

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH, 1931, AT 10.30 A.M.

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1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

M. Lerroux, delegate of Spain, President in Office of the Council, took the chair.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen, — In my capacity as President in Office of the Council of the League of Nations, I have the honour to declare open the twelfth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

2. — ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE TO REPORT ON THE CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES.

The Chairman :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the election of the Committee to report on the credentials of the delegates.

According to the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, this Committee should be elected by secret ballot. Since the Rules of Procedure were adopted, there have been frequent exceptions to this rule. In view of the precedents and the practice established by my predecessors, the Assembly will not, I think, object to my attempting to help it to reach a decision on this matter, without in any way presuming to influence its choice.

I feel that I shall only be forestalling the Assembly's wishes in submitting a list consisting of eight names, as follows :

Mr. DE VILLIERS (Union of South Africa),
M. MOLLOFF (Bulgaria),
Dr. WOO KAISENG (China),
M. DE AGÜERO Y BETHANCOURT (Cuba),
Baron SZTERÉNYI (Hungary),
M. RAESTAD (Norway),
M. GONZALEZ-PRADA (Peru),
Khan SÉPAHBODY (Persia).

Members of the Assembly who may desire to put forward other proposals are invited to do so. As no objection to my proposal has been raised, I think I may conclude that the Assembly has decided that the Committee on Credentials shall consist of the delegates whose names I have just read.

The list proposed by the Chairman was adopted.

The Chairman :

Translation : My intention in proposing that the Assembly should proceed immediately to constitute the Committee on Credentials was to expedite proceedings and to allow this Committee, whose duties are so important, to perform its work under the best possible conditions.

The members of the Committee on Credentials will therefore be good enough to meet immediately in a room which has been placed at their disposal in order that they may submit their report at the earliest possible moment.

3. — OPENING SPEECH BY M. LERROUX, PRESIDENT IN OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL.

The Chairman :

Translation : It is a great honour for me, taking part as I am for the first time in your work, to welcome, as President in Office of the Council of the League of Nations, the delegates who have come from every part of the world to take part in the deliberations of the Assembly. I shall not attempt to particularise all the work that has been done by the League during the year in the various fields in which it has been active. This year, as always, you will find very full and detailed information in the report of the Council and the Secretary-General. I should like, however, to make a few general remarks on the work that has been done.

Let me first of all congratulate the League on the completion of the Preparatory Commission's work, which has enabled the Disarmament Conference to be convened. It has taken no less than ten years of investigation and study, of tentative efforts in various directions, of innumerable meetings and of vehement discussions, to bring us to this result, which, after all, is no more than a starting-point. The League has collected the material. We are ready to begin, and we must do constructive work if we are to satisfy the ardent desire of public opinion. Let us all, therefore, wish success to this first Disarmament Conference, which should lead to results that will form a valuable contribution to the maintenance of peace in the world.

The Assembly has always attached great importance to the development of arbitration and the strengthening of security. Since your last session, the number of States recognising the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice has risen to thirty-seven, including almost all the countries of Europe, my own among them. During this past year, the number of States acceding to the General Act for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes drawn up and adopted by the Assembly of 1929 has increased to sixteen. In this steady stream of accessions to the institutions and the engagements of the League we cannot but see a mark of the intention of Governments to bring their difficulties before the League and submit them to its methods of settlement. It was during the past year that the Convention for the Development of the Means of preventing War, which you will be called upon to examine, was drawn up; it is designed to assist the

Council in applying one of the most important articles of the Covenant — Article 11 — that article which has several times enabled the League to ward off threatened conflicts and to settle the matters out of which they might have arisen.

I do not hesitate to give credit to the League as a whole for the activities — indeed, the very existence — of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, the creation of which was authorised last year by a unanimous vote of the Assembly. I regard this as an important contribution to the maintenance of world peace. During the coming weeks, you will have to decide upon the constitution of this Commission, its organisation, its field of activity and its methods of work. At the same time I should like to emphasise the beneficent influence exerted upon international relations by these periodical meetings of some thirty States, most of them represented by their Foreign Ministers, including those of two countries which are not Members of the League — Turkey and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Having myself been present last May at the proceedings of the European Commission and the Council of the League, I was able to observe how direct contact between responsible statesmen, and discussions conducted in a frank and liberal spirit at meetings of these two bodies, could influence both Governments and public opinion itself in delicate and difficult circumstances.

During the first year of its existence, the European Commission has concerned itself chiefly with one of the partial and regional aspects of the general economic crisis — the special crisis through which agriculture is passing in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. It has endeavoured to improve the situation by finding means of encouraging the sale of grain and by organising credit so as to reduce the burdens upon agricultural production in those countries. In a few months, with the assistance of the technical organisations of the League, it has succeeded in establishing a Convention for the creation of an international agricultural mortgage credit company, which will probably begin operations early next year.

The Commission has sought to do more than this. Being called upon to face the problem of the general direction of tariff policy in Europe, it has adopted in outline a wide programme which has been worked out by committees of experts. Their conclusions will be laid before you, together with those of the Conference with a View to Concerted Economic Action.

As you see, a large part of the League's work in the economic and financial sphere since your last session has been devoted to Europe. But it would be a mistake to suppose that the League has failed in its duty of universality. First of all, we may do justice to the various League bodies by pointing out that, in their endeavours to improve the organisation and economic relations of the European countries — a desirable achievement in itself, and profitable, moreover, to the whole world if carried through on the right lines — those bodies have never lost sight of the possible effects of their decisions or recommendations on the other States Members of the League.

Furthermore, there have been numerous demonstrations of the League's activity outside Europe. To mention only the most important of these, we have, in Central and South America, the enquiry into infant mortality in the Argentine, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay; the participation in the Serological Congress at Montevideo; the assistance given to Bolivia in re-organising her health services; the establishment, in response to an offer from the Brazilian Government, of an international leprosy research centre in Brazil.

In the course of the tour which he made this year in various Latin-American countries at the invitation of their Governments, our Secretary-General saw convincing evidence of the devotion of those countries to the League, the importance they attach to its work and their anxiety to co-operate in it more closely, while the Secretary-General's presence enabled the countries he visited to gain a closer view and a clearer realisation of the institution to which they belong. That is the value of these journeys and meetings, which the Assembly has always advocated; they serve to draw closer the ties that unite all the Members of the League to its centre. Let us hope that in the near future the co-operation of Central and South America will extend to those other countries whose delegates we should like to see among us.

Turning to the Far East, I might mention the Leprosy Commission which met at Bangkok; the malaria research in Melanesia; the work on the subject of opium-smoking; the Indian tour of the Director of the Economic and Financial Section, who was invited by the Government of India to give his opinion on the creation of an organisation for the study of economic questions; and the establishment, at the Chinese Government's request, of co-operation over a wide field between China and our various technical organisations — the Health Organisation, the Communications and Transit Organisation, the Economic and Financial Organisation and the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation. I am sure that the Assembly will unanimously wish to offer its heartiest congratulations to the Chinese Government on its efforts to re-organise China, and will express the hope that this co-operation may lead to good results both for China and for the League.

The agreements relating to maritime signals and the lighting of coasts adopted by a Maritime Conference — the first of its kind to be summoned by the League — in which the United States, Brazil and Mexico took part, are of a universal nature. The same is true of the Convention for the Unification of Laws on Bills of Exchange and Cheques; the work on economic statistics and veterinary questions; the proceedings of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation; the enquiries into the economic depression, the agricultural crisis and the gold problem; and the Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs.

I should like to say a few words about this last Convention. It originated with the Assembly, which in 1929 laid down the principle of the limitation of manufacture. The task entrusted to the Conference which met on May 27th last was an enormous one. The Conference had been convened to limit manufacture; it was called upon to frame a system whereby no more drugs should be produced than are required for legitimate world consumption. It is no exaggeration to say that the Conference, at which upwards of fifty countries were represented — including the United States of America, Brazil, the Hejaz, Mexico, Turkey and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics — successfully overcame practically all the difficulties with which it was faced. It established a definite rule for determining world requirements of drugs; it established a system of supervision covering all drugs; it made the Convention applicable to a far larger number of drugs than the 1925 Convention; it even extended the system to all derivatives of opium and of the coca leaf that might be discovered at any future time, deciding that such derivatives should be deemed harmful failing proof to the contrary. That Conference, presided over in so masterly a fashion by M. Louis de Brouckère,

whom I would take this opportunity of thanking formally, enabled the League of Nations to achieve one of the most successful results it has ever obtained in the humanitarian and moral sphere.

There has thus been no falling off in the League's work, as regards either quantity or quality. All the various League bodies have been working at full capacity, and, although the individual results, considered separately, may sometimes appear rather slight in comparison with the comprehensive mission of the League, all those results, taken together and considered dispassionately, undoubtedly, constitute a considerable advance towards the final goal of any form of international co-ordination, that goal being the co-ordination of effort and the simplification of current rules and practices in the general interests of all the nations. The League, as I just now endeavoured to show, has consistently extended its activities and made known its methods in the different continents.

How, indeed, could it be otherwise, when there exists a worldwide depression surely unparalleled in world history in its extent and intensity, weighing down the economic life of every country, of powerful countries and of weak alike, sparing none and threatening all with grave political and social disorders? Anxiety is all-pervading, and the uncertainty of what the morrow may bring forth makes itself poignantly felt in many countries of Europe, Asia and America.

The adjournment of reparations payments and war debts on the proposal of President Hoover, the London Conferences, the conversations held in Paris, Berlin and Rome between German, American, British, French and Italian statesmen, the action of the Bank for International Settlements, the work of the Basle Committee of Experts, are all so many tokens of a desire for recovery, of a readiness to co-operate. That desire, that determination, must become even more pronounced and all-embracing, for the decisions taken hitherto seem calculated to result in purely temporary assistance confined to certain countries. No occasion could be more propitious for this purpose than the meeting of this Assembly. There will be exchanges of views and discussions at the present session which will pave the way for conversations and future decisions.

Let the Governments represented here make it plain to the world that they understand their duties in the matter of mutual support and co-operation and that they are prepared to assume the necessary responsibilities. It rests with them, acting in the spirit of the Covenant, to arrest the wave of pessimism, to ensure co-ordination of efforts in the financial, economic and political domain; to restore tranquillity and bring about a revival of confidence. I call upon you, gentlemen, to co-operate in that task.

(The meeting was adjourned at 11 a.m. and resumed at 11.25 a.m.)

4. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES : REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The Chairman :

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

I call upon the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials, M. de Agüero y Bethancourt, delegate of Cuba, to read his report.

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

Translation : Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, — The Committee appointed by the Assembly to report on the credentials of delegates met to-day at 10.45 a.m. in the President's office. 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, letters from Ministers for Foreign Affairs, or telegrams from the same sources, or letters from permanent representatives accredited to the League of Nations :

Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, British Empire, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Siam, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Union of South Africa, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

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

The following States Members have not as yet accredited delegates to the Assembly :

The Argentine Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, Salvador.

The Committee is glad to note that the majority of delegations are accredited by full powers granted by the heads of States.

The Chairman :

Translation : I beg to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report.

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

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

5. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE TWELFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the twelfth ordinary session of the Assembly.

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

May I call upon M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, and M. Hymans, first delegate of Belgium, as former Presidents of the Assembly, to be good enough to act as tellers ?

(The votes of the delegates were taken in turn by secret ballot.)

The Chairman :

Translation : In the first place, I wish to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 50 |
| Blank voting paper | 1 |
| Valid votes | 49 |
| Absolute majority | 25 |

The following were the votes obtained :

| | |
|---|----------|
| M. Titulesco (first delegate of Roumania) | 25 votes |
| Count Apponyi (first delegate of Hungary) | 21 votes |
| M. Vennersten (delegate of Sweden) | 2 votes |
| M. Costa du Rels (delegate of Bolivia) | 1 vote |

I have the honour, therefore, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, to announce that M. TITULESCO, delegate of Roumania, is elected President of the Assembly.

It is with the deepest satisfaction that I congratulate M. Titulesco on his election. He has already been President of the Assembly and has done much to improve co-operation between the nations.

I call upon M. Titulesco to take the chair as President of the Assembly.

(M. Titulesco took the Presidential Chair.)

6. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen, — I accept with feelings of deep gratitude, which it is beyond my power to express in words, the great honour that you have done my country and myself in calling upon me once again to preside over the work of this eminent Assembly and in breaking for once with the tradition that the President shall not be eligible for re-election. I shall endeavour to give proof of my gratitude by adhering to the methods we employed last year and trying to improve them as far as possible, so that, with your help, our work may attain its true purpose, its real objective — efficacy.

Effective work, to be judged, not by the effort made, but by the results achieved, is more than ever essential for the League.

The world is passing through a terrible crisis — a lack of confidence which began in the sphere of finance and threatens to invade every domain. On all hands we hear that the flame of confidence is burning low, is all but spent ; and we, all of us assembled here, should all be failing in our duty did we not prove to the nations by rapid, visible and concrete acts that, here in Geneva at all events, the sacred fire is not in danger of extinction ; that, though the flames are not yet strong enough to quicken with their warmth, they can at least illuminate the world and guide it.

In very truth, they do illuminate and guide it. It is only at the first glance that the League appears as a body of men who meet and deliberate here at the Assembly or in the Council or in the Committees.

In reality, the League stands for a spirit and a method, a habit of thought and a habit of action, an impulse of the heart making for comprehension, and an intellectual discipline making for closer contact. The League is primarily and essentially an attitude of mind, which we can only acquire by assiduously taking our share in the work here at Geneva ; but, having acquired that spirit, we carry with us wherever we go an imprint, we hold a real and potent treasure.

We do not claim at Geneva to have the monopoly of the means for preserving peace and drawing the nations together. To deny, however, that the results obtained in the sphere of international understanding without the direct participation of the League, are none the less the fruit of its spirit and the outcome of its methods, would be

manifestly unfair; to ignore that self-evident fact would be sheer ingratitude.

Far from considering that the results obtained in the field of international co-operation without the direct participation of the League could detract in any way from its merits, I claim those results as our own, and enter them boldly as profits in the League's moral balance-sheet.

If, then, the League's action is so potent even when invisible, how much more should that be the case when the eyes of the world are focused upon it? Mankind, I know, has always longed for miracles, and our present hardships have only strengthened that natural tendency. With limited means at our disposal, and such a state of mind to cope with, we are faced with a serious situation, which must be met with courage and a clear view of the issues. Let us admit frankly that Geneva is not the land of miracles, but let us prove by our acts that nowhere can goodwill and a spirit of decision produce better results than here within the framework of the League.

Ours is a hard and thankless task, but a task that we cannot shirk. We are the depositaries of the most precious of treasures. In our hands lies the supreme hope of the world, perhaps its last hope. Who among us, for the mere satisfaction of some private interest, however legitimate, would dare violate the sacred trust confided to him? Let us never, then, in all our discussions, great or small, forget what hangs upon our disagreement or upon any confession of impotence.

We are passing through a difficult period. This clearly is the transition from one form of collective life to another; many of the old truths have died, and the new truths are not yet sufficiently clear to have emerged as motive forces.

That being so, we cannot cling blindly to obsolete formulas. Nor must we, trusting blindly in the future, plunge headlong into the unknown. As things are, it behoves us to hold fast to what has been tested by experience, and to prepare, carefully and patiently, those future positions which we shall not occupy until the time comes, knowing exactly where we stand.

Confidence, caution, action, sacrifice those are the watchwords of to-day. Reinforce confidence with action, temper action with prudence, never refrain from acting because action involves sacrifice — only thus can the danger be averted, only thus can we play a conscious part in an evolution of which neither the meaning nor the extent can be determined with any degree of accuracy.

Duty calls. It calls for acts of heroism — a heroism without attraction, which offers no immediate reward, which engenders misunderstanding and hostile criticism, the silent, anonymous heroism of the trenches. On this occasion, however, we are fighting for peace, for the nations no longer face one other in fratricidal strife; they are fighting, for the first time, side by side against an adverse fate, which only full co-operation can hope to circumvent.

Can we be pessimists in face of such a spectacle? Never, since the world entered upon this crisis, has solidarity among the nations been more strikingly attested. Enter our material losses on the debit side, but enter on the credit side this comforting assurance — suffering is forging the bonds of true brotherhood between the nations.

This is no shipwreck of the world! This is the workshop in which a new world is being built. Each man must do his duty, we must all work together. Who then could be doubtful of success?

No matter if we are not here to see the work completed. No matter if the first efforts are forgotten. No matter if we prove to have been

the Unknown Soldiers in the victory of peace. We have been believers when we might have lost faith, and that is the only merit that counts for the men of Geneva; that is their sole claim to glory.

I would thank now our Chairman, who, as President of the Council, welcomed me to the Presidency of the Assembly and, in conclusion, utter the two words which justify my election to that office: "To work!"

(The Assembly adjourned at 12.10 p.m. and resumed at 12.20 p.m.)

7. — AGENDA : EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION.

The President :

Translation : Acting in accordance with precedent, I have just approved a note circulated to the delegations, which will give them an idea of the proposals I should like to submit in regard to the various items on the agenda of the present session.

As all the Members of the Assembly have the note before them, I shall ask them to vote on the first question on the list — namely, the adoption of the agenda for the present session.

Still in accordance with precedent, and in order to save time — unless any delegation wishes for a vote — I propose that the Assembly adopt *en bloc* the questions appearing on the agenda — that is, the questions contained in document A.2(1), Items 1 to 22.

To these must be added the supplementary list of questions circulated in accordance with paragraph 3 of Rule 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. There is only one question of this kind in document A.2(1): the Draft Convention for the Regulation of Whale Fishing.

If there is no objection, I shall consider the agenda of the twelfth ordinary session of the Assembly adopted.

The agenda was adopted.

The President :

Translation : The President of the Council has just sent me the following letter, dated September 5th :

"I have the honour to inform you that the Council, at its meeting of Friday, September 4th, requested that the following question should be included in the agenda of the twelfth session of the Assembly :

"The installation of an aerodrome near the Seat of the League of Nations.

(Signed) A. LERROUX,

President in Office of the Council."

I do not think the Assembly will have any objection to including the question in the agenda, this being quite in accordance with the practice followed at previous sessions.

If there is no objection, that course will be adopted.

Adopted.

The President :

Translation : The Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union has written to me enclosing the report of the Co-ordination Sub-Committee, together with reports framed by the various other Committees entrusted with certain

work by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

The letter from the Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry, and the accompanying documents will be circulated to the delegations and will supplement the other documents received from the Commission which are already before the Assembly and which come under Item 11 of the agenda. I do not think that Members of the Assembly will have any objection to my submitting later proposals as to the action to be taken with regard to this communication from the Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry.

This proposal was adopted.

8. — CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the Constitution of Committees.

The Assembly will probably wish to follow the procedure adopted at previous sessions, and to set up 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 the organisation of the Secretariat and the League's finances, the fifth with social and humanitarian questions, and the sixth with political questions.

In pursuance of the practice followed at previous sessions, I would suggest that the Assembly should arrange for the meetings of the Committees to alternate as follows: the First, Second and Sixth Committees would meet at the same time, and so would the Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees.

If there is no objection, I shall consider these proposals adopted.

The proposals were adopted.

The delegations will doubtless have been good enough to send to the Secretariat by now the forms on which they have entered the names of their delegates and substitute delegates for each Committee. I would ask delegations which have not yet sent in their lists to do so as soon as possible.

The Committees will meet here, in this hall, this afternoon to elect their Chairmen.

9. — AGENDA COMMITTEE : APPOINTMENT.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the constitution of the Agenda Committee. Following the practice of previous Assemblies, I propose that a small Committee of seven members be set up to examine the procedure to be followed as regards the inclusion in the agenda of any new questions that may arise during the session.

If the Assembly is agreed and no other names are put forward for this Committee, I shall venture, following the example of my predecessors, to propose a list of names as follows :

M. BELLEGARDE (Haiti), Chairman,
Dr. GAUS (Germany),
M. MASSIGLI, (France),
Dr. HYDER (India),
The Honourable C. P. BEAUBIEN (Canada),
M. SATO (Japan),
Baron SZTERÉNYI (Hungary).

If no one has any objection, I shall consider the list adopted.

Adopted.

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

The President :

Translation : At its last five sessions, the Assembly decided that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should sit as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly, together with the Chairmen of the six Committees.

I would ask the Assembly if it agrees, in accordance with precedent, that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee shall sit as a member of the General Committee of the present Assembly.

The President's proposal was adopted.

The President :

Translation : I request the Agenda Committee immediately to elect its Chairman, so that he may take part in the work of the General Committee of the Assembly.

11. — AGENDA : DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : Following the practice of previous sessions, I venture to submit to the Assembly suggestions for the distribution among the Committees of the various items on the agenda as adopted.

I propose that the items be distributed as follows :

First Committee : Items 4, 5, 6, 7 and 15.

Second Committee : Items 16, 17 and 18, and also the supplementary question: the draft Convention for the Regulation of Whale Fishing.

Third Committee : Item 12.

The parts of the Transit Organisation's report concerning communications affecting the working of the League in times of emergency should also be referred to the Third Committee. Among these questions should be included one I have just mentioned which was referred to the Assembly by the Council — the installation of an aerodrome near the seat of the League of Nations.

Fourth Committee : Items 8, 9 and 22.

Fifth Committee : Items 10, 19 and 20.

Sixth Committee : Items 11, 13, 14 and 21.

As regards item 11, I would point out that the covering letter from the Chairman of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union and the accompanying documents will be referred to the Sixth Committee.

