words as will calm passion and mould public opinion.

Several speakers have already observed that this Assembly was not intended to be, or even to appear to be, a school of rhetoric. It is not our duty to distribute laurel wreaths or to strew palms before the victors in the lists of oratory. The object of our meeting here is to consider problems which affect the future of the great civilisations and to seek with patient zeal to reconcile the sometimes discordant elements of practical and acceptable solutions.

It has been unjustly said that our meetings lacked the quality of brilliance. I am inclined to make a virtue of what was intended as a criticism. Is this not actual proof of the serious nature of our work? Whether in matters social, financial, economic or political, decisions have been taken which may have far-reaching consequences. In all spheres in which we are competent to act, important results have been obtained. Of these I will only say one word.

Through the help given to refugees and the extension of protective measures for women and children, the League has sought to safeguard the rights of the weak and to alleviate the misfortunes of the suffering. In this connection I should like to pay a warm tribute to the International Labour Office for all the help it has afforded.

Special mention should be made of the Convention drafted by the Sixth Committee to remove the last traces of slavery. This is an undertaking of real humanitarian value and we hope that it will be welcomed by the Governments concerned.

By the interest it has shown in the organisation of public health and the regulation of the opium traffic, the Assembly has proved its anxiety to

remove dangers threatening the physical and moral well-being both of individuals and of entire communities.

Thanks to the sincere co-operation of the Governments of Hungary and Austria, the financial reconstruction of these two countries has yielded most encouraging results.

The technical organisations, such as the Financial Committee and the Economic Committee, to which should be added the Committee for Communications and Transit, have displayed a praiseworthy activity. Each in its sphere has prepared the way for an undertaking the world-wide scope of which you will all have realised. All Governments are agreed that the causes of international difficulties—and disputes often lie in economic conditions: accordingly the proposal for a general Economic Conference has been welcomed. The resolution proposed by the Second Committee opens up a vast field of enquiry and investigation with a view not merely to mitigating the effects but to removing the causes of the evils which at the present time weigh so heavily upon all nations.

The question of intellectual Co-operation also offers a promising outlook. The Committee will shortly have at its disposal an admirable instrument in the Paris Institute, and its influence is bound to increase with time. It will have to concentrate its attention on schemes for diffusing a knowledge of the ideal of the League, for winning fresh support and making its work better known. This task cannot be pursued by means of partisan propaganda, but only by a faithful and unbiased statement of the League's activities.

Although no actual resolution has been passed on the somewhat thorny question of the protection of minorities, it has nevertheless been discussed by the Sixth Committee. The opinions expressed during this discussion show that the League is conscientiously performing the useful and noble but difficult task entrusted to it under the Treaties, namely, that of safeguarding the interests of certain national minorities. The work it has done should inspire confidence in those populations which look to it for support. All fears, all sensitiveness will gradually be removed by the wisdom of the Governments and the loyalty of the minorities. The combined and sincere efforts of the League, the Governments concerned and the minorities themselves should eventually lead to a situation, a brotherly relationship, which will mark the end of the minorities problem, both from the international and the domestic standpoint.

I must also draw attention to the work of the Mandates Commission in developing and perfecting the institution established by the Treaty, the supervision of which is entrusted to the League. We are firmly convinced that the mandatory Powers have at heart the steady improvement of the material and moral conditions of the populations placed under their paternal and, I would add, vigilant tutelage.

I now turn to that trilogy which has become classic — "Arbitration, Security and Disarmament". The deliberations of this Assembly have shown us that the spirit of the Protocol drawn up last year still lives. It constitutes, at the present time, an ideal and a rule of conduct. None of the general principles enunciated by the fifth Assembly were questioned by the sixth. The only modifications concerned the application of these principles: the principles themselves formed the fundamental basis of our discussions. Did not the Assembly show what was its intention by denouncing a war of aggression as an international crime? Did it not again affirm the necessity of arbitration and security as essential conditions to disarmament? Surely, however, Security, as contemplated in the

Protocol must, by the very terms of that document, and in accordance with the statements of the most authoritative members of this Assembly, necessarily be supplemented by regional agreements, by pacts between peoples with common interests who believe themselves directly threatened ?

Two methods of attaining this end were proposed by the authors of the scheme for the pacific settlement of international disputes. The idealistic method, based upon general conceptions, sought to reconcile human facts with principles: the realistic method endeavoured to find a compromise between principles and facts, and to accommodate ideas to circumstances. I may be pardoned for recalling Plato and Aristotle. Called upon to choose between the method of the disciple and that of the master, the Assembly decided that it would perhaps be more expedient to follow the teaching of the disciple. The eventual end will be the same. It is the methods of realisation or application that differ. The Members of the League wish to prepare the way for disarmament by means of special agreements in order to obtain security. They propose the pacific settlement of conflicts and disputes by arbitration conventions. From all these facts it is clear that the spirit of the Protocol has animated and quickened the work of this Assembly.

It has not been judged advisable to engage once more in a discussion of the project for universal compulsory arbitration. But inevitably, whatever paths we may tread, we shall one day reach this goal. A little reflection will show that there are only two possible alternatives — arbitration or arbitrariness. Between these two words, which follow each other in the dictionary and yet are mutually exclusive, the Members of the League have never hesitated.

This brief and superficial survey of the work done in the last few weeks is enough to show that the sixth Assembly has not disappointed the hopes which the world placed in it. This work has been such as to confound the sceptics, to convert the pessimists and to give to all those who believe in

the League fresh ground for confidence, optimism and faith. Our Assembly has courageously done its duty and faced most difficult tasks. With a clear realisation of its mission and of its responsibilities it has drawn up the programme of the great enterprises of to-morrow and revealed to mankind new and shining horizons.

Ladies and gentlemen, in the course of your walks through Geneva you may have happened upon the little church of St. Paul, whose red-tiled roof and Romanesque front lie sheltered under the foliage of autumn. Harmonious in its proportions, rich in its sobriety, this modern temple with its mediæval air contains a masterpiece of the French painter, Maurice Denis.

The arch of the central nave frames this magnificent work of art, which dominates the high altar, fills the whole apse and casts a subtle oriental light on the high vault. Before us lies a calm sea which the twilight mantles with purple and greenish gold.

A fishing-boat gently rocks upon the waters.

In it a number of figures are grouped round a man clothed in a robe of many folds. The apostle Paul addresses his companions, come to him from Rome and Corinth, Jerusalem and Ephesus, Cyprus and Thessalonica. The words fall upon the mellow air: "There is no longer Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free..."

Before this striking evocation of apostolic times I found myself dreaming that one day we may see on the shores of this peaceful lake men of every religion, faith and race acclaiming the voice which the echoes will carry to the uttermost ends of the earth: "There is no longer victor nor vanquished, oppressor nor oppressed, for you are all one in justice and peace".

Ladies and gentlemen, the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations is now closed.

*The Assembly rose at 5 p.m.*