As regards item 13 — the Nansen International Office for Refugees — I should mention that the part of the Supervisory Commission's report (document A.5.1931) which concerns the budget of the Office will also be referred to the Sixth Committee. Financial questions relating to the Nansen International Office for Refugees must, under the terms of Article 16, paragraph 5, and Article 16(c), paragraph 1(a), of the Financial Regulations of the League of Nations, be referred for preliminary examination to the Committee appointed to deal with the question as a whole.

The proposals were adopted.

12. — MATERIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SESSIONS OF THE ASSEMBLY. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF FIVE.

The President :

Translation : The Committee of Five which deals with arrangements for the organisation of the Assembly has sent me a report in the form of a letter, which will be printed in the *Assembly Journal* and circulated to the delegations in that way. The report contains certain suggestions for the organisation of the present session. In accordance with precedent, I propose that the Assembly decide to refer it for examination to the General Committee of the Assembly, which will, when constituted, receive the proposals of the Committee of Five and subsequently inform the Assembly of the action which it thought might be taken, on these suggestions.

If no one has any observation to make, I shall regard this proposal as adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

13. — ELECTION OF NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : One of the items on the agenda of the present session is the election of three non-permanent Members of the Council. I thought the delegations might like to know at once the date on which that election will be held.

After consulting the rules and precedents governing the matter, I would suggest that the Assembly should hold the election on the afternoon of Monday, September 14th.

The President's proposal was adopted.

14. — PROCEDURE FOR THE ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : I wish to remind the delegations of the programme of work for this afternoon. Beginning at 3.30 p.m. the Committees will meet one after another, at intervals of twenty minutes, in this hall, in order to elect their Chairmen as follows :

- First Committee at 3.30 p.m.
- Second Committee at 3.50 p.m.
- Third Committee at 4.10 p.m.
- Fourth Committee at 4.30 p.m.
- Fifth Committee at 4.50 p.m.
- Sixth Committee at 5.10 p.m.
- Agenda Committee at 5.30 p.m.

15. — ENTRY OF MEXICO INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS : DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE DELEGATIONS OF GERMANY, THE BRITISH EMPIRE, SPAIN, FRANCE, ITALY AND JAPAN.

The President :

Translation : The delegations of Germany, the British Empire, Spain, France, Italy and Japan have just handed to me a draft resolution which reads as follows :

"The German, British, Spanish, French, Italian and Japanese delegations,

"Considering that Mexico is not mentioned in the Annex to the Covenant enumerating the countries invited to accede thereto ;

"Considering that the League should now in all justice repair this omission which is wholly contrary to its true spirit :

"Propose to the Assembly that Mexico be invited to accede to the Covenant and to lend its valuable support to the League as though it had been invited from the outset."

The Assembly thus has before it a proposal on which it will be asked to a decision, in the form of a resolution or a recommendation.

In conformity with the usual custom and with the Rules of Procedure, this proposal will be distributed to the delegations, and I shall ask the Assembly, at to-morrow morning's meeting, to decide what action is to be taken on the proposal.

16. — EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY WITH REFERENCE TO THE CATASTROPHE IN CHINA : DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : I have before me a proposal submitted by the British delegation which reads as follows :

"The Assembly,

"Having heard with the deepest sorrow the account of the terrible disasters that have overtaken certain provinces of China :

"Appeals to all men and women of goodwill throughout the world to show by action their sympathy for those who are the victims of this appalling catastrophe."

In conformity with the usual custom and with the Rules of Procedure, the above proposal will be distributed to the delegations, and I shall ask the Assembly, at to-morrow morning's meeting, to decide what action is to be taken on the proposal.

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH, 1931, AT 10.30 A.M.

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Opening of the Discussion.
Speech by M. Grandi (Italy).

President : M. TITULESCO.

17. — ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : In the first place, I have to inform the Assembly of the result of the voting which took place yesterday for the election of the Chairmen of the six Committees of the Assembly.

| Committee | Chairman |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| First | M. SCIALOJA (Italy), |
| Second | M. JANSON (Belgium), |
| Third | M. MUNCH (Denmark), |
| Fourth | M. POLITIS (Greece), |
| Fifth | Khan ALĀ (Persia), |
| Sixth | M. MOTTA (Switzerland). |

The Agenda Committee has elected as its Chairman M. BELLEGARDE (Haiti).

18. — ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the election of the six Vice-Presidents of the Assembly.

Under Rule 21, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure, this election takes place by secret ballot. I wish to remind delegates that voting papers should include only the names of six members and that no country should be mentioned.

I call upon M. Scialoja, delegate of Italy and Chairman of the First Committee, and M. Munch, delegate of Denmark and Chairman of the Third Committee, to be good enough to act as tellers.

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

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 48 |
| Blank voting paper | 1 |
| Voting papers valid | 47 |
| Majority required | 24 |

The analysis of voting is as follows :

| | Votes |
|--|-------|
| M. Briand (France) | 44 |
| Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) | 43 |
| M. Yoshizawa (Japan) | 43 |
| Dr. Curtius (Germany) | 42 |
| Count Apponyi (Hungary) | 39 |
| M. Restrepo (Colombia) | 32 |

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, therefore, I have the honour to declare the following delegates Vice-Presidents of the Assembly: M. BRIAND, Viscount CECIL OF CHELWOOD, M. YOSHIZAWA, Dr. CURTIUS, Count APPONYI and M. RESTREPO.

The General Committee of the Assembly, therefore, is now constituted as follows:

The six Chairmen of Committees:

M. SCIALOJA (Italy),
M. JANSON (Belgium),
M. MUNCH (Denmark),
M. POLITIS (Greece),
Khan ALA (Persia),
M. MOTTA (Switzerland),

together with the six Vice-Presidents who have just been elected:

M. BRIAND,
Viscount CECIL OF CHELWOOD,
M. YOSHIZAWA,
Dr. CURTIUS,
Count APPONYI,
M. RESTREPO,

and the Chairman of the Agenda Committee:

M. BELLEGARDE.

19. — ENTRY OF MEXICO INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE DELEGATIONS OF GERMANY, THE BRITISH EMPIRE, SPAIN, FRANCE, ITALY AND JAPAN.

The President:

Translation: The Assembly will remember that a draft resolution has been submitted by the British, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish delegations concerning the entry of Mexico into the League. The text of that draft resolution reads as follows:

"The German, British, Spanish, French Italian and Japanese delegations,

"Considering that Mexico is not mentioned in the Annex to the Covenant enumerating the countries invited to accede thereto;

"Considering, that the League should now in all justice repair this omission, which is wholly contrary to its true spirit;

"Propose to the Assembly that Mexico be invited to accede to the Covenant and to lend its valuable support to the League as though it had been invited from the outset."

As you will note, this is a proposal that may be incorporated in a resolution or a recommendation, as you may decide. But, first, we must determine the procedure to be followed. The first question to be considered is whether the Assembly is to refer this proposal to the Agenda Committee or whether, under Rule 4, paragraph 4, and Rule 14, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure, it prefers to deal with it immediately:

In accordance with precedent, I shall interpret the silence of the Assembly on this point of preliminary procedure as a sign that it does not desire to refer the matter to a Committee and that,

consequently, the Assembly has decided by the requisite majority to place the question on its agenda and deal with it immediately.

The President's proposal was adopted.

The President:

Translation: I open the discussion on that proposal by calling upon the first speaker on the list, Dr. Curtius, first delegate of Germany.

Dr. Curtius (Germany):

Translation: As the representative of Germany a country which has long been bound to Mexico by ties of constant and sincere friendship, I had great pleasure in subscribing to the proposal regarding the invitation to Mexico.

Its population and the extent of its territory give Mexico an important place among the States of the world. Not only the States which form part of the sphere of Spanish culture, but all the States Members of the League will set the greatest value on the active participation of Mexico in the work of the League. We are all aware that the League's activity will increase in importance as it tends to become universal in scope and a great step towards this universality would be taken if Mexico were to become a Member of the League.

For reasons into which I need not enter here, Mexico has long remained aloof from the League. It was therefore with universal satisfaction that the news was received at the beginning of last year that the newly elected President of the Republic, His Excellency General Ortiz Rubio, had declared, shortly before taking up his high office, that he was in favour of the early entry of Mexico into the League. We shall all be ready to congratulate both himself and his country, and the League also, when his Government actually presents itself as a member of the League.

The President:

Translation: Viscount Cecil, first delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire):

I have the greatest possible pleasure in supporting this motion which has been made by my friend Dr. Curtius for an invitation to be extended to the State of Mexico to apply for membership of the League of Nations. I do so for many reasons, but for two in particular.

In the first place, this proposal is the correction of an omission that was made at Paris when the formation of the League was being considered. That omission has lasted much too long, and I am not sure that I ought not to acknowledge that I was in part, I suppose, responsible for it. It therefore gives me particular pleasure at this moment to take part in remedying an omission which never should have been made.

The second and more important reason is that we all, I think, desire to have the collaboration of Mexico in our consultations and deliberations. Mexico is one of the most ancient and one of the most influential of the States of the American continent. It has a great position and a history showing remarkable energy and self-reliance in its people. I am quite certain that we shall find its collaboration and assistance of great value to us at Geneva.

I agree entirely with Dr. Curtius that, the more universal the League becomes, the more one of its most fundamental characteristics is realised. Perhaps I may be allowed to add that in my view membership of the League by each State is not only valuable for the League but is valuable for

the State itself. It brings more vividly perhaps before its people the knowledge of the interdependence of all States in the modern world, and makes them realise that, in working for the prosperity and peace of the world, they are working also for the prosperity and peace of their own country. I have great pleasure in seconding the proposal now before us.

The President :

Translation : M. de Madariaga, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga (Spain) :

Translation : I am here, by an act of noble self-abnegation on the part of the first delegate of Spain, to support the motion submitted to the Assembly. Such a motion is bound to be an extremely attractive one to the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, since it is designed to facilitate the entry into the League of a country which is connected with Spain, not only by historical ties, but by ties of blood. Spain has realised intensely, almost as intensely as Mexico herself, the reason — what our great Cervantes would have called "the reason of unreason" — which has kept Mexico aloof from our discussion for this long period.

After the noble and admirable words of Viscount Cecil, that pillar of the League and of the universal spirit that rules its activities, I need not dwell upon the retrospective aspect of the question.

Mexico to-day occupies a pre-eminent position on the American continent. All the American countries of the same race and language regard her as one of the leading nations of that continent. I have realised, in the official post I have taken up at Washington, where the present Mexican ambassador is the doyen of the Diplomatic Corps, that the great North-American Republic maintains with Mexico, relations of the most cordial intimacy and co-operates with her to an unexampled degree.

Moreover, however enviable the continental position of Mexico, there is no doubt that she herself does not find it adequate to enable her to fulfil her destiny as a nation of the modern world. Just as men do not come to a full realisation of their individuality until, to use a sublime expression of Pascal's "they try to understand the universe", so nations cannot come to a complete understanding of their national individuality until they rise to a comprehension of universality. It is this same noble aspiration after universality that, despite all, endears to us the old eighteenth-century imperialism, the worst aspects of which are now happily vanishing.

Nations that are not strong enough for imperialism and those which, though strong, aim at a higher form of development have found, since the creation of the League of Nations, a blameless way to achieve universality. The League can do Mexico the great service of helping her to a complete understanding of her national spirit.

On the other hand, as Lord Cecil has already said, Mexico can help the League by contributing a sturdy spirit of liberty in her political conceptions, a deep-seated tradition and, above all, a unique sense of brotherhood between races, which may be of the utmost service to the League and stimulate its development.

It is the bounden duty of the League to attain, as soon as possible, the universality that is at the very root of its being, that is really the standard and model which inspired its conception. The League must be able to inscribe upon its portals and to use as a motto for its action this sentence adapted

from the old classic: "I am the conscious and organised world, and no nation can be foreign to me."

The President :

Translation : M. Briand, first delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Briand (France) :

Translation : I wish to say in a few words how happy France is to be able to associate herself with the present gesture towards that great nation, Mexico. It was a great pleasure to me to subscribe to the proposal now before the Assembly — a proposal destined to make good an omission of which we were all conscious and which we all deplored.

At last it is possible to put right a misunderstanding, an unfortunate mistake; and we shall see among us the representatives of that great nation. They will come to share in our work and to contribute a valuable co-operation which we all desire.

It will be a happy occasion, and I wish to say on behalf of my country that France will joyfully welcome the day when Mexico comes to take her share in our work, thus bringing us a step nearer to what is the highest ideal of our League, universality.

The President :

Translation : M. Grandi, first delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Grandi (Italy) :

Translation : I gladly associate myself with the declarations made by previous speakers who have already spoken. Italy also will be delighted to see a great nation like Mexico taking part in the work of the League of Nations.

The President.

Translation : M. Yoshizawa, first delegate of Japan, will address the Assembly.

M. Yoshizawa (Japan) :

Translation : The Japanese delegation was anxious to join with those who proposed the draft resolution inviting Mexico to accede to the Covenant of the League.

We have always been ardent advocates of the principle of universality, which is to combine within the League representatives of all civilisations and of all continents, with their varied types of national genius.

That is why we are so anxious that Mexico should bring to the universal work of the League the valuable contribution of her own individual civilisation.

The President.

Translation : M. Gonzalez-Prada, delegate of Peru, will address the Assembly.

M. Gonzalez-Prada (Peru) :

Translation : This is the first occasion on which I have had the honour of addressing you from this platform, having been chosen by the delegations of the Latin-American States to express the satisfaction that those countries have felt on learning that Mexico is shortly to become a Member of the League of Nations.

The draft resolution submitted to us, inviting Mexico to accede to the Covenant and to lend her valuable support to this Assembly is a further

step forward towards world unanimity, which must remain one of our most cherished aims.

I have great pleasure in fulfilling the honourable duty entrusted to me by my Latin-American colleagues and declare our profound satisfaction at the prospect of seeing in the near future the representatives of Mexico here among us, sharing in our work.

The President :

Translation : The Hon. Hugh Guthrie, first delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

The Hon. Hugh Guthrie (Canada) : The delegation from the Dominion of Canada, which is a nation occupying its place on the continent of North America, desires most heartily to endorse the resolution which proposes an invitation to our sister State on the North American continent to accede to the Covenant and become a Member of the League of Nations.

Canada has, in the past, had many relationships with its sister State of Mexico. They have all been most pleasant and satisfactory. A considerable international trade is done between the two countries, and I believe always upon a satisfactory basis, under the provisions of a Trade Treaty which exists between the two countries. It will be a matter of great satisfaction to the Dominion of Canada to know that this invitation to Mexico has gone forth, and a greater satisfaction to know that the invitation has been accepted and that Mexico has become a Member of the League.

The President :

Translation : M. de Quevedo, delegate of Portugal will address the Assembly.

M. de Quevedo (Portugal) :

Translation : The accession of the Republic of the United States of Mexico to the League of Nations will be hailed as a most welcome event by all the States Members of the League. Mexico, one of the great nations of Spanish America, one of the outstanding products in the historic achievement of the Latin-Iberian race, ranks also as one of the greatest nations of the New World.

Mexico's greatness lies in her ancient culture, her creative instinct, the valour of her men and the fruitful output of her liberal institutions.

As representative of one of the countries of the Iberian Peninsula, in which the origins of Latin-American culture must be sought, I sincerely rejoice to learn of the probable entry into the League of the great Mexican people, a people who will lend to us the invaluable support of their experience and place upon our work the fruitful imprint of their genius.

I welcome the accession of the United States of Mexico with all the friendliness and enthusiasm of a kinsman and a friend.

The President :

Translation : M. Restrepo, first delegate of Colombia, will address the Assembly.

M. Restrepo (Colombia) :

Translation : I gladly avail myself of this opportunity of paying a tribute to that great country, Mexico, an old friend of Colombia, the country which I have the honour to represent at the Assembly of the League of Nations. Ever since the establishment of our independence at the beginning of the last century, we have been on terms of close friendship with Mexico. We Colombians admire the great qualities of the Mexican people, their

indomitable courage, their energy, their wisdom. All of us in Latin America have experienced great difficulties owing to the fact that the Iberian race came and settled among native races, races so very different in character. Such difficulties still face Governments which have learnt wisdom, Governments as firmly established as those of the older European countries.

One criticism sometimes levelled against us is that we are always having revolutions. The causes of that situation deserve to be closely examined. The reason why it is so difficult for us to establish any permanent system of order is to be found precisely in that mixture of races — native races on the one hand, and, on the other, the Iberian race — which has settled among them.

Mexico boasts of her ancient Aztec stock and prides herself on continuing the native Governments based on her traditions. It is believed that the old Asiatic races reached the New World through the Behring Straits, though another learned theory is that America peopled the rest of the world. That is a moot point, but those scholars who have studied Mexico most thoroughly affirm that her ancient monuments bear witness to a civilisation the origins of which are lost in the beginnings of time. In Yucatan, in the mountains of Mexico, on the high tablelands, in the city of Mexico itself, those mighty monuments are found, silent witnesses of a glorious past.

We in Colombia count it an honour to be descendants of the Spanish, for with us the white race predominates.

In Mexico, on the other hand, in addition to several millions of Spanish there are thirteen millions of Indians who speak nothing but their own native tongue. Be that as it may, Mexico is a powerful country, an immense country, organised in the form of a federation which is an honour to the Latin-American race.

The delegates of all the nations assembled here are not, I think, aware of the reason for the invitation now being extended to Mexico to enter the League. Is it possible that so manifestly powerful a nation was once forgotten? This is the moment to explain why Mexico has not been represented here since the foundation of the League. As representative of Colombia, I was one of the founders of this great institution. Not long ago, Costa Rica applied for admission to the League, and the delegates here wondered then why Costa Rica had not received an invitation as the South American States had done. I should like to tell you something about how Mexico and Costa Rica came to be left out, when the great Powers signatories to the Treaty of Peace extended their invitation to the South American countries.

For the first time in history, as you will recall, all the South American States were convened to attend the Second Peace Conference held at The Hague in 1907 under the auspices of the Czar of Russia. After that, some time elapsed. Then, on the signature of the Treaty of Peace, we were all invited again, with the exception of Mexico and the Republic of Costa Rica. What was the reason for leaving out one North American country and one country of Central America? It was because President Wilson, a great American leader, and a great man, to whom I pay a tribute whenever I utter his name, preached a doctrine which rather implied intervention as regards the Governments South of the United States, from the Colorado River to Chile. He held the view that, in the interests of pacification in South America, we should refuse to recognise Governments which were the outcome of revolutionary movements, of *coups d'état*, of *cuartelazos*, or military plots.

Costo Rica applied for admission, but Mexico, in the pride and dignity of her race, would not apply. Since then, more stable government has been established under General Ortiz Rubio, to whom Dr. Curtius referred, and at the present time calm reigns in Mexico. Like every other country, she has to contend with economic and financial difficulties; but the country is none the less rich, a country of gold and silver mines, a country with its national heroes like every other nation — heroes such as that Spaniard who burnt his ships when he reached the Mexican shores and cried to his soldiers: "Victory or death!" The Emperor Guatemoc was taken prisoner by that same Spaniard, and Roman history alone offers examples comparable to that episode. Guatemoc was burnt alive, like Saint Laurence, according to Christian tradition, and with him his secretary, a man of poorer fibre than himself. When he began to tremble and to cry out, the Emperor turned to him and said; "Enough! Do you imagine that I myself am lying on a bed of roses?" Such was his nobility of character, such the influence of his personality.

Colombia, like all the countries represented on the League, will welcome Mexico as a fellow Member when the moment comes for her to send her representatives to this Assembly.

The President :

Translation : All those delegates who have spoken have declared themselves in favour of the proposal now under consideration.

I think, then, the time has come to suggest that the Assembly should modify the terms of the text and convert it into a resolution.

I would propose the following wording :

The Assembly,

Considering that Mexico is not mentioned in the Annex to the Covenant enumerating the countries invited to accede thereto ;

Considering that the League should now in all justice repair this omission, which is wholly contrary to its true spirit ;

Decides that Mexico be invited to accede to the Covenant and to lend its valuable support to the League as though it had been invited from the outset.

Asks the Secretary-General to give effect to the present decision.

If no one has any observations to make, I shall assume that the Assembly agrees to the proposal being converted into a resolution.

Agreed.

The President :

Translation : We still have to settle a point of procedure.

The Assembly can refer the resolution I have just read to a Committee, for preliminary examination or it can adopt it at once. If no one has any observations to make, I shall take it that the Assembly desires to accept the resolution immediately and unanimously.

The draft resolution was unanimously adopted.

The President :

Translation : May I be allowed, as President of this Assembly and as a Roumanian, to express my delight at the prospect that Mexico may soon take her place among us, side by side with the kindred races which form part of that great family, the League of Nations?

20.—REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: OPENING OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the opening of the general discussion on the report on the work of the League of Nations since the eleventh session of the Assembly.

M. Grandi, first delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Grandi (Italy) :

Translation : This is the first occasion on which I have the honour of addressing the Assembly of the League of Nations, but it is not the first time that I have collaborated with you, here and elsewhere. My many years of direct and indirect co-operation in the work of the League and my unfailing confidence in the efficacy of that co-operation will, I hope, be held to absolve me from the duty of making declarations of a general character.

Italy's policy, moreover, has been explained on various occasions from this platform, so that I should only be reiterating ideas and principles with which you are already acquainted. I should simply be going over ground already covered by the statesmen of my country and put before you with admirable clarity by those in charge of the Italian delegation at previous sessions of the Assembly.

To-day I propose to confine myself to certain considerations connected with the report on the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly and, in particular, to the problems described in the report as constituting the main aspect of that work: I refer to the preparations for the Disarmament Conference and the enquiry into the existing economic depression.

My determination to confine myself to those particular points is due partly to my desire to keep within the limits of the report and partly also to my conception of what the League's work should be. For, in my view, the League should keep before it the realities of international relations and not be afraid to emerge from its study of ideas. The policy of States should be the root and origin of its activities, while it should not be allowed to spend itself in the enunciation of principles any more than in evolving its own constitutional law. In other words, the League should engage in practical work, bearing a co-ordinate relation to the work done by each country, adapted to the problems with which we are faced and designed to convince the nations of the sincerity and efficacy of our efforts.

About the constitutional development of the League I should like to say a few words here. Of the questions in our agenda, one is directly connected with this aspect of the League's work. I refer to the amendment of the Covenant in order to bring it into harmony with the Pact of Paris of 1928. That question will be examined by the First Committee, and the Italian representative on that body is one of the original authors of the Covenant. Italy, I need hardly remind you, associated herself with the British proposal for the co-ordination of those two instruments. From a general standpoint, therefore, and in connection with what might be called the League's constitutional policy, I shall seize the pretext of this item on the agenda to express my views on the subject of possible amendments to the Covenant.

I am frankly conservative in this matter. Our association of States is still in its infancy,

and the tests to which it is being put are not perhaps the severest that it will have to face. It certainly answers a real need for international co-operation, a need felt by the peoples now more intensely than ever before, and we are entitled to survey with confidence its future, the work that it may be expected to accomplish and its prospects of success.

Nevertheless, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that this association is of recent origin, that the significance of its legal institutions has not yet become part of the national conscience, that its international functions have not yet developed to the fullest extent envisaged in the simple but stupendous plan embodied in the Covenant.

Let us not forget that the Covenant has only been in existence for a few years. Only now, perhaps, in the light of events, are we beginning to appreciate its scope, to understand its spirit and to estimate it at its true value. It is an instrument of which full use has not yet been made, which has scarcely begun to be employed in certain essential departments, such as disarmament. That alone should be enough to counsel prudence.

It seems to me, however, that another aspect of the problem is chiefly deserving of our attention. We must consolidate the actual basis on which our association rests. I do not mean to imply that there is any lack of confidence in the League. May I, however, point out that, if we want international relations to become an organic part of the League system, the contractual principles on which that system is based must not be continually subject to revision. If these institutions are to be a living force in the conscience of our peoples, our undertakings must not be brought up for daily discussions, and we must avoid setting up new structures which might lead to the idea that the institutions of the League of Nations are simply an unsatisfactory means of organising the legal side of international relations and that that could be done better in other ways.

We can hardly be accused of having gone too far, but the practically universal accession to the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court, the increasing number of accessions to the General Act of Arbitration, the framing of the Convention to strengthen the Means of preventing War, and, lastly, the proposals for bringing the Covenant into harmony with the Paris Pact, undoubtedly constitute a programme which may be regarded as adequately supplementing the Covenant.

If the Covenant is to be retained in its entirety, and is itself to retain its nicely balanced proportions, the obligations arising out of it must be applied in full, so that the relations between the constituent elements of what has been termed the international organisation of peace may be scrupulously respected.

Those elements are clearly indicated in the Covenant—the peaceful settlement of international disputes, disarmament and security. The Covenant even fixes the relations between them inasmuch as it declares the peaceful settlement of international disputes and disarmament to be the real basis and token of security and peace.

I have no intention of theorising on the structure of the Covenant; but, to illustrate my remarks, I might mention certain ideas which the Italian delegation has repeatedly put forward here. These may perhaps be pertinent now, when we are preparing for the Disarmament Conference—that is, on the eve of complex negotiations which cannot begin in the necessary atmosphere of clarity, unless, from the outset, each one of us frankly states his country's policy.

Since we regard the problem of disarmament as an integral part of the League system, that system must obviously be our starting-point. One principle stands out clearly from the stipulations of the Covenant—peace can rest only on the security of nations, and security can be found only in the harmonious evolution of two factors: the peaceful settlement of disputes and a general reduction of armaments.

Disarmament and arbitration, the rejection of all solutions based on force, and the relative equalising of the military strength of States at the lowest possible level—that is not just a theory or dogmatic assertion. It lies at the root of the system which the League Covenant has evolved with a view to the reduction of armaments; it corresponds essentially to real and pressing demands. Indeed, there is no problem of security distinct from disarmament and arbitration.

If, in international relations, solutions could be reached by the use of force, if there were no excess of armaments, the problem of security would never arise. It has arisen because the legal organisation of the association of nations which we have been laboriously constructing during the last few years still leaves the door open to the race for armaments, a factor that undermines its structure and jeopardises its efficacy. It is not merely because the excess of armaments has the effect of blunting the sense of justice among the nations, but because no nation can hope to live in peace and security under a system of international justice which, however perfect in theory, is in practice menaced by the pressure that armaments may bring to bear on inter-State relations.

To realise this, we need only survey the period preceding the war, which was marked by two characteristic and simultaneous phenomena—on the one hand, the first concrete manifestations of the principle of conciliation and arbitration, with the creation of the first arbitral tribunal at The Hague, and the conclusion of various treaties based on that same principle; on the other, the strength of armaments. In other words, an increase in the number of international acts designed to secure peace and a simultaneous increase of armaments, which was bound sooner or later to lead to war.

When we look back on those tragic happenings, we can hardly be surprised that our nations, which have barely emerged from a war the consequences of which are still crippling them, should refuse to regard international justice as an adequate safeguard for the future.

Nor can we be surprised if the nations ask that international justice shall be safeguarded from the dangers attendant upon a policy of armaments. The Covenant imposes upon us the duty of disarming, but the Covenant does not possess the only claim to our consideration; there exist other claims, vaster still.

For the last twenty years, Europe has been in a permanent state of unrest. Wars and revolutions have succeeded one another, the deaths must be reckoned in millions, national systems of economy have been overturned and the working classes are without employment.

Our civilisation has been periodically saved in different directions by the genius of a few men, and by the power of resistance and the spirit of sacrifice of the peoples; but the time has come to make a collective and concrete effort in the defence of our common heritage.

Recently, there have been ever clearer and more visible signs that isolated efforts are no longer adequate. No country, however powerful and vast, however well equipped and wisely organised, but feels the menace to its own organisation in the

form of possible sudden external events. The consciousness of the solidarity of nations has become more definite, and courageous spokesmen have not been lacking. President Hoover's proposal and the felicitous action of the American Government are a case in point, and no member of this Assembly, I think, will have forgotten the cordial reception given in every country to the American proposal, despite the heavy sacrifices it entails on either side.

We have had further proof during the last few months of the need for closer co-operation between nations, and — what is more important — there has been co-operation between the nations which only a short time ago, were in armed conflict with one another. They have settled their differences and decided to co-operate in the defence of our common civilisation.

Fresh possibilities have been opened up by the negotiations between those countries, which do not differ in any respect from those envisaged by the League. All these means lead to the same common goal. In any case, work is being done, ideas are being clarified and — let us be frank — the interests served by international solidarity are being proclaimed and defined. Our business now is to organise, to safeguard and to clear the way, and that we cannot do so long as our efforts at collective organisation are paralysed by the race for armaments.

In this connection, one of the most delicate questions of international policy — the financial obligations arising out of the war — is not without some bearing on the disarmament problem. There is, of course, no diplomatic connection between disarmament, reparations and debts; but nobody will deny the moral connection between them.

Before nations sacrifice their rights, they must be persuaded of the usefulness of the sacrifices demanded of them, and it is difficult to see the usefulness of any fresh settlement of the financial obligations arising out of the war, as long as the race for armaments continues.

We cannot deny the justice of an observation put forward more than once — the sacrifices made must not, by permitting the increase of armaments, be allowed to aggravate the present state of insecurity, which, more than anything, is militating against a general economic recovery, and is one of the fundamental causes, if not the main cause, of the present unsettled situation.

One other observation is relevant in connection with this general economic problem. All countries are suffering as the result of the continual increase in Customs barriers, a protectionist policy which means that the economic development of the various countries is proceeding on individual lines, and prevents the sound development of the process of integration which alone can secure effective economic collaboration between States. One of the immediate causes of the retention and strengthening of these Customs barriers, which have the effect of dividing the world into often extremely small commercial units, and which have had, and still have, the effect of dispersing the efforts of the nations, is the general state of political insecurity which drives nations to organise a system of economic security and to snatch at all costs at some independent means of defence for possible use against dangers that may threaten them from without.

I am well aware that the protectionist fever from which the world is suffering to-day has other

more general causes; but, in Europe, undoubtedly one of those causes is an obscure sentiment of danger — possibly a vague and distant danger — which we must do our best to allay. What the countries of Europe want is tranquillity. Let the more powerful States give the less powerful ones a feeling of general security, and let that feeling of general security rest, not only on their avowed will to peace, but on a definite and equitable adjustment of the relations between them, and we shall see the disappearance — as if by magic — of all the special political reasons for what I might describe as economic armaments. Let us lay down our arms, and we shall see the disappearance of those barriers, sometimes ridiculously high, which separate the economic systems of our nations.

In my Government's view, disarmament is the starting-point of many things — the putting into execution of the system of security and peace created by the Covenant, the establishment of greater confidence between States, and the re-establishment of laws of economic integration which have suffered such ruthless violation.

That is the most urgent item in the League's programme; that is the task most closely in keeping with the League's essential purpose.

The Disarmament Conference has been convened and will begin work on February 2nd. My observations may therefore appear superfluous; indeed, I hope that they will prove so. Naturally, they do not refer to the convening of the Conference, but to the policy that may be adopted by the Governments represented there, to the ideas they may bring to it, and to the methods they intend to follow. Now is the time for courage, moderation and above all, common sense. Each one of us must realise the difficulties of the others, must state his own requirements frankly, limiting them to what is really essential, and must reduce his armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety, and the enforcement by common action of international obligations, within the meaning of Article 8 of the Covenant.

I am, however, inclined to think that, during the actual period of preparation for the Disarmament Conference, States which have definitely undertaken to participate in the Conference might adopt provisional measures. The Council of the League, as you know, suggested preliminary discussions. Acting on that recommendation, we might do really useful work by adopting practical measures without delay. My own feeling is that we ought to try immediately to arrive at a really effective armaments truce, at least for the period of the Conference, and I should like to ask you seriously to consider my suggestion.

A general and immediate agreement between States to suspend the execution of programmes for fresh armaments would not only set our peoples an example of goodwill, but would create a psychological and political atmosphere of greater calm and confidence, which would do more than any declaration of principles to further the work of the Conference and lead to tangible results.

In this connection I may inform you that His Majesty the King of Italy has just signed the General Act for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, and I have received from my Government instructions with a view to the accession of Italy to the General Convention to strengthen the Means of preventing War, should that Convention be approved by the Assembly.

I have already had occasion to explain to the Council the importance attached by Italy to the General Act, an instrument which we regard as a welcome addition to the technical machinery of international justice.

Our present duty is to create the conditions for the functioning of international justice. I have no wish unduly to stress my point of view, nor was it my desire, in directing your attention to the disarmament problem, to exclude other questions which call for consideration, or to pass over the fact that disarmament is only one element in the problems arising out of the international situation. It does, however, seem to me to be the most urgent problem, and a problem which must be settled before we can hope to solve the others.

I do not propose now to go into the economic questions affecting international relations at this difficult period of national life of the peoples. The Italian delegation will certainly have occasion, in the course of our proceedings, to explain its attitude towards these questions, the technical nature of which necessitates careful and detailed study.

I should like, however, to give you a few explanations with regard to one of the questions to which I have referred — the financial obligations arising out of the war.

If that matter were to come up for discussion again, it would, of course, have to be the subject of negotiations between the States directly affected by it. As things are, we do not know if or when such negotiations may commence. In any case, the possibility of a fresh examination of the problem of debts and reparations depends largely on what happens during the next few months, when we shall have an opportunity of judging the effects of the Hoover plan.

Italy sincerely hopes that those effects will prove to be favourable, firmly convinced as she is that an equitable adjustment of debts and reparations would be of advantage to all countries, not only to debtor or creditor countries.

That is the view that has always been held by the Italian Government, and is still held by it. The problem is, of course, infinitely more complicated than appears at first sight, since it presents other than strictly economic aspects — not because it is a special kind of problem in itself, but because no international problem is exclusively political or economic.

It is, in fact, impossible to draw hard and fast lines between the interests of the States, for those interests are interdependent. The important point is to solve political problems in the spirit of co-operation in which it is desired and in which it is necessary to solve the economic problems. Political peace and economic peace must coincide, mutual confidence being a necessary condition for both of them. It is when a general atmosphere of co-operation has been created that particular differences between States can be most easily adjusted.

There are important precedents in our recent history that may serve as examples — for the European States, of course. I need only recall the fact that the Locarno Agreements, by inaugurating an era of closer confidence in the relations between certain European Powers, have helped to create the objective conditions which made it possible to deal with the problem of German reparations on the lines known to you, from the Dawes Plan to the Young Plan.

I quite realise that these questions do not come directly within the framework of the League's

work. The very fact that certain States with important specific interests in connection with the financial obligations arising out of the war are not Members of the League precludes the possibility of thus including those questions in its work. Could they be solved, however, we should find new and broader bases of agreement, which is the aim of us all. The League can help by working still more energetically in the interests of moral reconciliation, a crying need, not in Europe alone, but all over the world.

The further we get away from the great war, the more keenly do we realise the terrible wounds which it inflicted on all countries without distinction—wounds which we should find it impossible to heal were it not for the fact that the spirit of sacrifice which the war brought out in all the belligerent countries itself engendered powers of resistance which have enabled countries to defend their civilisation—reserves which encourage them to face the future with greater confidence.

We are all counting upon that spirit now and Europe can count on the spirit of the Italian people. Still, as I said, individual national action is not enough while the creation of exclusive groups might injure, rather than further, the cause of co-operation security and peace.

As a matter of fact, since the war, European policy has been distracted by the conflict between two great forces which it has not yet been possible to adjust: on the one hand, the collective movement towards establishing a regime of more systematic and stable co-operation than any which has existed before, and, on the other, the tendency of particular States to form themselves into independent groups for the defence of their national interests — in our opinion, a very doubtful solution of the problem of international co-operation.

A collective effort on the part of European and non-European nations, whether Members of the League or not, is necessary to correct these conflicting tendencies, and to discourage the idea of creating exclusive groups in Europe. This tendency is not, in our opinion, in accordance with the conception embodied in the Covenant of regional understandings for securing the maintenance of peace. On the contrary, the system has the effect of creating divisions highly prejudicial to the peace and tranquillity of nations. It is a mistake to think that it represents a first stage towards the formation of a larger group. The formations of *blocs*, in the form either of military alliances or agreements for the furtherance of particular interests or special regimes, inevitably leads to the creation of other *blocs*. This automatically entails the establishment of powerful associations of interests which tend to withdraw from participation in the main action and begin to watch one another.

If we desire to establish a real system of peace, it must be based on real international interests. That is a delicate problem of adjustment as between the particular interests of individual States and the organic system of international co-operation. The Covenant provides us with a happy solution of the problem, and we ought, not only to respect that solution, but to deduce from it general rules of conduct applicable in our international relations.

We all form one single group, and our dearest hope is to see it expand rather than disintegrate. We trust that the League of Nations may become a true reflection of the solidarity of nations, of all States, great and small, European and non-European, all helping to further their common civilisation, a civilisation which it is our duty not only to protect, but to strengthen and extend.

For that reason we welcome the co-operation of States non-members of the League. It seems to me that we should be placing too narrow an interpretation upon our interests if we sought to confine to Member States the advantages that may ensue from the League's work. We ought to give the States which do not yet belong to the League every facility for co-operating with it within the general framework of its principles. Even in places where no echo of the League's voice is heard, its spirit may still penetrate — the

spirit of co-operation and peace. The world has never needed it so much as now, for if we have not yet seen the worst of the economic depression, we may expect to do so soon.

As our distinguished President said, we must seize on the spontaneous sentiments of solidarity to which this crisis has given birth, not only to meet the stern needs of the times, but as the basis of a greater and more durable institution for the future.

The Assembly rose at 1.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8TH, 1931, AT 4 P.M.

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President : M. TITULESCO.

21. — EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY WITH REFERENCE TO THE CATASTROPHE IN CHINA : ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the draft resolution submitted by the British delegation conveying an expression of sympathy to the Chinese Government.

The text is as follows :

“ The Assembly,

“ Having heard with the deepest sorrow the account of the terrible disasters that have overtaken certain provinces of China,

“ Appeals to all men and women of goodwill throughout the world to show by action their sympathy for those who are the victims of this appalling catastrophe.”

Unhappily, there are precedents for the submission of such a resolution. Last year, your President received a draft resolution expressing sympathy with the Dominican Republic, which had just suffered terribly from an earthquake.

This year, another Member of the League, one of the oldest and most faithful Members, is enduring an equally terrible calamity.

The Assembly will not, I think, desire to change the procedure it adopted at its eleventh session in expressing its sympathy for a Member State. I therefore propose that we should begin at once the discussion of the draft resolution before us.

Agreed.

The President :

Translation : Viscount Cecil, the first delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire) :

The motion of which the British delegation has given notice will, I am sure, commend itself to all the members of the Assembly without any exception, and I do not therefore need to occupy your time for more than a very few minutes in order to recommend the resolution to your favourable consideration. It calls the attention of the Assembly to events in China, to the floods in China, which I think are really without parallel in the history of that country, or perhaps in the history of any other country. I am informed that right along the valley of the great river Yangtse for more than a thousand miles, and for a breadth of fifty miles, the whole area is flooded. That is a prodigious stretch of country, as large, I understand, as Scotland.

It is stated that several million human beings have perished in the floods; some authorities have put the figure as high as ten millions. It is estimated that something like thirty million persons are homeless as a consequence of the floods. Human bodies are floating about in the

flooded area ; it has been impossible even to bury them. Crops have been destroyed and relief is urgently needed in order to enable the unhappy survivors to live until the next harvest.

It is said that it is only a matter of organisation, no doubt of considerable organisation, to convey food, clothing and medical stores to the parts of the country which are affected. Unfortunately, the hospitals in the large towns there — for example in Hankow — have all been flooded out, so that the need from a health point of view is very extreme. Those of us who live in countries which have not endured such an affliction must not forget that it is only too likely that great epidemics of disease will follow these floods, and that they may spread far and wide over the surface of the earth ; this, therefore, is a matter of great international importance, apart from the sense of fellowship and friendship in which we live and work here in order to promote that sense among the nations of the world.

I do not know, and therefore I have not mentioned the matter in my draft resolution, whether there is any way in which the League of Nations can be of service in this matter ; but I am quite certain that the Secretariat and the Council will be only too ready to afford, in this connection, any assistance which the Government of China may require and for which it may ask.

It would be an impertinence and it would be futile to add, by any phrases of mine, or by any attempt at rhetoric, to the claim which the bare facts of this disaster must make on every one of us. I trust we shall adopt this resolution and that it may be fruitful in helping the very hard-pressed and terribly tried provinces of China to which I have referred.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Sze, first delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Sze¹ (China) :

I arise at once to express the appreciation of the Chinese delegation of the motion proposed by Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, chief of the delegation of the British Empire. I can assure you that, when the news of this proposal of sympathy and help reaches China, the hearts of my people will be stirred by the sympathy thus shown to them in their great trouble.

It does, indeed, appear that the calamity resulting from the floods in China is a vast one. Many millions of people in the neighbourhood of Hankow and elsewhere have had their homes destroyed and been rendered destitute. This is a disaster which could not have been reasonably foreseen and provided against. The records show that never before had the Yangtse River risen so many feet — fifty-three and a-half at Hankow. The highest previous record had been fifty feet, which was about a century ago, and only once since then had it reached as high as forty-nine feet.

In addition to the loss of life and the destruction of the millions of homes, there is the fear that epidemics of disease may follow. It is thus evident that my people will welcome all the aid that can be extended to them from other countries. In this connection, my delegation would be ungrateful if it did not mention the assistance which the League of Nations is already giving to our Government and people. The National Health Administration at Nanking is in touch with the Health Organisation of the League and, through the League's Bureau at Singapore, with the health administrations of other Far-Eastern countries, with a view to securing co-ordinated action for combating possible

epidemics, or for taking any other joint action which the emergency may require.

The Transit Organisation of the League, in application of a general scheme of collaboration with the Chinese Government, is proposing to dispatch to China, as soon as practicable, highly qualified engineers experienced in the matter of hydraulic work for the prevention of floods. Further, the Chinese Government has recently requested the Secretary-General of the League to recommend the choice of an expert, if possible, experienced in relief work done in the past by the League in the Near East, in order to help the National Government of China in co-ordinating public and private efforts to cope with the situation occasioned by this present appalling catastrophe.

You may be sure that the Chinese people will never forget any sympathy and aid that may be extended to them by the League in this their time of trial. I note with gratitude that already His Majesty the Emperor of Japan has made a most generous gift, that the Government of France has authorised the Government of Indo-China to extend medical and sanitary aid, and that other Governments and private organisations and individuals are taking steps to lend their assistance. My Government has lost no time in taking such action as has been within its power to furnish relief to the stricken areas, and the Chinese all over the world are raising what sums they can for the relief of their fellow-countrymen in China ; but there will be need for all the help that can be furnished by all generously-minded people.

Once again my colleagues and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the action which this day has been proposed to this Assembly. In no other way can the attention of the world be so effectively directed to the dire situation in several of the provinces of China.

The President :

Translation : M. Yoshizawa, first delegate of Japan, will address the Assembly.

M. Yoshizawa (Japan) :

Translation : The Japanese delegation associates itself, in sincerest sympathy, with the proposal submitted by the British delegation concerning the terrible calamities which have just overtaken China.

According to official information which we have received, the floods have attained unprecedented proportions. A large number of towns on the banks of the River Yangtse, and, in particular, the whole district of Hankow, are under water, and hundreds of thousands of inhabitants have fallen victims to this disaster.

The Japanese delegation is especially glad to give its support to the British proposal, because the Emperor, as soon as the sad news reached him, was graciously pleased to grant a sum of 100,000 yen for the relief of the sufferings of the neighbouring nation.

Furthermore, a special committee has been formed, on the initiative of certain distinguished persons, with a view to organising the work of relief and assistance to victims of the catastrophe.

It is therefore with great satisfaction that the Japanese delegation supports the proposed resolution. It sincerely hopes that all Members of the League will join in this demonstration of solidarity.

The President :

Translation : Sir B. L. Mitter, first delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

Sir B. L. Mitter (India) :

It would have been taken amiss in my country had I allowed this occasion to pass over in silence, for nowhere has China's calamity stirred deeper sympathy than in India. This is not merely due to the fact that China is our neighbour and a very friendly neighbour; India and China are linked together by material ties of a common civilisation. When one of these countries is overtaken by a disaster of the magnitude which Lord Cecil has described, it is only natural that the most poignant sympathy should be felt in the other country, because we are not merely stirred by humanitarian ideas, but also by the most personal feelings of sympathy. That sympathy springs from a friendship of common culture and common ideas. I do not want to take the time of the Assembly any further; I warmly support the resolution proposed by Lord Cecil.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Curtius, first delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Curtius (Germany) :

Translation : The sympathy of the whole world for the sufferings of the great Chinese people has found expression in the draft resolution before us and in the words we have just heard. As a representative of a nation which itself is struggling against the greatest hardships, I cannot keep silence at such a time. It must not be said that we Germans, in our own misfortunes, have lost sight of the sufferings of others.

There is not much we can do to help, but we none the less feel the greatest sympathy for the victims of the catastrophe which has overtaken the Chinese people.

I therefore associate myself wholeheartedly with the words of the previous speakers, and I hope that the terrible disaster which has befallen the richest regions of China will cause us to explore and to utilise all the means in our power to give assistance to that country.

The President :

Translation : M. Beelaerts van Blokland, first delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

M. Beelaerts van Blokland (Netherlands) :

Translation : The populations of the Netherlands and of the Netherlands East Indies are deeply affected by the news of the recent disaster which has befallen vast regions of China.

Our relations with China are of long standing, and we are proud of our friendship with that great people, our neighbour in the Far East, where I learnt to know its splendid qualities in the course of long residence in that part of the world.

I therefore support most heartily, on behalf of the Netherlands delegation, the draft resolution submitted by the British delegation.

The President :

Translation : M. Hymans, first delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

M. Hymans (Belgium) :

Translation : I should like to express from this platform my warm approval of the proposal before the Assembly.

China is passing through a period of terrible hardship and trial, and I am anxious to extend to it the heartfelt sympathy of my Government and my country.

The President :

Translation : M. Politis, delegate of Greece, will address the Assembly.

M. Politis (Greece) :

Translation : The Greek delegation wishes to give its warmest support to the generous proposal of the British delegation. It cannot forget that our country has already enjoyed more than once the benefits of the Health Organisation of the League. Greece remembers with gratitude that nine years ago, at the time of the great catastrophe in Asia Minor, when more than a million refugees poured into her territory, bringing with them the germs of diseases of all kinds, the League, through its Health Organisation, was of the greatest help to her. The specialists it sent to Greece were able to give the necessary guidance to our vaccination committee and our medical corps as a whole to enable them in a few weeks to organise the necessary relief. Greece remembers with the same gratitude the effective assistance she received from the League for the settlement of the refugees.

On the strength of this experience, Greece sincerely hopes that the Assembly will adopt the proposal of the British delegation, and that the help thus promised to China will arrive as promptly as the tragic hours through which she is passing demand.

The President :

Translation : M. de Quevedo, delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

M. de Quevedo (Portugal) :

Translation : It is with feelings of grief and sorrow that I associate myself, on behalf of my country, with the tributes paid by the Assembly to the Chinese people at a time of suffering and distress. China, that great nation of the Far East, has been linked with Portugal by ties of close friendship dating from the distant and glorious days when my country undertook its first expeditions to the confines of Asia. The friendship between Portugal and China is therefore centuries old, and has never faltered throughout the course of history.

It is therefore an intimate feeling of sorrow and distress which prompts me to address a few words of deepest sympathy to the Chinese nation, our neighbour and friend, at this sad juncture, when one of her most important districts is stricken with disaster, desolation and mourning.

I desire to say that I give my full adhesion to the draft resolution proposed by Lord Cecil, which calls upon the world to give proof, by suitable action, of its sympathy with the victims of this terrible catastrophe.

The President :

Translation : M. de Agüero y Bethancourt, delegate of Cuba, will address the Assembly.

M. de Agüero y Bethancourt (Cuba) :

Translation : The people of the Cuban Republic are deeply affected by the news of the disaster which has befallen the great Chinese nation.

My country is bound to China by ties of old and sincere friendship, and I have special instructions from my Government to declare here that the Republic of Cuba warmly associates itself with the draft resolution submitted by Lord Cecil.

The President :

Translation : M. Alá, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

M. Alâ (Persia) :

Translation : As the representative of an Asiatic nation which has for centuries been a friend of China, a country with which Persia has from the earliest times had cultural relations, and for whose civilisation she has the greatest admiration, I desire to associate myself warmly with the draft resolution submitted to the Assembly. I should like to express the most heartfelt sympathy for the sufferings of this great country, and the disaster which has befallen a friendly nation.

I wish to assure M. Sze that the spirit of solidarity which unites all the Members of the League, and especially the Asiatic nations, cannot allow the Persians to remain insensible to the sufferings of their Chinese brethren.

As early as the thirteenth century, our poet Sati said that the sons of Adam all form part of one body and originate from the same substance, and that when fate afflicts one member of that organism all the other members inevitably suffer with it.

I hope and believe that my fellow countrymen will put this idea into action and will come to the help of China with all the means at their disposal.

The President :

Translation : Mlle. Campoamor, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Campoamor (Spain) :

Translation : On behalf of the Spanish delegation and of my country, I beg to express my acceptance of the humane proposal of Great Britain, voicing as it does the spirit of fraternity that inspires this Assembly. My delegation not only approves the proposal, but has instructed me to declare that it will make its terms and its spirit known in Spain which to-day is filled with an impassioned desire for human brotherhood. The feelings which inspired the British proposal will awaken an echo in the hearts of the Spanish people. The present troubles of China not only show us our duty to humanity, but revive many historic and traditional memories uniting us with that country in its hour of sorrow.

The President :

Translation : M. Garay, delegate of Panama, will address the Assembly.

M. Garay (Panama) :

Translation : On behalf of the delegations from Latin America, which have asked me to act as their spokesman, and on behalf of my own country, I desire to express the feelings of solidarity which prompt us to support the draft resolution proposed by the British delegation.

In all our Latin-American countries there are large Chinese communities, and we therefore have friendly and business relations with the great Chinese nation and its Government. Hence, we sympathise with all our heart in China's misfortune, and hope that the resolution the Assembly will pass may be fruitful in happy results for that country, which to-day is passing through a period of such deep distress.

The President :

Translation : From the speeches to which we have listened, I conclude that the whole Assembly accepts the British proposal, and, if no one has any objection, I shall interpret the silence of the Assembly as a sign that it intends to adopt this resolution unanimously, and thus give the Republic of China a token of its warm sympathy.

The draft resolution submitted by the British delegation was unanimously adopted.

The President :

Translation : I shall also request the representative of the Chinese Republic to be so good as to convey to his Government the sentiments which this Assembly has expressed by unanimously adopting this resolution.

There is no doubt that, in the presence of the sufferings of China, the whole world will promptly make the gesture for which these sufferings call.

22. — COMPOSITION OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : Before passing to the next point on our agenda, I have a communication to make.

The delegation of Haiti has just informed me that M. Dantès Bellegarde, who appears on the list of delegates as first delegate of Haiti, will not be able to come to Geneva to take part in the work of the present session.

Yesterday morning, the Assembly, in anticipation of M. Bellegarde's arrival, appointed the delegate of Haiti, upon my suggestion, as a member of the Agenda Committee, and that Committee, at its meeting yesterday afternoon, elected M. Bellegarde its Chairman.

Since M. Bellegarde cannot take part in the work of the present session, the Assembly will have to appoint someone else to be a member of the Agenda Committee. I propose the first delegate of Haiti, who has taken M. Bellegarde's place, M. Constantin Mayard.

If my proposal is adopted by the Assembly, M. Mayard will take M. Bellegarde's place as a member of the Agenda Committee. That Committee at its next meeting, will have to elect a Chairman in the place of M. Bellegarde. As soon as the Chairman of the Agenda Committee has been appointed, he will be asked to serve on the General Committee of the Assembly.

If no one has any objection, I shall consider this proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

23. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE SINCE THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion on the report on the work of the League since the eleventh session of the Assembly.

M. Beelaerts van Blokland, first delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

M. Beelaerts van Blokland (Netherlands) :

Translation : The circumstances in which the present Assembly is meeting are far from encouraging. On all hands we are threatened with financial and economic disorder, depression and distress. There are some, even, who already see on the horizon the spectre of a new war, which only shows how far astray people can go when they wilfully shut their eyes to the common interests of humanity.

For is not war largely responsible for the chaos in which we are involved? Does not the period through which we are passing prove, if proof were necessary, that, in the international community, essentially interdependent as it now is, violence

inevitably has the effect of dislocating the whole machinery of world organisation? Another war would most surely render the obstacles in the way of a return to prosperity insurmountable. The only ray of hope in this economic slough in which we are floundering is the certainty that the peoples are becoming more and more alive to the stupidity of war. They are beginning to realise that war, as a means of satisfying national aspirations, is outdated, and that the community of States has no choice but to co-operate or perish.

We are witnesses of a movement of increasing *rapprochement* between States in an endeavour to find some means of bringing about constructive co-operation. For the moment, contact is principally in the field in which there is greatest need of it, but which at the same time presents the greatest difficulties—the economic and financial field. Small wonder that the League's work, feels the effects of that movement.

The Assembly and the Council, in so far as they were called upon to promote the necessary contacts, may appear now to be playing a relatively less important rôle than before. Only the superficial spectator, however, will be disturbed by that fact or will see in it a diminution of the part played by the League. The League is merely the external image, the form in which the union between States is continually evolving. Anything that promotes that evolution at the same time strengthens the League; and, while there is reason to feel disappointment at the results achieved by some of the Conferences and Commissions which have met under the League's auspices, it would be a mistake to blame the League for lack of success.

The League's task is to encourage international activities, but that it can only do in so far as its Members allow it. If no progress has been made, the fault lies with the Governments responsible, not with the League.

Everyone is so much concerned with economic difficulties and efforts to find a solution for them that it is only natural that the organic problems with which we have been concerned here during the last few years should appear to have been relegated to the background. It would be unwise, however, to neglect those problems, since they remain supremely important from the standpoint of organisation.

Let us therefore continue to devote our attention to them—to developing the means of preventing war, to bringing the Paris Pact into harmony with the Covenant and to continuing the work for the progressive codification of international law. All these problems are important, and the Assembly will not have met in vain if it succeeds in facilitating the solution of any one of them.

The financial and economic difficulties, however, admit of no delay. The Assembly is confronted with what is now the most urgent task of all. By giving proof of the spirit of co-operation which should inspire us all, it will stimulate the efforts made on every hand, whether within the League or outside it, to bring order out of economic and financial chaos.

There are technical problems of the greatest difficulty involved which call for the co-operation of the most highly qualified experts of every country. But to carry through this work, as recent discussions in the Committee for European Union and its Sub-Committee have shown only too clearly, technique is not enough; what is chiefly wanted is mutual confidence.

Confidence is like security; constantly speaking about it is not the best way of achieving it. Nevertheless, an atmosphere of mutual confidence in which each tries to understand the difficulties of the others is an essential condition for the comprehension of economic problems and the only

condition that can justify any hope of finding a solution for them.

That was the atmosphere that prevailed when the Oslo Convention was concluded, when the Scandinavian States, Belgium, Luxemburg and the Netherlands showed their desire to put into practice the principles underlying the economic action of the League and thus contribute their share towards the development of the international spirit.

Nor is it only in the economic domain that it becomes necessary to consider the needs and the feelings of other nations and the difficulties with which their Governments are faced. We all have our national interests, our legitimate national aspirations, but we must remember that other nations too have theirs, and that it is their right and their duty to consider them.

The question is, then, to reconcile these various aims. We cannot hope to do so unless we approach the problems in a spirit of equity—I might almost say of impartiality—and with the fixed intention of obtaining lasting results, lasting in that they give satisfaction, as far as possible, to all the parties concerned.

The present situation is serious, but it is not hopeless. The strength of the destructive forces must not be over-estimated. Former ages have had their economic crises and have surmounted them. Why should we not succeed to-day, at a time when the difficulties have, it is true, increased and a much larger section of the world is affected by the crisis, but when, on the other hand, the unprecedented technical equipment of the international community is at the disposal of those in search of a common solution.

Public opinion is beginning to be aware of the solidarity of nations and to see that the prosperity of one State cannot be secured at the expense of other States.

It is not enough, however, for Governments to note with satisfaction the progress of public opinion. Traditions of narrow national egoism have a strong hold on the mind of the people, and nations are easily prevented by the age-old spirit of rivalry and domination. It is the duty of statesmen not to allow Governments to be led astray by passing currents of opinion, but to stand firm and to guide public opinion in the direction of organised peace. To risk a temporary loss of favour is better than to incur the condemnation of posterity.

In considering all the possible means of contributing towards the solution of these various difficulties, it is natural to think first and foremost of the Disarmament Conference convened for next year. The extent of the saving that could be brought about if the Conference reached an agreement on a tangible reduction of armaments is obvious, but the true importance of such a reduction lies elsewhere. There is no better way of promoting mutual confidence between States than by fulfilling the promise contained in Article 8 of the Covenant.

We must realise that the nations, disappointed at the slow rate of progress, are more than ever turning their attention towards this first Disarmament Conference. They are asking us for deeds at last, and without further delay.

The Netherlands Press has just got up a petition among its readers over 18 years of age in favour of international disarmament, to convince the coming Conference that the world is expecting results from its meeting. Nearly two and a-half millions—more than half the adult population of the Netherlands—have signed the petition. That result is remarkable, but, in other countries, I am sure, similar results could be obtained.

A voice is being raised throughout the world demanding something more than peace. It calls for the preservation of our civilisation, the preservation of the supreme heritage, material and spiritual, of mankind.

We cannot afford to ignore that voice, nor can we evade co-operation, which, in the evolution of the world, has become a vital condition of society.

The President :

Translation : M. Pusta, delegate of Estonia, will address the Assembly.

M. Pusta (Estonia) :

Translation : The Commission of Enquiry for European Union decided, at its meeting on September 5th last, that the special proposals by delegates to which the Drafting Committee of the Commission of Enquiry was unable to give special attention would be communicated in full to the Assembly. Thus we have before us the proposal of M. Tõnisson, first delegate of Estonia, inviting the Governments to promote by all suitable means — Press, education, propaganda, on the screen and by wireless — the broadcasting among the general public of the idea of European Union. I should like to support that proposal.

I agree with M. Tõnisson that it is absolutely necessary to broadcast, among the general public, the idea of European Union, as in modern democratic States it is in the last resort the public that governs. I would even go so far as to ask the Assembly to supplement the proposal by a second resolution. The Commission of Enquiry for European Union would, in my opinion, be doing useful work wholly in keeping with its terms of reference if it decided to study the problem of the constitution of the European Union in the strict sense of the term. In other words, it should extend the terms of reference, not only of the Commission of Enquiry, which is far from having completed its work, but also of its Organisation Sub-Committee, by requesting it to do for European Union what it has just done for the Commission of Enquiry — namely, to study its organisation.

I am well aware that my proposal may appear somewhat bold ; but I should nevertheless like to try and convince you that present circumstances are such as to permit — nay, to demand — the consideration of such an enquiry.

There are two kinds of arguments in support of this proposal — legal arguments and arguments based on fact. First, my proposal is legally justified as being entirely in conformity with the fundamental resolution adopted by the eleventh Assembly, which set up the Commission of Enquiry in 1930.

This resolution set up the Commission for the express purpose of studying the question of European Union and, according to the terms of paragraph 4, to "pursue the enquiry which has already been begun, and of which the French memorandum of May 17th, 1930, and the replies thereto constitute the first elements".

I venture to draw your special attention to this passage. You are aware that, in the documents described as forming the basis of our enquiry — the French memorandum and the twenty-six notes from Governments — an important place is accorded to questions connected with the constitution of the Union. Consequently, in recommending the Commission of Enquiry to pursue the examination initiated by the memorandum, the Assembly, I feel sure, *ipso facto*, placed on the programme of the Commission the question of the methods of constituting and organising the future European Union.

We have not yet begun this work, and we must do so if we are to fulfil the requirements of the resolution of September 17th, 1930, which is our constitutional charter.

That is not the only argument in support of my proposal ; it can also be justified by facts, and in two ways. It is, in my view, doubly important to proceed with this enquiry — in the first place, because public opinion is now inclined to regard the idea of Pan-Europa as having been abandoned by the Commission of Enquiry itself ; and, secondly, because, under the stress of circumstances, our Commission has exceeded the strict limits of the enquiry as defined by the resolution of September 17th, 1930.

In view of the increasing difficulties presented by the economic depression, the Commission of Enquiry has left on one side the question of the constitution of the Union in order to concentrate on the most urgent items of the programme. We are in no way criticising this decision of the Commission. On the contrary, we should like it to devote more time to urgent problems which are of especial importance for Europe, such as agricultural credits and unemployment.

As it was quite rightly said in the last memorandum of the French Government, the main thing is to resist the temptation to a dispersal of effort, to co-ordinate effort, to concentrate on a certain number of definite points and to work along these lines with energy and perseverance. Again when these problems connected with the economic depression were studied, the Commission took certain decisions which may be regarded as rather different from the mass of the resolutions normally adopted. I would ask you to re-read and meditate upon resolution No. 2 adopted at the second session of the Commission, especially its final passage. As you know, it invites the authorised representatives of the European countries affected (grain-exporting countries of Central and Eastern Europe and European importing countries) to meet at an early date and make a common effort to find means of disposing of the grain surplus at present available.

The meeting was to be called on the sole initiative of the President of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, and its conclusions were to be put into effect without further reference to the Commission. There is, I think, no need to emphasise the particular significance of this resolution as compared with the normal resolutions of the Commission, which are in the nature of invitations, recommendations or *vœux*, or which, when they do give rise to a decision, merely entail the setting up of a committee of experts — that is to say, the institution of an additional enquiry.

Resolution No. 2 provides, on the other hand, for a meeting convened on the sole initiative of the President of the Commission of Enquiry with a view to achieving rapid practical results without further reference to the Commission, and we can thus say that these are resolutions of a "customary" character which definitely lie outside the limits of the enquiry.

This resolution No. 2 might be compared with resolution No. 8 adopted at the same session, which is of the same nature inasmuch as it constitutes a real international instrument of peace, adopted and signed by the various Foreign Ministers.

Must we therefore conclude that resolutions of this "customary" character are to be condemned in future? Not at all. On the contrary, we are of opinion that they must be recognised as regular and are to be recommended, inasmuch as they prove that there already exists, in the form of the Commission of Enquiry, a European Union in embryo — that is to say, groups of representatives

of the European Governments able to give definite undertakings on behalf of their Governments.

"Policy first", said M. Briand, using a formula which he afterwards interpreted to mean that the examination of economic questions and their solution should be carried out, not by experts, but by duly accredited delegates. In M. Briand's opinion, that is what constitutes the chief progress made by the European Union.

Do not let us destroy the effect of that progress, and, above all, do not let us appear to abandon it, since we are commending to public opinion the idea of European Union on which it is based.

I therefore propose that the Assembly should adopt among its resolutions one to the effect that its Commission of Enquiry for European Union should, on the basis of the Assembly resolution of September 17th, 1930, study the various possible methods of constituting and organising the future European Union.

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

"The Commission of Enquiry for European Union is instructed to include forthwith and permanently in the programme of its work the question of the various possible methods for the constitution and organisation of European Union.

"The Secretariat of the League is instructed to facilitate the task of the Commission of Enquiry by bringing together and collating the existing technical literature on the subject."

The President :

Translation : We have before us a draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Estonia. In accordance with precedent, it will be printed and communicated to the delegations, and suggestions will subsequently be submitted as to the action to be taken upon it.

The continuation of the discussion was adjourned to the next meeting.

The Assembly rose at 5.45 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH, 1931, AT 11 A.M.

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President : M. TITULESCO.

24. — FUTURE WORK OF THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION :
DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE
ESTONIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember, at its meeting yesterday afternoon, a draft resolution was submitted by M. Pusta, delegate of Estonia, concerning the future work of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union. This draft resolution reads as follows :

“The Commission of Enquiry for European Union is instructed to include forthwith and permanently in the programme of its work the question of the various possible methods for the constitution and organisation of European Union.

“The Secretariat of the League is instructed to facilitate the task of the Commission of Enquiry by bringing together and collating the existing technical literature on the subject.”

In accordance with precedent, I propose that the Assembly should submit this draft resolution

for preliminary examination to the Agenda Committee, which will be asked to make suggestions as to the action to be taken with regard to it.

The President's proposal was adopted.

25. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY :
CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion of the report on the work of the League of Nations since the last session of the Assembly.

Sir Brojendra Mitter, first delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

Sir Brojendra Mitter (India) :

The members of the Indian delegation are convinced believers in the ideals of the League. They have been consistently loyal to those ideas and are keenly anxious for their progressive realisation. There are some who say that very little achievement can be claimed on the credit side of the League's account. I dispute that. What is it that the League is attempting to do ? The war spirit, which dominated nations for centuries, cannot all at once be transformed as by a magician's wand into international goodwill. What the League can legitimately claim is the creation of the appropriate atmosphere. Simultaneously with the creation of that atmosphere, the League has started on a career of winning victories of peace by fighting ignorance, disease, economic maladjustment, and other maladies which afflict the body politic.

Looking at the agenda of the present session of the Assembly, we cannot fail to be struck by its variety and importance. I can assure the Assembly

that the Indian delegation will endeavour to make its humble contribution towards the solution of the problems before us in a spirit of comradeship and goodwill towards all.

The problem which looms largest is, of course, the reduction of armaments. We hope that the Conference convened for next February will achieve definite results. We rely on the great Powers to instal trust in place of suspicion, and to establish their moral pre-eminence as they have already established their material pre-eminence. The resources, both moral and material, which are bound to be released by such a reduction of armaments will be available for prosecuting vigorously the activities on which the advancement of human kind to higher and still higher planes of existence depends.

The problem of the world slump is no less important than the problem of disarmament. On that subject, the Indian delegation had the privilege last year of moving a resolution in the Second Committee proposing an intensive and continuous study under the auspices of the League. We are glad to find the results of that enquiry before us. Nevertheless, since last year world depression has increased in intensity. While we fully appreciate the merits of the study which has been made, we propose this year to recommend not only a continuation of the study, but an investigation of the means of implementing the same.

While speaking on this topic, I might be permitted to express our high appreciation of the proposals recently made by the President of the United States of America. Here is a silver lining to the cloud which is hanging over the world. Here is the definitive new factor in the situation for which the world has been waiting. Let us see to it that we make the most of it without cavil or quibble and with every resource of self-help as a first step towards re-establishing the economic equilibrium of the world.

I have spoken so far of expectations; it is always more pleasant to speak of achievement. The co-operation between the League Health Organisation and India promises to bear good fruit in one important respect. India has been in close touch with the Far-Eastern Bureau at Singapore, and the interchange of views and the comparative study of the problems of tropical disease is being carried on in the true spirit of the League for the benefit of humanity. A new milestone was reached last year by the publication of the report of the Malaria Commission, which will be of considerable value to India and others intimately concerned, owing to the welcome suggestions which it contains. We are proud that the report bears eloquent testimony to the study of malaria which has been carried on in India and which has yielded important results.

The next topic on which I wish at this stage to make some observations is intellectual co-operation. In the whole range of questions coming before the Assembly, this subject arouses a peculiar enthusiasm in a delegate from India. The vast evolution of culture, education and philosophy in India qualifies us in a special measure to co-operate with other countries on this plane in the development of the international spirit. While we are ready to receive new ideas, we are equally ready to bring into the common pool the experience of centuries. The whole programme of intellectual co-operation makes a strong appeal to India, whether it is the development of inter-university relations, the international co-ordination of libraries and museums, or the translation of classics. I may refer to the activities of at least two Indian institutions in this direction, the Asiatic Society of Bengal and the Indian Museum in Calcutta.

The former, by bringing out authorised versions of classics and supplying manuscripts to foreign learned societies, and the latter by exchanging specimens with sister bodies in Europe and America, are doing a signal service in the field of intellectual co-operation. It may not be out of place to mention the cosmopolitan institution established by India's poet, Rabindranath Tagore, at Bolpur, in Bengal, the main object of which is the synthesis of the culture of the East and the West.

India is also keenly interested in the activities of the League in the field of the unification of laws. We appreciate the League's efforts in the matter of the unification of the laws on bills of exchange promissory notes and cheques. For our part, we have recently brought our law on the sale of goods into line with the law in England and America; the law of the Dominions is practically the same. Here, as in fact in other branches of commercial law, the lead of the League will be warmly appreciated in India.

There is one aspect of the work done by the League during the past year that we in India find particularly satisfying. It has often fallen to the lot of the Indian delegation to criticise the League on the ground that its activities have taken little account of the countries east of Suez. We note with pleasure the very substantial effort the League has made this year, and is continuing to make, to come to the rescue of that great country China in the midst of her troubles. We further note the proposal to establish an office of the League in India, which should do much to increase the knowledge of the activities of the League among our population of 350 million inhabitants. We also express our cordial appreciation of the visit to India under the auspices of the League of that eminent economist, Sir Arthur Salter.

Nevertheless, before I resume my seat, there is a note of warning that I feel I must sound. Though it is true that this year the activities of the League have covered a larger area than before, its European activities would appear to us to have to some extent trespassed on the purely diplomatic field. In our view, the League machinery ought not to be employed for the purpose of arriving at regional agreements in the economic sphere. No doubt the urgency of the economic crisis accounts for this development, but we in Asia share in this crisis, and, to take an example, I do not think that the Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company should have been set up by means of League machinery in a form limited to European countries without Asiatic countries having an opportunity of putting forward their views at this Assembly.

I note the statement in a letter from the President of the Sub-Committee of Economic Experts, printed at the head of the report of that Sub-Committee, to the effect that all members of the Sub-Committee are anxious that the Economic *rapprochement*, which they hope to establish between the countries of Europe, far from proving harmful to the economic relations existing between Europe and the other parts of the world, will, on the contrary, have the effect of intensifying those relations and rendering them closer and more beneficial to both sides. I hope this will indeed be the case; but, so long as Asiatic countries remain outside the scope of this *rapprochement*, so long must they look on with some anxiety.

The President :

Translation : M. Yoshizawa, first delegate of Japan, will address the Assembly.

M. Yoshizawa (Japan) :

Translation : Among the important international questions which, since the constitution of the

League, have, called for its watchful attention and indefatigable efforts, the problem of the reduction of armaments undoubtedly occupies the first place. After unavoidably lengthy preparatory work, we are now in the happy position of being able to look forward to the coming conference for the reduction of armaments as the crowning of our efforts, and I must warmly congratulate the Preparatory Commission for the Conference, which has thus brilliantly achieved its task after heavy work extending over a period of five years.

Thanks to the Commission, we now have before us a draft Convention for the limitation and reduction of armaments, which may usefully be taken as a basis for the work of the Conference in 1932.

I need hardly say here that it is the earnest wish of the Japanese Government to consolidate world peace and to further the welfare of humanity by means of an equitable agreement on the reduction of armaments. My Government is willing to participate in the coming Conference and to do all in its power to contribute to its success. As everyone knows, the Japanese Government, acting always in the spirit underlying the work of disarmament, endeavoured to bring about a reduction in naval armaments at the successive Conferences held at Washington, Geneva and London, and the agreements concluded are being loyally carried out. In the field of land disarmament, also, it has, on its own initiative, already effected considerable reductions. Indeed, whereas before the war there were in Japan twenty-one army divisions, apart from certain independent units, in 1922 the effectives of each division were greatly reduced and in 1925 four divisions were disbanded. Consequently, there are at present only seventeen divisions, with effectives representing not more than 65 per cent of the pre-war effectives, a figure which corresponds to 0.28 per cent of the population.

On the other hand, as our army did not participate in the operations on the European battlefields, its war material and air force are not adequate for the requirements of national defence, and my Government has therefore been obliged to readjust that state of affairs. While willing to do all in its power in full agreement with the participating Governments to make a success of the general Conference, the Japanese Government earnestly desires that the Powers whose situation is closely bound up with the national defence of Japan should make similar efforts for the conclusion and loyal execution of the Disarmament Convention.

In view of these considerations, the Japanese Government intends to put forward at the coming Conference such proposals as seem to it most equitable, in accordance with the spirit of Article 8 of the League Covenant, and having regard also to the present position of our armaments and our peculiar situation in the Far East.

It is particularly desirable that the Disarmament Conference should yield positive results at a time like the present, when the world is passing through a period of general economic depression of exceptional gravity. Opinions may differ as to the causes of that depression, but it can hardly be denied that one of its causes is to be found in the fact that numbers of countries have, in their over-anxiety to protect themselves economically, one after the other adopted a policy incompatible with the principle of liberty of trade based on a rational division of international work.

Immediately after the world war, a tendency to erect Customs barriers was observed in nearly every country. In order to combat this tendency, the League convened the Economic Conference of 1927, which exhorted the States to abolish all

obstacles to liberty of trade. Subsequently, by means of a Convention for the Abolition of Import and Export Prohibitions, a Convention for a Customs Truce, and other attempts to solve various problems affecting world economic co-operation, the League endeavoured to create an international atmosphere essentially favourable to liberty of trade between the members of the international community.

Those efforts on the part of the League should certainly not be under-estimated. Nevertheless, we must admit that, when the world crisis came — that is, in the course of the last few years — there was revealed more and more clearly a tendency to restrict or prohibit the import of foreign commodities or to prevent their import in actual fact by increasing Customs duties on the pretext that such were necessary to protect the home trade and industry, make good a budget deficit or remedy unemployment. There are even signs of nations going further still and ignoring or restricting the application of the most-favoured-nation clause in commercial treaties, or other similar guarantees.

There is thus a risk of serious interference with the principle of equality of opportunity or non-discrimination which had hitherto been accepted by the nations. Moreover, that tendency not only jeopardises international obligations, but constitutes a serious obstacle to the development of the productive resources of each country, causing international trade depression and aggravating the economic crisis from which the whole world is now suffering.

At the present time, the various countries have become so interdependent economically that any policy of economic isolation pursued by certain countries inevitably entails tremendous difficulties for all the other countries which, in their international trade, adopt the principle of freedom of trade. If an increasing number of States strike out on a line which must inevitably lead to the abandonment of a liberal policy, such a tendency can only be described as deplorable from the standpoint of international economic peace.

I wish to take this opportunity of drawing the attention of all countries to these grave considerations and to express the sincere hope that the League will use every means at its disposal and exert its prestige in order to mitigate, as far as possible, this highly regrettable tendency.

As regards the question of the amendment of the Covenant of the League of Nations in order to bring it into harmony with the Pact of Paris, the Japanese delegation last year expressed certain doubts as to the desirability of such a measure. My Government sees no reason to modify its original view, but I am glad to be able to tell you that it is prepared to accede, in principle, to the draft amendments embodied in the report of the First Committee of the last Assembly, it being understood that those amendments shall in no way affect the legitimate exercise of the right of self-defence.

In conclusion, I should like to take this opportunity of expressing our great satisfaction that the League of Nations has responded to the appeal of our neighbour, China, and that a plan has been prepared and put into execution under the supervision of the Council — a manifest demonstration of the League spirit of universality and solidarity.

More than ever before, the League must mobilise its full resources to secure cordial collaboration and must prevail upon all States to collaborate in eradicating, as far as possible, the evils from which the whole world is suffering. I for one earnestly hope for the progress and success of all the League's activities.

The President :

Translation : The Hon. Hugh Guthrie, first delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

The Hon. Hugh Guthrie (Canada) :

As one who has not hitherto been privileged to participate in the deliberations of the Assembly of the League of Nations, may I express some trepidation and some reserve as I venture to discuss in a general way one or two of the subjects which are prominently mentioned in the report on the work of the League since the eleventh session of the Assembly.

As a representative of the Dominion of Canada, I wish to express the appreciation of the people of that country at the generous manner in which representatives from Canada have hitherto been received and honoured by this Assembly; in particular, may I express the deep appreciation of the Dominion of Canada for the honour which was conferred on Canada by this Assembly in selecting the head of the Canadian delegation, in the person of the Honourable Raoul Dandurand, as the President of the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations. The active interest which Senator Dandurand always manifested in the work of the League gave him a place of influence and of prominence in the councils and deliberations of the League which another may find it well-nigh impossible to attain.

May I pause at this point in my remarks to make a formal presentation to the League of Nations on behalf of the Dominion of Canada, of a portrait in oils of the Honourable Raoul Dandurand, the President of the sixth Assembly of the League of Nations. This portrait is by Baschet, the celebrated French artist; it will be placed on view in the Library of the Secretariat of the League, and I think you will agree with me that the artist has succeeded in placing upon canvas a remarkable likeness, an admirable portrait, of a great Canadian whose success in the councils of this Assembly is a matter of very deep satisfaction to the Dominion of Canada. I am aware that the absence of Senator Dandurand from this Assembly will be a matter of great regret to many of those present.

While much might be said in favour of a certain degree of continuity in the national representation in this Assembly, regard must nevertheless be had to the changing political conditions in a democratic country such as Canada. It is of primary importance that the views of the Government of each country upon the various questions which arise should be authoritatively laid before the Assembly.

It is a matter of congratulation and satisfaction to all the Members of the League that, notwithstanding the infusion of a certain amount of new blood annually in this Assembly, yet the names of many great statesmen who have hitherto largely guided its deliberations are still found upon the roll of the twelfth Assembly. General recognition will always be accorded to that group of great men from many countries who, through their knowledge, their efforts and experience, are regarded by the world at large as leaders in the work of the League of Nations.

It would be the merest platitude to affirm in this Assembly that the basic principle upon which the League of Nations was originally founded was the maintenance of world peace, the negation of war, the adjustment and settlement on international differences by peaceful arbitration; yet the League, in pursuit of its purposes, has found it necessary to explore and examine many customs, many systems, many conditions which prevail

in various parts of the world and which at first glance may not appear to be very directly concerned with world peace, but which have a very direct influence on world conditions. Matters pertaining to trade, finance, agriculture, industrial conditions and unemployment, health and the like, have all received the special care and study of the League, and we admit that in many respects, in regard to these subjects, great advances have been made through the efforts of the League.

While I agree that all these subjects indirectly concern the greater question of peace, yet I venture to assert that, in the eyes of the world—in the opinion of the man in the street—such incidental questions might well be postponed for final adjustment, until the supreme, the all-important, question of world peace shall have been placed upon a more firm and satisfactory basis than that upon which it rests to-day.

In my judgment, by far the most important features of the report which has been presented to this Assembly are those which directly or indirectly suggest the question of world peace, and the most important subjects upon the agenda for the consideration of this Assembly are undoubtedly the questions of peace, arbitration and disarmament, with all that these terms involve.

Let it not be supposed that one in my humble capacity is inclined to be either critical or censorious in his remarks. I assure you that nothing is further from my mind. No one realises more than I do, or appreciates more highly than I do, the long, the enduring efforts of that great body of statesmen who, for the sake of peace, have unselfishly given of their best, and whose successive efforts we expect will soon be crowned with a real achievement for the security of world peace.

If one may be permitted to emphasise a platitude, let me repeat that the maintenance of world peace is the fundamental principle of the League of Nations. While throughout the intervening years the League has performed many useful services and has to its credit many achievements for the benefit of mankind, while it has erected a wonderful superstructure for the dissemination of valuable information for the guidance and improvement of the nations of the world, yet the success or failure of the League in the judgment of the world will always be based upon a single standard: Has it succeeded in the abolition of war and the establishment of peace? I assume that you all realise that such will be the supreme test.

It will be recognised that any contribution which the Dominion of Canada may be able to make in support of the maintenance of world peace or more particularly in support of the principle of "arbitration, security and disarmament", will be in the nature of deeply sympathetic co-operation in whatever plan may be finally determined as the best means of achieving the desired end.

In no sense of the term can Canada be deemed a militaristic country. Geographically, Canada is rather favourably situated, reasonably remote from active interest or definite concern with the difficult problems confronting many of the great nations in other parts of the globe. While we possess a vast territory, our population is but 10,000,000, composed for the most part of descendants of Great Britain and France, but including also considerable numbers from all countries in Europe. The armaments of Canada are practically negligible. We maintain only such military, naval and air forces as are necessary for the maintenance of law and order within our own border. Canada has no need for greater armaments. She has but one international boundary. The United States of America, a great and friendly country, is our only immediate neighbour, and we are

convinced that the peaceful aims and aspirations of that great country both rival and support our own.

It will be recognised at a glance that there is but one course for Canada to urge in regard to arbitration and disarmament. Our aims and interests in this respect all point in the same direction, and both in this Assembly and in the Conference soon to be held Canada will urge, with all the influence at her command, the acceptance by the nations of the world of the general treaty of disarmament mentioned in the report, which treaty will be submitted to the Conference in February next.

While I do not seek to minimise the important problems which confront many great nations in regard to the proposal for general disarmament throughout the world, it is the belief of the Government of Canada that, under the treaties and covenants now subsisting between the various countries, and with the extension of the principle of arbitration to embrace all causes of international dispute, general disarmament upon a very extensive scale may take place within reasonable time with reasonable security to all nations concerned.

Let me briefly state some of the grounds upon which my assertion is based. In the first place, the League of Nations, after ten years of effort, has created a new international atmosphere, new international ideals; it has established a general desire for peace, and an aversion of war. The willingness to promote peace has become a dominant idea throughout the world. It has been of slow growth, it is true. It was germinated in the destruction, sorrow, and awfulness of the great war. It has been nourished, fostered and encouraged by the League's activities.

We are convinced that, throughout the world to-day, there exists a more marked desire for international co-operation than has ever existed heretofore. Let us strive to take the fullest advantage of the favourable conditions which undoubtedly exist. The foundation for a permanent super-structure of arbitration, security and disarmament has been well and truly laid through the efforts of the great statesmen who have devoted themselves to this noble object under the auspices of the League. Let us continue to build upon that foundation.

In the second place, I submit that ample safeguards and guarantees for all nations and for all reasonable purposes will be found in the original Covenant in the Treaty of Versailles, and in the subsidiary treaties and covenants which have been accepted by so many nations. Most of the nations of the world stand to-day pledged to the principle of disarmament and arbitration; most of the nations of the world have expressly renounced recourse to war.

Article 8 of the Covenant and the preamble of Part V of the Treaty of Peace clearly indicate a general scheme of disarmament, in the manner prescribed in the documents themselves. The Locarno Treaty of September 1926, which directly concerns Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, reaffirmed in the most definite manner the binding force and effect of Article 8 of the Covenant. The Locarno Treaty further declared that aggressive war was a crime, also that all international controversies should be settled by arbitration or other pacific means. While it is true that the Locarno Treaty is in some important respects limited in its application, it remains an outstanding agreement between the States which were parties to it, in favour of arbitration and disarmament, coupled with reasonable guarantees for security.

Permit me also to mention another international agreement of outstanding importance to the whole

world. I refer to the Briand-Kellogg Treaty, otherwise known as the Pact of Paris, which came into effect in July 1929, and has now been accepted by almost all the States Members of the League. In my humble opinion, this particular treaty constitutes an enormous contribution to the peace and security of the world. It most expressly condemns recourse to war and renounces war as a means for the settlement of international dispute.

The importance of the Briand-Kellogg Pact in relation to the peace of the world cannot be overestimated. The fact that it has obtained almost universal approval throughout the world, and also the fact that it was projected to a large extent and has been approved by the United States of America, give to it a value and consequence in world affairs which must be recognised. I assume, therefore, that it will be the duty of this Assembly, either now or hereafter, to effect such amendments in the Covenant of the League of Nations as may be necessary to harmonise any conflict or repugnance which may now exist between the provisions of the Covenant and the Pact, so that the essential elements of both may be maintained to the fullest possible extent. Canada will readily accede to all such amendments.

One other important bulwark for the security of nations and the maintenance of world peace will be found in that forum which has already been established under the authority of the League and is termed the Permanent Court of International Justice. What has come to be known as the Optional Clause and the General Act of 1928 have now been accepted by so many nations that one may predict with some confidence that, in the not too distant future, the jurisdiction of this tribunal will become worldwide in extent and also all-embracing in the nature and character of the subjects upon which it is authorised to pronounce. Such, at least, is the earnest hope and desire of a great many nations which have already accepted both the Optional Clause and the General Act, of which the Dominion of Canada is one.

Before concluding, permit me to make one further observation. The report contains a reference to the work of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, in regard to which Commission and the proposals which it has made, the Dominion of Canada claims to have a special interest as one of the great grain-exporting countries of the world. I realise that this is not the appropriate occasion to enter upon a discussion of this important question. I desire, however, to reserve expressly the fullest right to discuss this matter when the occasion arises, and in the meantime it will be understood that Canada is in no way committed to the Committee's report or to its proposals.

The President :

Translation : M. Ghika, first delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

M. Ghika (Roumania) :

Translation : For all who are following with deep interest the League's work and its progress towards the consolidation of peace — which is its *raison d'être* as well as the supreme goal towards which the efforts of Member States are directed — the annual report on the work of this international institution since the last Assembly in 1930 gives some indications as to the value of the progress made and the prospects for the near future. Naturally enough, as time passes and we leave behind us the early years of the League's inception and growth, years characterised by the large-scale work of the constructive period, it may seem, at first sight, as

though the League's activity had lessened in scope, if not in effectiveness; it may seem as though, while not reduced to marking time, its progress had been slower and more tentative.

In reality, a new period of activity has begun, a period of adaptation and readjustment, to clear the ground in preparation for the solution of certain important questions of the day. Among these, disarmament is in the foreground, dominating every other question and demanding of the Member States a joint effort of mutual comprehension and willing sacrifice in the cause of peace. If ultimate success is to be assured, all the States collaborating must be imbued with a sincere and infectious desire to find some common ground.

I have no wish to hurt anyone's feelings or to dismiss without examination opposing views expressed in all good faith and with a warmth of would-be persuasive conviction; but I confess that, in my opinion, to use security and disarmament as two distinct terms, denoting opposite conceptions, in a definite order of priority, is equivalent to stylistic pleonasm. It is possible to conceive *a priori* of a community unarmed and without need for arms, because its social order ensures absolute security; but it is useless to suppose that such a community could throw down the arms it requires for defence — especially on the morrow of a veritable holocaust — if security does not exist or is found to be precarious and ineffectual.

Here I am merely repeating what many have said before me with the voice of authority — that, in the present international situation, security is a function of the confidence which each State inspires in the others. If we mean to shake hands instead of shaking our fists at one another, we must first have the open heart which calls for the open and outstretched hand. That is the magic key which, in a better future, is to open, not the gates of a visionary other-world paradise of the nations of to-morrow, but the doors of a real League of Nations. Compared with it, the League that brings us together in annual session is merely a framework, a half-finished building whose façade bears a symbolic device, and within which we are trying to consolidate peace in an atmosphere of hope and encouragement.

Every Government, in addition to the incessant work of the chancelleries, must mobilise the living forces within the nation in an effort to draw the peoples together. A determination to remove misunderstanding and win hearts beyond the national frontiers must be supported by enlightened public opinion, guided aright by the educational and more particularly the moral elements in each State. These have a real mission to fulfil in school and church. They must see that, to help the League in its work, there is an ever-widening circle of agreement among the masses — under the impulsion of Governments already won over to the cause — as regards the measures which States are contemplating and adopting to secure a lasting peace through disarmament.

Nothing can replace confidence as a guarantee of peace throughout the world; and, until the elected representatives of the peoples and the acts of Governments are everywhere inspired by that spirit, pacts of non-aggression, which have multiplied apace during the past few years, are rather in

the nature of pegs staking out a new road than fixed milestones on the triumphal way to the temple of peace. Such as they are, they have their value, which must be recognised and welcomed as a happy omen.

Roumania, for her part, follows an unswerving policy which the representatives of successive Governments have proclaimed from this platform. She is prepared to conclude pacts of this kind with all States, near or far, without exception. For she is sincerely determined to be a stable element in the maintenance of peace in Eastern Europe; and she feels that her policy, to which she consistently and confidently adheres, fully safeguards the work of peace.

To sound once more a note of reasoned optimism until the peoples have gained the necessary confidence, I affirm that the League's work of peace is being helped forward by various elements of consolidation based on common interests. The world economic crisis from which the nations of Europe and those beyond the seas are suffering so cruelly provides another favourable element of this kind. True, we should all prefer not to have to test the usefulness of such a form of solidarity, arising as it does from common hardships. Nevertheless, faced with similar economic and financial difficulties, hearing similar cries of distress from across the national frontiers — from factories where work is vanishing into thin air like the smoke from their chimneys, from farms where crops are piling up and rotting for want of purchasers — the nations, feeling themselves a prey to the same evils and day by day becoming increasingly aware of their interdependence, which calls for common self-defence if they are not to perish together, are bestirring themselves. They are making efforts, as yet tentative and isolated, at each new turn of the world crisis, actuated by a common desire — vague at first, but more and more conscious as time goes on — to advance together in search of a way of escape, a means of recovery, a return to normal life and peaceful, fruitful labour.

Roumania, like all the other States, is feeling the repercussions of the world crisis and is sadly regarding her surplus unsold harvests. Accordingly, she is following with the keenest interest the work of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, the programme of which gives hope of a satisfactory solution. To find a market for the surplus crops from the 1930 harvest, to export future surpluses, to obtain agricultural credits, to regulate production and trade — all these are questions of the utmost importance and touch the very heart of Roumania's daily life. Nor must we forget the Pact of Economic Non-Aggression submitted to the League; it directly bears upon a situation the harassing effects of which Roumania felt last year. Roumania proposes to take part in the League's work during the present session, as at all the previous sessions, in a liberal spirit, a spirit of the most active sympathy. She hopes that her contribution to the common task will be a useful one and that this year will be marked by real progress in the advance along the difficult road which is to lead us, we hope, by progressively easier stages of more perfect understanding, onwards to the ideal which is the dream of mankind.

The Assembly rose at 12.45 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH, 1931, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : M. TITULESCO.

26. — CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that I informed it, at the meeting on September 8th, of the reasons which prevented M. Dantès Bellegarde, delegate of Haiti, from being present at this session and consequently from accepting the Chairmanship of the Agenda Committee to which he had been elected.

The Agenda Committee met yesterday afternoon and elected as its Chairman, Dr. L. K. Hyder, delegate of India, whom it had already elected Vice-Chairman. Dr. Hyder is therefore invited, as Chairman of the Agenda Committee, to take his place as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly, to which he will be a most welcome addition.

27. — FUTURE WORK OF THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION : DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE ESTONIAN DELEGATION : REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that in accordance with the proposal I made at the beginning of yesterday morning's meeting, it decided to refer, to the Agenda Committee, for preliminary examination, the draft resolution submitted by the Estonian delegation concerning the future programme of work of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

The report of the Agenda Committee on this matter reads as follows :

"The Agenda Committee agrees to propose that the Assembly should include this draft resolution in the Agenda of the present session, so as to permit of its examination by the sixth Committee, which would consider it under item 11 of the agenda of the Assembly, relating to the Commission of Enquiry for European Union."

If no one has any objection, I shall consider the report of the Agenda Committee adopted.

The report was adopted.

28. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion on the report on the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly.

The first speaker on the list, His Excellency M. Lerroux, first delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. Lerroux (Spain) :

Translation : The League of Nations will, I hope, find nothing but cause for congratulation in the change that has taken place in the internal organisation of Spain since the last Assembly. Henceforward, Spain is to be governed no longer forcibly and arbitrarily, but by law and mutual consent. Thus there is complete agreement between the principles of Republican Spain and those of the League. But there is also another reason why the new Spain is profoundly attached to the League. The new Government must devote all its attention to the internal reconstruction of the country on new foundations, and this can be carried through only in an atmosphere of general peace and prosperity. Hence, there is a two-fold guarantee that Spain will co-operate actively, and, I venture to hope, effectively, in your efforts in the cause of peace and right.

You are all familiar with the various reasons why Spain was more or less unaffected by the more direct consequences, both economic and political, of the war. She might have availed herself of this privilege of her historic destiny to sever the bonds of solidarity and, following the classical precept, "*cultiver son jardin*" — which, as you know, is a most wonderful one. But *noblesse oblige*, and throughout her history Spain has had too well-established a tradition of universality thus to abandon herself to the part of a disinterested spectator of others' sufferings. Far from that, my country is highly conscious of the bonds that link it with the other countries of Europe, suffering as they are from a serious crisis due undoubtedly to the upheavals of all kinds consequent upon the war; and, in its anxiety to contribute to a solution, it cordially welcomed M. Briand's general efforts to direct European policy towards a closer continental union.

I say it boldly and clearly: though Spain has made herself felt all over the world, and has mingled her blood with that of every race, she feels herself to be essentially a European country, realising the vital part that our ancient continent, fertile and fruitful as it is, plays and must always play in the civilisation, the intellectual progress and the prosperity of the world.

We have therefore followed very closely the proceedings of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union and its sub-commissions and committees — only too happy if, in the course of those proceedings, we could contribute any concrete suggestions to the solution of the grave problems under consideration. Generally speaking, Republican Spain looks for an extension and definition of the right of the impartial technical organisations of the League and the International Labour Office to investigate all political and economic activities which overstep national frontiers. This is true particularly of the development of industrial combines — a desirable development, but one that needs to be watched.

But while Spain, as one of the oldest of European nations, feels an increasing attachment to the old continent and an increasingly intimate concern in its destiny, she can never forget that, in the very year in which, at Granada, she was finally consolidated as a nation, she gave to the world a new continent, which is peopled to-day by twenty nations of her lineage. You will permit the first Minister for Foreign Affairs of Republican Spain to greet from this platform the American peoples of every speech — for all of them, as Americans, owe their

existence to Spain — and to tell them that she feels herself more closely united with them than ever before, now that, with identical systems of government, the sole difference between them has ceased to exist. She deeply regrets the absence of a number of American countries — both those which have not seen their way to subscribe to the Covenant, those which have retired, and even those which, though Members of the League, do not come to assist us with their advice. While respecting their various motives, Spain would take upon herself to appeal to them urgently to co-operate constantly and systematically in the noble work of the League, in which those who give always receive.

The new Spain has a profound faith in the League. The inextricable complexity of the problems to be solved, and the multiplicity of committees, too often give rise to jeremiads; and critics, friendly as well as unfriendly, dare to attack the very principles that are responsible for our presence here. But, impatient as we may be to see the world's diseases cured, disappointed as we may be by our lack of success, who would be so unjust as to blame the League — which, after all, is only a method of international co-operation — for failures which are essentially due to the absence of such co-operation?

Spain herself is thoroughly convinced that the world situation demands, not a reduction, but a development of the League; not a restriction, but an extension of its activities; and, above all, not a return to a state of international anarchy and to the system of limited and ephemeral understandings between groups of countries, which at once arouse suspicion in other groups — a barren and dangerous system, as past experience has shown — but a fresh affirmation of the principles of publicity, universality and international co-operation on which the work done at Geneva is founded.

Strong in this faith, Spain is convinced that the day will come when all the nations of the world, including the United States of North America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, will join with us, for those countries are as anxious as the rest of us for peace, and the League is the soundest foundation for the organisation of peace — not only because it is the sole permanent institution that can raise an effective barrier against war, but also because its aim is to eliminate all danger of war by encouraging the habit of international co-operation in all the arts of peace.

For these reasons, the Spanish Republic regards it as an error to suppose that the work of the League should be limited to any particular spheres, whether political or technical. It holds that it is the very multiplicity of the League's operations that contributes most effectively, though indirectly, to peace and disarmament. Nor can we accept the need of economy as a valid argument. It is true enough that economy is necessary — nay, indispensable — in national budgets, and, needless to say, in the budget of the League all unnecessary expenditure must be avoided and every possible administrative economy must be introduced. But when work of an international scope has been declared by the Assembly and the Council to be expedient, the nations that form the League owe it to themselves to provide the necessary funds for that work. It is a great thing to have an institution which bears the responsibility for organised civilisation, and we do not feel that 30 million gold francs represent an unduly high budget for such important work.

The Spanish delegation will therefore examine with care all proposals relating to the international organisation of the League, in order to be sure that the permanent organisations at Geneva and The Hague have the funds and the moral support necessary for the discharge of their duties. When critics attack our activities, we are, I feel, entitled

to reply that, if the League had done no more than create these three admirable centres of international technical work and international enthusiasm — the Secretariat, the International Labour Office and the Registry of the Court — it would, even so, have justified its existence. The Spanish Republic attaches the greatest importance to the maintenance of these three centres, which are models of efficiency and international integrity. It will always be ready to participate in any efforts the Assembly may think it necessary to make in that direction, with the assistance of the three distinguished officials in charge, especially the Secretary-General, in whom the Assembly rightly places complete confidence.

In full consciousness of the requirements of justice in the social sphere and of the obligation it has incurred in regard to labour organised in legal associations, which has so effectively contributed to its creation, the Spanish Republic will take an active part in the work of the International Labour Office, with a view to the welfare of the workers and to progress in regard to the technical aspect of production on international lines. It proposes to devote its sympathetic attention to the international conventions which are not yet ratified by Spain.

I am especially charged to proclaim here that Republican Spain, which is proud to have been the first to introduce the principles of international law in the Old World, confirms her accession to the Court of International Justice; and I hope that the number of countries which have signed the Optional Clause with regard to the obligatory jurisdiction of the Court will soon include all civilised nations, whether Members or not of the League.

It is in this spirit of sympathy towards all international institutions that Spain, though she had no part in its establishment, welcomes the creation of the Bank for International Settlements as a new manifestation of the law of modern life that the problems of the present time cannot be solved except by international co-operation and on universal bases. My Government is firmly resolved to stabilise the national currency and to adopt the gold exchange standard as soon as the constitutional measures have been passed by Parliament. Spain will then put forward a claim to be represented on the Bank for International Settlements, which even now she hopes will have a successful future.

But, of all these forms of international activity, Spain, in common with other countries, attaches the greatest importance to the Disarmament Conference which is to meet in February next. My Government has made it its first object to reduce its military effectives very appreciably. In other words, she has, as far as she herself is concerned, anticipated the work of the Conference. That is all the more reason for her to be interested in the success of the Conference.

The Spanish representative on the Council is the Rapporteur for disarmament questions. The Preparatory Commission asked the Spanish representative to draw up its general report. The League doubtless recognises that Spain has an exceptional position, and, I may add, a privileged position, in this matter. In re-organising the position in Spain, the Republic has halved the number of divisions of her army, and has reduced by two-thirds the number of her officers, who have accepted the sacrifice with the greatest patriotism. She has also reduced the budget of the army and navy, thus giving evidence that Spain does not wish to have anything more to do with the imperialist ambitions of outworn institutions.

Spain has no capital invested or capitalists interested in the maintenance of gigantic enterprises devoted to the production of war material, which, failing war or a threat of war, are bound to collapse and intensify the economic and financial catastrophe.

Lastly, Spain, which has, by democratic means, regained the free control of its destinies, has established a complete union of purpose among the Spanish people, the nation and the State — a union failing which any understandings between Governments have in the past proved, and will in the future prove, precarious indeed.

The best guarantee of the efficacy of any peace treaty lies in the assurance that the signatures of the Governments are backed by the democratic will of the peoples, and that the peoples mean to stand by those signatures, with the support of the women, as expressed through the Press.

As is clear from the most superficial glance at the geographical, economic and political circumstances which determine the foreign policy of Spain, nothing is more urgently necessary to her future than peace. But — if you will permit me to use so bold an expression — Spain's interest in disarmament is also a disinterested interest. Among the various convergent standpoints, Spain feels that she can preserve a certain impartiality, while remaining firmly attached to the principle of the speediest possible organisation of peace and disarmament, which are the two essential aspects of the question.

But neither the organisation of peace nor even disarmament — at all events within the limits at present possible — is sufficient to ensure the attainment of our ideal. Peace is a state of mind. Therefore, we must keep a careful eye upon the causes that may predispose public opinion in different countries to rivalry and war. I should like to mention two of those causes which seem to me most dangerous. First of all, there is economic competition. As long as the absence of international co-operation forces the nations into rivalry on the markets of the world, introducing methods inevitably borrowed from the war psychology, it will be vain to seek through mere disarmament the ideal of peace by which we are all inspired. Therefore, the League of Nations must endeavour to build up economic co-operation on new foundations, inspired by those sentiments of international solidarity which the universal nature of the present crisis brings so clearly into the foreground.

But there is one cause of anxiety more capable, perhaps, than any other of inducing a state of public opinion favourable to war. I refer to the influence that may be exerted on public opinion in various countries by a Press insufficiently informed of the intentions and acts of other countries. It would be a great mistake to suppose that in such matters danger can only proceed from ill-will or bad faith. Generally, on the contrary, an atmosphere of international mistrust — even an atmosphere of absolute tension — develops as a consequence of false interpretations, due either to insufficient information or to simple misunderstandings caused by the natural divergences between national outlooks. This vast field of international information, this task of clarifying and purifying the sources and channels of the distribution of news, seems to belong naturally to the League of Nations; it is the League which could take the initiative in exploring the possibilities of reform and progress in that direction.

My Government has observed with the keenest satisfaction that a number of delegations, notably those of Sweden and Poland, gave attention to this problem in the course of the investigations

concerning measures for strengthening the means of preventing war.

Spain, which has nothing to fear from publicity, but which has repeatedly suffered from misunderstandings such as those to which I have referred, has more than once devoted attention to this problem, which has been laid before the League in various forms, first by M. Urgoiti at the Press Conference at Geneva, and subsequently by M. Casares in the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation. I, who have the honour of addressing you, and who am President of the Spanish Press Association, would ask the Assembly in both capacities to afford a sympathetic reception to the following draft resolution:

"The Assembly,

"Considering that the organisation of peace demands the maintenance of an international spirit freed from all prejudices and misconceptions;

"Convinced of the necessity of ensuring that the Press of all nations receives as impartial and complete information as possible:

"Requests the Council to consider the possibility of studying:

"(a) Means of associating feminine action and feminine feeling with the work of the League of Nations by an effective and direct collaboration;

"(b) Means for preventing, with the assistance of the Press, the dissemination of such false information as may hinder the maintenance of peace and goodwill among the peoples."

International solidarity between democracies, the effect of feminine opinion and the direct participation of women in public life, and opinion as represented by the Press—these alone can give us a solid guarantee of peace established by Governments under the inspiration of the League of Nations.

The President:

Translation: The Rt. Hon. Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, first delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire):

A perusal of the report which we are now considering will have brought home to everyone that there has been no diminution of the activities of the League and its efforts to secure peace and good understanding between the nations. I sympathise very much with the passage in the speech which we have just heard which emphasised the importance of that activity and expressed the hope that it would not be diminished.

At the same time, all of us must feel that at the present moment any saving in money by a great institution such as this which can be accomplished without injury ought to be accomplished. It is not, of course, that the actual amount of money involved is considerable. If the League expenditure were diminished by ten or twenty per cent, no appreciable impression would have been made on the economic situation of the world; but if it were possible by one means or another to show that we in this League are not indifferent to the economic difficulties of the world, that action, as a gesture, would be well worth taking.

At the same time, I do agree most heartily with the representative of Spain that it would be the falsest of false economy if we were to do anything, more particularly at this time, to reduce the authority and prestige of the League of Nations,

or still worse to reduce its efficiency. That must be the governing consideration in all our efforts at economy. It is only subject to that consideration that the British delegation would feel able to consider any proposals in that direction.

There is one other matter relating to the internal management of the League to which I should like to refer. It has been a matter of discussion in this Assembly over and over again whether the present system of elections to the Council is altogether satisfactory. The British Government, the late Government, and I have no doubt the present Government, have given great attention to that subject, and they are satisfied that it is a matter which requires further investigation. I therefore ask leave to present to the Assembly a draft resolution in the following terms:

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a special committee to study the existing system of elections to the Council and to report to a future session of the Assembly on any reforms which may appear desirable."

I want to mention two other matters before I come to the main observations which I desire to make; the first is the question of slavery.

This is a matter which has occupied the attention of successive Assemblies for several years past, and I hope it will occupy the attention of this Assembly. The present position cannot be regarded as satisfactory. We drew up some years ago with great care and great thought a Convention on this subject. I believe it was a good Convention. It has certainly been accepted by the great majority of the Members of the League, but the active and positive results of that Convention have not, I am afraid, been very considerable.

In the circumstances, it is right to remind you that there are still in the world something like five million human beings living in a condition of more or less severe slavery. That is a terrible reflection on our existing civilisation. We shall have the honour of pressing upon the Sixth Committee once again proposals for a more efficient machinery to supervise the carrying out of the Convention which we have accepted. I earnestly trust that the Sixth Committee will give its close attention to those proposals and that we may be able to obtain some positive and constructive result this year.

On pages 144-145 of the report on the work of the League there is a reference to the Nansen International Office for Refugees, and you will notice that there still remain something like a quarter of a million refugees to be dealt with. Last May, the President of that Office, the very highly respected Dr. Max Huber, a citizen of this country, launched an appeal for assistance to enable the newly constituted Office to carry out and complete its work. I am glad to know that already considerable subscriptions have been sent in or promised; from Norway the interest on something like £12,000 to £15,000; from Armenian sources something like £14,000; from Denmark some £5,000 and from my own country, so far, some £4,000. I do not mean to say that these are Government subscriptions. They come—and that is the object of the appeal—from private sources; but I earnestly hope that the flow of funds will not diminish, and that the great work—one of the greatest of our humanitarian works—begun by one of the greatest of our members, and one of the greatest of internationalists, Dr. Nansen, will be carried through to a triumphant conclusion.

I venture very earnestly to commend that object and I trust that the appropriate Committee will be able to do something to forward the cause.

These questions, however, great and important as they are, are not the questions which at this moment occupy the close attention of the peoples of the world. The period in which this Assembly meets is one in which the purposes for which the League was founded are obviously of a special importance, a special gravity and urgency. Never was it more necessary that the world, and that most cautious and apprehensive section of it, the investing public, should be assured of the continuance of peaceful international relations. Never was the international co-operation which is the second main purpose of the League more needed for the world's current problems. It would be a real tragedy if this Assembly, representing as it does some three-quarters of the world, were to come to an end without contributing anything to the cure of the grave maladies from which the world is now suffering.

The anxiety which is now in all our minds results from the world economic depression which began two years ago, and also from the financial crisis which followed three months ago. Grave as is the economic depression, it is the financial crisis which threatens the more immediate disaster unless urgent action can be taken.

The dominant need of the moment is to revive international investment. This is needed in order to bridge the gap in the balance of payments between creditor and debtor countries, to stop the drain on gold, which, if it continues, will threaten a number of currencies which have been painfully restored during the past decade, and to provide capital for the economic enterprises without which the recovery and employment of those now involuntarily idle will be impossible. If this is not done, and done quickly, it is clear from the evidence before us that one country after another, both in Europe and overseas, will be forced into some form or other of extended moratoria which may endanger the whole system on which the economic life of the world is based, and will be driven again into the chaos which results from demoralised currency.

Let me enforce this argument by referring to the special case of Germany. I do this because the German position is at the centre of the present financial crisis, because the repercussion of a disaster there would obviously extend over a large part of the rest of the world, and because we have the report — this is the most important thing — of the very authoritative expert Committee which met at Basle under the presidency of Mr. Wiggin. That report says, in impressive terms :

"The time is short. The body of the world's commerce, whose vitality is already low, has suffered a severe shock in one of its members. This has resulted in a partial paralysis which can only be cured by restoring the free circulation of money and of goods. We believe that this can be accomplished, but only if the Governments of the world will realise the responsibility that rests upon them, and will take permanent measures to re-establish confidence. Their action alone can restore it. We think it essential that, before the period of prolongation of credits recommended by the London Conference comes to an end, they should give to the world the assurance that international political relations are established on a basis of mutual confidence, which is the *sine qua non* of economic recovery, and that the international payments to be made by Germany will not be such as to imperil the maintenance of its financial stability.

"We therefore conclude by urging most earnestly upon all Governments concerned that they lose no time in taking the necessary measures

for bringing about such conditions as will allow financial operations to bring to Germany, and thereby to the world, sorely needed assistance."

That is what the experts say. That is their urgent appeal, under pain of disaster, not only to the country first in question, but to the whole world.

What can and should the Governments do? If we had a period of years before us there is much that could and should be done. International trade must be extended by the removal of impediments; monetary reforms must be attempted and the new methods and machinery proposed by the French Government in its most interesting memorandum and considered by the League's financial organisation must be tried.

All these and other things are necessary, and in time are practicable; but we are faced by an imperative need of action, not in a period of years, but of months or even weeks. What can be done in this time? Within this time international investment must be revived, sufficient confidence must be given to the investor to lend again at once. Is there any practicable alternative to the action recommended by the Basle Committee? Is it not evident that the problem of Governmental indebtedness to which temporary relief has been given by the present moratorium needs such a solution as will give confidence for new investments on a long-term basis, which both the Conference of Prime Ministers in July and the Basle Committee in August regarded as indispensable?

These loans might give confidence to the creditor countries and induce them again to lend to enterprises in them, and this would allow the amount lent to go to mass production and reduce the gap between payments of debtor and creditor countries. I see no alternative to this, if we put aside such an expedient as Government guarantees of foreign loans. It is, of course, equally essential for such new investments that the borrowing countries should take every step to balance their budgets and to use the new resources lent by capital for productive purposes. But this is not all. The lack of confidence which caused the present crisis is due, not only to doubts as to the debtor's capacity to pay, but also to anxiety as regards the political position. I want to say a few words on that subject.

In a sense, the political position is not altogether unfavourable. I do not think that there is the slightest prospect of any war. I know — and history tells us — how rash it is to prophesy as to the future of international affairs; but, nevertheless, I do not believe that there is anyone in this room who will contradict me when I say that there has scarcely ever been a period in the world's history when war seemed less likely than it does at present.

But, nevertheless, there are evils. In the first place, there is prevalent throughout many countries in the world — I was almost going to say every country, but certainly in many countries — a certain atmosphere of internal unrest. That does not only concern those countries; it has its repercussion all over the world. We hear constantly of violent speeches or aggressive demonstrations being made in this country or in that; and I quite realise — for I have been in public affairs all my life — the immense temptation that orators feel in that direction. You see a great multitude before you. That multitude expects to be excited and enthused, and you are led on to make striking and vehement phrases which call forth loud cheers from your audience and cause people to congratulate you on a successful speech. Yet it may well be that such a speech will not only do infinite

harm to the foreign relations of your country but will sentence some miserable women and children in far-distant countries to misery and starvation.

If only orators could have before them a picture of people struggling for existence, to whom the economic prosperity of the world means all the difference between life and death, I think they would put a good deal of water in their wine and forego a few of the enthusiastic cheers of their audience. Let us always remember that in this, as in so many other matters, one inflammatory speech cannot be killed even by ten moderate speeches from the same quarter. Unfortunately, moderation is not particularly readable; it does not receive the same publicity as extreme utterances and for that and other reasons it is very difficult by mere speech to counteract the harm that is done by violent utterances. It is partly due to this, but partly also to many other causes, that there is in the world an atmosphere of international suspicion certainly as great as it has been, perhaps greater than it has been, in recent years, and it is that international suspicion flowing in part from these disturbances and unrest in the countries of the world, and also from other quarters, which it ought to be the special function of the League of Nations to allay.

As I have just said, mere speeches are not enough — not even resolutions or *communiqués*. As you, Sir, so well said in your opening observations, something of the nature of positive action is necessary. I am not suggesting, far from it, that this is a time for a general revision or reconsideration of the Treaty position in Europe. That would not promote peace or quietness or tranquillity, but I do think we ought to do something; and the obvious thing — as almost every speaker from this tribune has already said — is the promotion of international disarmament. By that means a lot of money could be saved. International disarmament would do more, perhaps, than any other single thing to increase international confidence, and by this great and unmistakable act it would be announced to the world that the nations were turning away from violence and looking to reason for the justification of their aspirations, and were prepared really and genuinely to enthrone justice as the arbiter of international disputes.

Do not let us think that this, which is a very urgent matter, is a matter that can be left to settle itself. I am not going to attempt to make a disarmament speech, but I do just want to draw your attention to one series of incidents as an illustration of the urgency of this matter. It so happens that quite recently, in the last few months, there have been held what are called "air manœuvres" in a number of countries — in my own country, in France, in Italy and in America, and I dare say in many others. Observe what that means. I am not criticising, I need not say, any of the Governments concerned. These are manœuvres to exercise and perfect an arm which is, perhaps, more essentially than any other an aggressive arm. No doubt if one country has aircraft, another country will say that it is necessary — and perhaps it is — for it also to have aircraft. But these manœuvres show once again that the possession of aircraft by one country is no defence against attack by the aircraft of another. It is not a means of defence; at the most it gives to the country attacked the power of reprisal, but nothing else. That is, I venture to think, the lesson of the manœuvres which have taken place.

I have before me a report that was published in one of our great English papers, the *London Times*, giving an account of some manœuvres in a country which I shall not name because I have no desire whatever to make any charge against any particular

country — far from it. It is the system that is interesting to me on this occasion, not the policy of any particular country — a policy which, as far as I can see, is pretty much the same all over the world. Here is the description of the manœuvres that took place in that particular country. I will just read a few extracts from the report:

"The first wave of the raiders flying low from the east appeared in a cloudless sky at 3 a.m. and afforded an impressive spectacle as they roared over the town and dropped hundreds of 'bombs' in the shape of fire-works which exploded loudly a few hundred feet above the house-tops. For an hour and a half the air trembled with the throbbing of powerful engines, as the attacking machines with tail lights flashing intermittently swept in across the town to discharge their explosive loads with splendid accuracy. The afternoon visit of the raiders was even more spectacular. At one moment it was possible to count nearly 300 machines, scouts, fighters and large three-engined bombers in the sky."

That was over one town.

"A similar attack was made yesterday on another town and resulted, according to the official *communiqué*, in the destruction of the railway station, the paralysing of the factories and the military establishments and in huge casualties amongst the civil population."

Then, with regard to another town, this time a dockyard town, the account is as follows:

"This town is judged by the umpires to have been 'half destroyed, and in any case to be out of action for a long time', with severe losses to its defensive seaplane and aeroplane organisations at a cost to the invaders of only ten fighting aeroplanes and eight bombers. Curtains of smoke were sent up both from the land and from the ships with the purpose of obscuring objectives of particular value and military importance, but the only result was to make them more easily picked out by the airmen. Thus this form of passive defence was only proved to be completely useless."

That is typical, I venture to say, of the results which were obtained from all the other manœuvres. There is no contradiction. There is this broad fact — that there are in existence all over the world military air organisations, one purpose of which is the destruction of cities with the vast masses of civil population, and against which, so far, no adequate defence whatever has been devised. I spoke just now of the necessity for encouraging the investing public, but what kind of encouragement is it when we say to the investing public: "We are threatening the destruction of the material wealth of all these countries, and these countries to which we anxiously implore you to lend money are preparing means for destroying the security on which your loans would rest".

I have taken the case of the air because it is in some ways the most striking; but to a certain degree, and allowing for the difference of method, etc., what has been said of the air may be said to a very large extent of land and sea armaments as well. I therefore welcome most heartily the observations made by my predecessors at this Tribune concerning the meeting of the Disarmament Conference next year, and I would like to emphasise the fact — because, after all, that fact is in itself a great step forward — that, by the unanimous consent of the world, the Conference is to meet on

February 2nd of next year, and that no Government, least of all my own, would tolerate for a moment any proposal for its postponement.

In this connection it is absolutely necessary that I should refer to the very remarkable speech which was delivered two days ago by the Italian Foreign Minister, my friend and colleague, Signor Grandi. That speech might be a model to all orators of the true method of the advocacy of peace — peace by means of disarmament and the League of Nations. In the course of his speech, Signor Grandi made a most interesting suggestion; as I understood it he proposes, or he suggests — I do not know that he went so far as to propose — that it would be very fitting and very useful if the nations of the world would agree not to increase their armaments by land, sea or in the air, at any rate until the Disarmament Conference has had an opportunity to come to a conclusion on the subject. That is a most interesting suggestion with which I fully agree.

Speaking personally, as one who, for many years, has taken a great interest in the disarmament problem, rather than as a representative of my country, though I do not know that there is any distinction between the two, I venture to say that, if this suggestion could be put into effect, it would make an admirable preface to the Disarmament Conference. I very earnestly hope that some proposal giving body and concrete effect to the Italian suggestion will be laid before the Third Committee, and I can promise that, so far as I am concerned, I shall give such a proposal the most anxious and most sympathetic consideration, moved by the desire, if possible, to see how a practical measure of that kind can be brought into actual existence. In any case, I desire to express my warmest thanks to Signor Grandi for having made the suggestion, and my earnest hope that it may lead to some practical result.

I feel that, both for economic reasons and for reasons of world peace and progress and everything that is really worth having in the civilisation of the world, this Disarmament Conference must succeed. We cannot afford to let it fail. It must result in a substantial reduction of the armaments of the world, and I am quite sure that that result can be achieved if the spirit in which we come to that Conference is only the right spirit. If each country merely seeks to get off with doing as little as possible, we shall produce no good results; but if we all come here, as I hope and believe we shall, with a desire not to see how little but how much we can do, how large a step we can take towards the ultimate ideal of complete international disarmament — if we come here in that spirit I am satisfied that the Disarmament Conference will be a triumphant success. After all, the Conference meets next year, and, if what I have tried to show you earlier in my observations is right, the crisis is very urgent. What are we doing in the meanwhile? What step can we take to improve the international atmosphere? I believe we can do a good deal.

There are present at this Assembly the representatives of two great and highly respected nations, each in its way a leader of civilisation. If there could be a real *rapprochement* between France and Germany, not only in word but in action, seventy-five per cent of the political unrest of the world would, I believe, thereby be removed.

I have seen it said in the papers and elsewhere that my country is opposed to a *rapprochement*; that for purely selfish reasons we are anxious to see these two great countries in hostility because we thereby have a greater position in the counsels of Europe. That is a gross and scandalous libel on my country; I have never heard Englishmen

give vent to any such proposition. I am satisfied that, whether it is the present Government or any future Government of England, it will always be anxious to do its utmost to promote good understanding between its two great neighbours, and nothing would give it greater pleasure or satisfaction than to see a real friendship — I hope there is a real friendship — and a visible friendship, between these two countries. We endeavoured at Locarno to give practical effect to our desire in that direction, and I can only say that, so far as the spirit of Locarno is concerned, it still persists in my country and we shall always be ready to do anything that we can — I do not know that there is anything we can do — to promote this splendid spirit.

My reason for referring to these two countries is not only because they are in our minds continually; we know how much depends on the policy of each of them. They, however, are not the only countries concerned; my country may very likely itself be doing something which, in the opinion of others, does not help the pacification of the world. If that is so, I only hope it will be pointed out to us, because, as far as I am concerned, I would say that it is the duty of every Government to search its mind at the present crisis in order to see what contribution its country can make towards putting an end to what is, after all, not a normal condition of international life, but an unnatural and diseased condition of the public mind. That seems to me to be the great task to which we should set ourselves in the coming months, and, I may say with absolute confidence, not only on behalf of my Government, but also on behalf of the people on whom that Government depends, that the only real plank in their foreign policy is to contribute to the utmost of their power to the pacification of the world.

The President:

Translation: In addition to the draft resolutions presented by the Spanish and British delegations, I have received the following proposal from the Norwegian delegation:

“The Assembly,

“Following the precedents already established for several 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 documents dealing with the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the last session of the Assembly”.

The text of these three draft resolutions will be printed and distributed to members of the Assembly, and I reserve the right to offer at a later date, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, suggestions on the procedure to be followed.

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

M. Motta (Switzerland):

Translation: I attribute the atmosphere of uneasiness which seems to pervade our work mainly, perhaps exclusively, to the economic and financial depression from which all countries are suffering in varying degrees. The duration, extent and effects of that depression — which are not confined to material values but in some ways affect spiritual values also — constitute a remarkable proof of solidarity between all countries. Indeed, the first great lesson to be drawn from it is that of universal solidarity.

The League cannot but feel the effects of the present situation. The sufferings of the various members of the body entail, by a biological law, the suffering of the whole body. We shall never have a prosperous League of Nations so long as the States composing it are themselves unhappy. The only question we have to ask ourselves is this: Can the League of Nations take effective action to mitigate the evils of the present crisis and help to cure them?

The real friends of the League, its most enlightened partisans and surest guides, are not those who indulge in specious optimism, but those who face the evils, diagnose them and set themselves to remedy them.

The efforts made hitherto in the economic field have not yielded satisfactory results, nor can it be denied that, even admitting that international affairs cannot always be measured by the same standards as national affairs, there is sometimes a serious lack of proportion between the means employed and the objects achieved. When storms menace and flood-waters threaten to engulf houses and cities, the inhabitants abandon the occupations and pleasures of untrodden times.

When all is said and done, however, we must ask ourselves this: If the League of Nations did not exist, where, how and by what means would Governments and nations find a way of meeting and taking counsel together?

In common justice we have to admit that quite recently, when the financial conditions of a great country suddenly became so critical, the Bank for International Settlements at Basle was used as a meeting-place where competent financiers could consult together without delay as to the best means of averting the catastrophe which threatened. Is not the Bank for International Settlements a direct off-shoot of the League, or at least a body conceived in the League spirit?

True, several countries have had to grapple with unwonted internal difficulties, and their Governments, which have naturally been most concerned with immediate interests, have looked on the interests attaching to international collaboration as of secondary importance.

Must we not, however, welcome as of good augury the fact that the very existence of the League and the warnings it gives have a relatively restraining influence on States and prevent them from embarking on dangerous courses. But for the League's existence, might not the unfortunate complications of the recent past have led to still more serious complications, perhaps even to social anarchy at least as destructive as war?

All thinking people will view with approval meetings and direct conversations between the heads and members of Governments especially interested in solving urgent and specific problems. There is no reason, however, to take the unsympathetic view that such meetings and conversations are in opposition to the work of the League. It is surely fairer to regard the two methods as complementary and to take the view that the heads of Governments who meet in Paris, Berlin, London or Rome are increasing their chances of success when they carry on their negotiations in the spirit of the League and without losing contact with the League.

The question of reparations and inter-State debts — that onerous legacy of the war — does not come within the League's province. Last spring, the President of the United States of America made a remarkable move, which, though apparently only concerned with a temporary aspect of the problem in question, has actually had the effect of bringing up the whole problem for discussion. That problem demands a solution; to leave it unsettled indefinitely would mean prolonging the

general business depression. I venture to say that we all hope the action taken will be carried to its logical and final conclusion.

There is no occasion to indulge in sterile pessimism, still less to abandon ourselves to what has always seemed to me one of the most contemptible forms of pessimism — defeatism. The idea of arbitration is progressing steadily, and the cause of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of International Justice has triumphed. The small States have not hesitated to embark on this course, and the great Powers — to their credit — have followed them. This session of the Assembly will probably see the introduction of a new Convention to strengthen the means of preventing war which, though not of primary importance, will furnish one more proof of our determination to leave nothing undone to avert a clash of arms.

I shall say nothing here of the unification of laws on bills of exchange and cheques, or of the unification of river law, nor shall I mention the international agreements concluded in April, whereby a number of obstacles to road traffic will be removed. I do not propose to expatiate on the new Convention for the limitation of the manufacture of narcotic drugs, which marks perhaps the decisive phase in the struggle against that social evil and the affirmation of a new will and a new method.

We are on the eve of the Conference for the reduction of armaments. That Conference will not be postponed. It will, both by reason of the object for which it has been called and by reason of its composition, be one of the greatest ever held. It has been convened in conformity with the Covenant, and the provisions of that instrument will not have been truly observed unless positive results are obtained. Although public opinion should be warned against entertaining exaggerated hopes, it must also be informed of the greatness of the undertaking. It must be proclaimed in no uncertain voice that the effective reduction of armaments alone can strengthen the feeling of security, help to eliminate certain deep-seated causes of the present economic disorder, and increase confidence in the maintenance of peace. Without such confidence rendered in some sort tangible and visible, it would be useless to expect a real business revival, it would hardly be possible to base any hopes on equitable treatment for international commerce within the meaning of the Covenant, including more particularly the stabilisation and gradual reduction of Customs tariffs.

The ultimate cause of our setbacks in the economic field has on more than one occasion been stated by the experts best qualified to speak to lie in the fear that peace may not yet be firmly established. Until business men are fully persuaded that the truth is the very opposite, they will be tempted to raise artificial economic obstacles between countries, designed to secure the independence and autonomy of each in time of danger threatening from without.

If, however, the League's methodical work, if accession of all to the Pact for the renunciation of war, if progress in arbitration and, lastly, effective and adequate reduction of land and sea armaments — if all these factors combined do not succeed in creating a fresh spirit which shall engender human progress in its supreme form, then truly we may despair of the future of mankind.

This cannot and must not be. Material and technical progress lies patent to the eye. Everywhere there is a tendency towards internationalisation, and credit too is weaving an ever closer and more far-flung net of solidarity. Men have never before been so near one another in time or in space.

The marvellous products of Marconi's genius would lose half their significance did they not prove that the supreme aim and object of material progress is to serve the cause of moral progress. The fatal attempts to apply discoveries and inventions to instruments of death and destruction are aberrations that violate the human and the divine order alike.

Last Tuesday morning, when we were endorsing the proposed invitation to Mexico, I was thinking that the entry of that great and wealthy country into the League would be in the nature of a symbol. It will typify the universal importance that Latin-America continues to attach to our work. It may perhaps herald further additions to our numbers or the return of others to our fold. In any case, despite certain signs to the contrary, it will show that the League is not regarded with indifference by any State. That is why this addition to our numbers at the present time appears to me as a cause of rejoicing and of hope.

29. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE GERMAN DELEGATION.

The President:

Translation: I have received the following draft resolution from the German delegation:

"The Assembly decides to refer to the Sixth Committee that part of the report on the work of the League since the eleventh session of the Assembly and of the introduction thereto which deals with the question of the protection of minorities (pages 74 to 80)."

This draft resolution will be printed and distributed, and I will make suggestions to you later as to the action to be taken upon it.

The Assembly rose at 12.40 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH, 1931, AT 4 P.M.

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Speeches by M. Alâ (Persia), Sir Thomas Wilford (New Zealand) and M. Michalakopoulos (Greece).

President : M. TITULESCO.

30. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The agenda consists of the continuation of the general discussion of the report on the work of the League since the eleventh session of the Assembly.

M. Alâ, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

M. Alâ (Persia) :

Translation : Last year, from this same platform, I had the honour to call the Assembly's attention to the economic crisis which was being experienced, not only in Europe, but also in the countries of the East. I emphasised the interdependence of all the continents and the need for extending the beneficent action of the League to Asia as well as to Europe, in the spirit of universality which lies at the very basis of the Covenant.

To-day this need is making itself felt still more urgently, for the situation has grown worse. We are threatened with a general collapse ; there is a lack of confidence everywhere.

I venture to submit to you in a few words the reflections and considerations which the common

danger has suggested to me, so that I may contribute my small quota to the solution of the problems which beset us.

To take first the economic sphere : In addition to the main causes of the crisis to which previous speakers have referred, there is one to which the League's attention has not been sufficiently drawn. I refer to the loss in purchasing-power of countries having a monometallic — a purely silver — currency, among which is Persia.

To remedy this state of affairs, it will be necessary to institute, through the technical services of the League, an exhaustive enquiry into the question of silver, the revalorisation of which, with the effective co-operation of all countries concerned, would appear to be advisable.

Again, the Commission of Enquiry for European Union has undeniably done useful work in regard to the disposal of the agricultural products of countries suffering either from overproduction or from a lack of markets. In order to relieve the position of these European countries, the question of drawing up a scheme of preferential tariffs is under examination, and an International Credit Bank has been formed, in which, however, States outside Europe may not collaborate until after a trial period of five years. But the agricultural countries of the East, including Persia, are labouring under the same difficulties, and it would only be fair to make general the system instituted under the auspices of the League.

I will not take up your time by citing other means which might be employed for assisting the countries of the East. The two typical examples I have mentioned will suffice. In the meantime, threatened with an unfavourable trade balance, deprived of markets and facilities for transit, left to her own resources, my country has been obliged in self-defence to have recourse to exceptional measures which, whatever may be said of them, were necessary to avoid a real catastrophe.

Despite the clouds looming on the economic and political horizon, we must not be discouraged or

pessimistic. The report on the work of the League reveals considerable progress in the right direction. The fruitful activity of the League has been exercised in many spheres. Nevertheless, some important questions, it is true, have been dealt with elsewhere. How could it be otherwise so long as the League has not attained its proper universality?

For my part I am an optimist, and I do not despair of seeing in our midst at a not very distant date those great countries which play a most important part in economics and in politics, but which are holding aloof, although they are not indifferent to the work of our Committees. It was with very real satisfaction that Persia welcomed the invitation sent to Mexico, and we are delighted that that great country is to take its place among us. We shall also be glad to see the countries of the Near East who are neighbours of Persia shortly becoming members of our society and collaborating in our work of peace. By thus enlarging our circle we shall increase the influence of the League and its prestige in the world. Security and confidence between the nations can only gain thereby.

This confidence of which so much has been said cannot be created in the economic field unless, in the political field, an effort is made to clear the ground of all antagonism and all rivalry, and unless the policy of prestige is abandoned, which is fatal to a better understanding between nations.

There is no doubt that the strengthening of the means of arbitration, the accession of a large number of countries to the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice and to the General Act for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes will help to allay fear and bring about wider and more effective co-operation. That is why my country, after ratifying the Optional Clause, has just submitted the General Act to Parliament for approval.

Again, confidence will be inspired and maintained if the articles of the Covenant, our constitutional charter, are left as far as possible untouched. The principles on which the League is founded should be maintained intact and the unity of the Covenant preserved.

Last year in the First Committee we examined the delicate question of bringing the Pact of Paris into harmony with the Covenant. We shall have to deal with that question again this year. Without wishing to be too rigid, since there is a continuity and solidarity between the various articles of the Covenant, we should only be prepared to consider slight amendments calculated to consolidate and organise more satisfactorily the guarantees which the articles of the Covenant as a whole give to the Members of the League.

Among the measures intended to restore confidence, I must not forget the resolution adopted by the eleventh Assembly on October 3rd, 1930. It lays down in particular the necessity for asking Governments what are the objections which prevent them from accepting certain international conventions concluded under the auspices of the League. That was a happy initiative, and establishes a procedure for the revision of conventions with a view to their ratification by the greatest possible number of countries. Persia herself has taken advantage of it to communicate to the Secretary-General her observations concerning the Convention of June 17th, 1925, for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and Implements of War, and to request him to submit the question to the Assembly with a view to revision.

The problem which outweighs all others, however, and the solution of which will be the most effective means of allaying fears and bringing about the

economic recovery of the world, is certainly disarmament. No one desires peace more ardently than Persia for, despite her neutrality, she experienced from 1914 to 1918 all the horrors of war, being invaded and devastated by the belligerents. It was only after the great world conflict that our defensive preparations really began. In drawing up the scheme of limitation which we shall submit to the Conference next year, we shall aim at the lowest point consistent with our obligations within the framework of Article 8 of the Covenant. In so doing, we shall count on the other articles of the Covenant which provide for concerted international action in the event of aggression being respected.

Unfortunately, there is a limit to the speed at which we can advance towards disarmament. It is in itself a great step forward that all the countries of the world, even those not Members of the League, have agreed to meet at a first international Conference to discuss the limitation or reduction of their armaments, a question which hitherto has been purely national in character.

I sincerely hope it will be possible to reach an equitable agreement, taking into account the geographical situation of each country and the degree of security attained.

The President :

Translation: Sir Thomas Wilford, delegate of New Zealand, will address the Assembly.

Sir Thomas Wilford (New Zealand). — The excuse I have for speaking here this afternoon is that my Government has asked me to deliver two messages to this Assembly. I shall be brief in my remarks, as brief as possible, but, before I deliver those messages, I desire to associate myself entirely with the remarks made by the leader of the British delegation in reference to the question of slavery. All those who have read the recent book by Lady Simon, a wonderfully comprehensive work, ably compiled, and who have studied the subject of slavery as it still unfortunately exists in some parts of the world to-day, will realise that the time has come when some determined effort is expected from an Assembly such as this at least to help to ameliorate the evil if not to banish it altogether.

I make no apologies for referring to the slavery question, for, in 1922, the delegate for New Zealand, Sir Arthur Steel Maitland, moved the first resolution, which was adopted by the League on the subject of slavery :

"The Assembly decides that the question of slavery shall be included in the Agenda of the Fourth Assembly, and requests that the Council presents to that Assembly a report based on the information which it shall have received on the matter."

This was the first step taken in the League with regard to the problem of slavery on the initiative of my country. We have been sorry to see that so little progress has been made since 1922, but we believe that this has been due to the fact that there was very little reliable data upon which decisions could be based and action taken. Since 1929, however, a great deal of information has become available, and it seems to me that either a Committee acting in a voluntary capacity should be appointed to examine and report upon the material that is now available, and which was not available in 1929, or that some method should be evolved by the Sixth Committee, without expense, in order that progress should be made.

I do not expect to see any revolution, but I do expect some evolutionary movement to take place

that will mark its impress on the progress of a reform, which, at the best, must be gradual. I have reminded you of the first step taken by the League in regard to slavery. Five days after that resolution was passed the Council of the League followed it up by calling for a report on any information possessed by the Governments Members of the League on the question of slavery, and, in 1923, following the New Zealand resolution, the Assembly appointed a small committee, with Dr. Nansen as Chairman. This Committee entrusted to a body of experts the task of investigating the slavery question. The Council in due course appointed an expert Committee of persons acting in a voluntary capacity, to examine the situation in the light of the material then before it. This body, the temporary Slavery Commission, reported to the Assembly in 1925 on the situation, in so far as it was revealed by the information placed at the disposal of the Commission which then disbanded. The British Government has pressed for the re-appointment of this Committee or of a permanent bureau to examine the mass of information which has become available since the Temporary Slavery Commission reported. I wish, notwithstanding, to make the suggestion before mentioned.

I have here a letter written by the Emperor of Ethiopia, dated July 12th last and addressed to the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society. I will not read the whole letter, as it is lengthy, but I propose to put that letter and the letter which evoked it before the Sixth Committee, in order that the members of that Committee who are sympathetic may be informed of the attitude of the Emperor of Ethiopia towards this very important question. Suffice it for me to give an excerpt from that letter, which reads :

"We are definitely decided with reference to the task we have undertaken for freeing the slaves still owned by the public, and not with reference to traffic in slaves, which we have already prohibited by decree. In some of the worst cases we have even gone so far as to inflict the death penalty."

There is a lot more in the letter, which I shall submit, as I have said, to the Sixth Committee rather than occupy the time of the Assembly with it. I cannot believe, however, that there can be any delegate from any country in this great Assembly who will not be willing, if he knows the facts, to help to bring about the abolition of a practice which is, at any rate in this age, to put it in the mildest way possible, against the best ethics of civilisation.

Next, I wish to deliver a message from my country to the Assembly. As you know, New Zealand has always been a subscriber, and a willing subscriber, to the League. Our representation has not been perfunctory; it has been animated by a genuine desire to help. But my Government in a letter sent to me before I left for Geneva states that :

"The growing cost of the administration of the League (and with it, of course, the contribution of New Zealand) is a matter of grave concern to us. The dissipation of the League's activities into so many really secondary functions must tend to divert its attention to some extent from the more vital objects for which in our view it was primarily instituted."

The letter closes with the following words :

"A definite attempt should be made to reduce the present expenditure."

I know that any remarks I may make in this direction may be unpopular. At the same time, if

popularity is to be the test of the expression of sentiments in an institution of this kind, the sooner it closes the better. My opinion, and the opinion of my Government, is this, that if there ever was a time in the world — and this has been emphasised on many occasions by speakers during this debate — when a *beau geste* should be made to the world, it should be made to-day in the reduction in some way or other of the huge amount which it at present costs to run the whole of this League. I am not suggesting how this should be done. It would be quite wrong for me to pretend to indicate to those who have lived in the administration of the League since its inception where useless expenditure could be discontinued. But there is no Government in the world to-day — and I do not except my own — that, in the changed circumstances and in view of the economic blizzard through which every country is passing, but must take in a hole or two in its belt.

I listened last year, and I have listened this year, to a great number of able speakers discussing a United States of Europe. Would it not be better to arrive at a united state of mind as a preface to the United States of Europe? I think we should arrive at a united state of mind if every one gave his candid opinion with regard to the cost that every country is having to bear to-day in connection with the working of this League.

My country would hold me guilty if I did not make a public declaration to the effect that it approves and supports and will pay with pleasure and readiness any contribution that is necessary for the Disarmament Conference which is to be held next year. While therefore my remarks apply to the general budget of the League, they do not apply to the vote for the Disarmament Conference. Whatever that amount may be, we take no exception to it and will gladly and readily pay our share.

Signor Grandi, while speaking, used an expression which attracted me immensely. He said : "The League should deal with the facts of the international situation and not confine itself to declarations of principle or to developing its own constitutional law". I agree with every word of that statement. I hope the Disarmament Conference will not turn out merely to be a Disarmament Conference of hope, but that it will be one of action, and anything that my delegation can do towards making that Disarmament Conference real and towards achieving a definite result will be done wholeheartedly and readily.

We realise that an unarmed State alongside a State which is wealthy in arms and military equipment lives in fear, and we realise also that it might, if its neighbour were unscrupulous, be in danger. I would like, therefore, to say that, when we are considering the question of the sum which shall be voted for carrying on the work of this League, perhaps a small Committee might be set up to ascertain where a substantial saving could be made in some of the sidelines of its activities — if I may so refer to them — without in any possible way attempting to curtail expenditure which may be described as reasonable in the circumstances. We think that it is undoubtedly possible to save a considerable amount of money and that this should be done at once.

I want to say a word here, too, in regard to the observation that has been made as to the various contracts, moral or legal, that have been entered into during the last few years. The Covenant, the Locarno Treaty, the Pact of Paris—the Covenant with its sanctions and the Pact of Paris without its sanctions — the movement to make the Pact harmonise with the Covenant, all prove that progress has been made by the League under what appeared to be almost insurmountable difficulties.

I have faith as a New Zealander in the League of Nations, because it has created a public conscience which now calls for arbitration and not for war for the settlement of international disputes. My country originated almost the first Arbitration Act that was ever put on a Statute Book for the settlement of disputes between employers and employees. Why did we do this? For the simple reason that we believe that arbitration is an appeal to reason, and that an appeal to reason must come at some time, and is it not better that it should come before the conflagration than after? On that principle, we stand four-square with the Conference in its desire to reduce armaments and to bring about some form of international arbitration for the settlement of international disputes. Every country to-day, as I have said before, talks of a national stocktaking. We can take in this Assembly an international stocktaking by reducing our expenditure, which reduction will help and affect every nation that is represented here — and how sorely some of them need assistance.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, in my country, we experience difficulty in obtaining information of what is happening at Geneva. Many delegates hardly realise that we are 13,000 miles away, and, when a country which sends a representative here receives notices of what is going to happen only just before a Conference, and there is no time left for consultation between the country and its representative in London, it is not good for the League.

I do not want New Zealand to be known as a country with a grievance, but I do want the League of Nations to realise that the countries which are far removed from Geneva, where great movements are taking place affecting everyone of us, should have the same opportunities as those which are near at hand of being consulted, and that the method adopted in the past of merely informing us should be at once discontinued.

The President:

Translation: M. Michalakopoulos, delegate of Greece, will address the Assembly.

M. Michalakopoulos (Greece):

Translation: We have heard many inspiring words from this platform on the subject of peace and international solidarity, and I should hesitate to address you after so many eloquent speeches were it not for my conviction that the ideal of union and peaceful co-operation which the world is seeking cannot be sufficiently extolled. My country, I am glad to be able to say, has done everything in its power to realise that noble purpose. No doubt its contribution to the general cause is only a modest one, but I venture to hope that its very spontaneity has been of real moral value.

In the firm belief that international disputes can and must be solved by the straightforward method of arbitration, Greece some years ago accepted the Optional Clause and has just acceded to the General Act. She has also concluded with various Powers, neighbours and others, a number of pacts of friendship, conciliation and arbitration which need but a few finishing touches to be entirely satisfactory.

I should like to dwell for a moment on one of these, as it is of peculiar historical significance and practical importance. I refer to the Greco-Turkish agreements concluded some weeks after the last Assembly, which finally put an end to a feud that had lasted for centuries, and inaugurated an era of friendship characterised from the outset by that frank cordiality which is a guarantee of its lasting character.

This example seems to me to be a striking and, I might also say, an instructive one. Not ten years ago, the two nations were locked in a terrible struggle — the last episode in their long history of antagonism. Scarcely a year ago, the problems arising out of the liquidation of that conflict were still numerous and complicated, but the goodwill of both parties triumphed in the end. When they did shake hands, they did so in good faith, and once for all. The Greco-Turkish friendship is founded on two firm principles — obliteration of the past and mutual confidence. Greece had the courage to abandon a dream cherished for many generations, and acknowledged as final the territorial status created by these recent treaties. Turkey did the same. There was no *arrière-pensée*, no thought of revenge. With the atmosphere thus cleared, full, practical and moral effect can be given to these pacts. The nations do not need political conquests in order to progress: science, art, intellectual and economic pursuits supply them with fields of activity into which they can enter with an equal claim to glory and with greater usefulness.

Because the attempt being made to secure a European Union was based on these ideas, we associated unreservedly with it from the outset. The venture is only slowly making headway, which is perfectly natural, though the results in the matter of agricultural credit alone are a sufficient proof of activity.

It is also thanks to the Commission of Enquiry for European Union that the idea of preferential tariffs between the European States has made such progress. During the discussions in the Commission, Greece took a special interest in the measures designed to protect agricultural products, as is both just and useful — just, because we must try to neutralise the caprices of Nature, which does not accord to every country all the products that it needs, and useful, because the improvement in the economic situation, and hence in the purchasing power of the agricultural countries, will facilitate the marketing of the products of industrial countries. The Greek Government is glad that it should have been proposed to entrust the examination of this question to a special committee, and feels sure that the Assembly will ratify the proposal.

These are really tangible results, and yet — as everyone knows, though no one likes to emphasise it — there are numerous indications, imponderable it is true, that the League's work is this year surrounded by an atmosphere, I will not say of despair, but of hesitation. Some doubt seems to be felt as to the ultimate success of the great principles of peaceful collaboration on which the League is based. The League has two great enemies; it is at grips with two great forces, or rather two great human weaknesses — forgetfulness and impatience.

The world easily forgets what has been done, and waits impatiently for what still remains to be done. People often forget that the League, which, only eleven years ago, was but an ill-defined embryonic entity, is to-day a great moral force, an organisation whose activities are continually increasing and extending. People forget that it has solved a number of grave political and economic questions. They forget that it has financially restored — that is, saved from ruin — more than one State which, unable to steer its way in the sea of post-war difficulties, was on the point of foundering. My own country was one of them, and I should like to take this opportunity of expressing once more our gratitude for the League's prompt and efficacious intervention. The work of Locarno — an historic fact of enormous moral and political

value — and other events more recent still, are forgotten. In January last, during the German-Polish dispute, pessimists foretold the League's approaching end, yet it was the League that settled the dispute. Again, in May, the international atmosphere seemed to be irremediably affected by the profound repercussions which the proposal for an Auto-German Customs Union produced in Europe, but once again the League, by referring the question to the Permanent Court of International Justice, gave time for personal feelings to subside and for a judicious solution to be evolved.

The League has another enemy in the impatience of nations. After five years of war, when men were locked in savage conflict, and the devastating sword of Mars reaped human and material havoc without parallel in world history, the League is expected to produce order out of chaos, with a touch of Circe's wand. People so easily forget how much more difficult it is to reconstruct than to destroy.

We see the same impatience as regards disarmament — a noble ideal indeed, but an achievement attended by all the difficulties inherent in any great innovation. The task before us, however, is neither more nor less than to change a system of armaments which has ruled society from time immemorial.

People expect that to be done in a night. No one will deny the progress made in this field during the last few years, and I can give you another edifying example. Greece and Turkey have undertaken not to increase their naval armaments without previous agreement, and the race for naval armaments, which might well have exhausted the finances of both countries, has thus been ended.

It is easy to make out a case against the League and the alleged inadequacy of its output. That is how nations become discouraged, and nothing is more dangerous. Whether they speak in good faith or not, these apostles of despair do the greatest injury to the idea of peace and understanding between peoples.

The Gospel teaches us that faith removes mountains; but faith is not a purely Christian virtue. It has worked miracles since the world began, and we must neither allow our own faith to waver nor undermine that of the peoples. Let us see to it that our thoughts, our words and our acts are not an encouragement to suicide, but a source of courage, an impulse to life, order and progress.

The Assembly rose at 5.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH, 1931, AT 10 A.M.

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President : M. TITULESCO.

31. — (1) MANDATES : (2) PROTECTION OF MINORITIES : ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE NORWEGIAN AND GERMAN DELEGATIONS RESPECTIVELY.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that draft resolutions were submitted by the Norwegian and German delegations at the first meeting of

the Assembly. The draft resolution submitted by the Norwegian delegation proposes that the reports on mandates be referred to the Sixth Committee. The draft resolution submitted by the German delegation proposes to refer to the same Committee that part of the report on the work of the League which deals with the question of the protection of minorities.

In conformity with precedent and custom, I propose that the Assembly should immediately adopt these two draft resolutions and should thus decide to refer the questions to the Sixth Committee.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

32. — COLLABORATION OF WOMEN AND THE PRESS IN THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE : DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SPANISH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that, at its fifth meeting, the Spanish delegation proposed the following draft resolution :

“ The Assembly,

“ Considering that the organisation of peace demands the maintenance of an international spirit freed from all prejudices and misconceptions :

“ Convinced of the necessity of ensuring that the Press of all nations receives as impartial and complete information as possible :

“ Requests the Council to consider the possibility of studying :

“ (a) Means of associating feminine action and feminine feeling with the work of the League of Nations by an effective and direct collaboration ;

"(b) Means for preventing, with the assistance of the Press, the dissemination of such false information as may hinder the maintenance of peace and goodwill among the peoples."

In accordance with precedent, I propose that the Assembly refer this draft resolution to the Agenda Committee, requesting the latter to submit, as soon as possible, suggestions as to the procedure to be followed with regard to it.

The President's proposal was adopted.

33. — METHOD OF ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation · The Assembly has been notified of the following draft resolution submitted at its fifth meeting by the British delegation :

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a special committee to study the existing system of elections to the Council and to report to a future session of the Assembly on any reforms which may appear desirable."

In accordance with precedent, I propose that this draft resolution should be referred to the Agenda Committee, with a request that the latter should make proposals as to the procedure to be followed.

The President's proposal was adopted.

34. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The agenda consists of the continuation of the discussion on the report of the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly.

M. Sze, first delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

M. Sze (China) :

This is the first session of the Assembly of the League of Nations at which I have appeared as a delegate, and I deem it proper that I should preface what I have to say with an expression of the appreciation I have of the high honour conferred upon me by my Government by designating me to represent it in a body of such an august character. I shall do my best to merit this honour; but, however unsuccessful or successful I may be in this respect, I know that I shall personally profit by the opportunity that these meetings will give me to meet and interchange views with the eminent statesmen here gathered from all quarters of the globe.

My colleagues and I represent a country having a culture which, in many respects, differs from that of other countries, and particularly from that of the peoples of the so-called Western world. Of many features of this culture or civilisation the Chinese people are proud, and feel themselves justified in believing that it contains qualities or ideals which will find a proper place in a world civilisation if such a unity of ethical, æsthetic and intellectual ideals is ever achieved. There was a time when the Chinese people were so well satisfied with themselves that they thought they had little to learn that

would be of profit to themselves from the customs and institutions of other peoples; but this is no longer the case. The Chinese people, while not blind admirers of Western civilisation, are keenly aware of its many merits, and desire to incorporate into their modes of life and thought those Western ideals and practices which they consider to be good and which can be blended in without impairing their own culture.

So far has this change of national attitude gone that I feel myself justified in saying that, at the present time, there is no country in the world which is more anxious than China for the development of co-operative goodwill among the nations of the world; nor, I believe, is there any country which is more anxious than China to do what lies within its power to advance this development by the common adoption of standards of international conduct and by the maintenance of institutions for securing to humanity, in realised fact, the benefits that should logically flow from international unity and co-operation.

Hence it is that China is a Member of the League of Nations and eager to aid in the accomplishment of the great purposes to which it is dedicated. This China is anxious to do because of its desire that the welfare of the world should be advanced. But my Government is also aware of the special or individual benefits which each of the members may severally obtain from membership in the League. This fact was noted by Lord Cecil when, in seconding the motion of Dr. Curtius for extending to Mexico an invitation to become a Member of the League, he said :

"I agree entirely with Dr. Curtius that the more universal the League becomes the more one of its most fundamental characteristics is realised. Perhaps I may be allowed to add that, in my view, membership of the League by each State is not only valuable for the League, but is valuable for the State itself."

Certainly this has been made manifest to China, which has received, and is now receiving, such invaluable benefit from the co-operation of the technical organisations of the League with her own administrative services. And now, added to these evidences of the League's goodwill and helpfulness, there is the resolution recently adopted by this Assembly, with regard to the great disaster which has come upon China by reason of the overflow of their banks by several of its great rivers.

The assistance which the League is giving to China is further evidence, if, indeed, further evidence be needed, that the aims and purposes of the League are worldwide in character — that it is truly an ecumenical organisation.

By tradition, the Chinese are an unwarlike people, and have ever exalted the glories of peace above those of war. China has, unhappily, during recent years, been forced by domestic conditions to maintain considerable bodies of troops, but she has recognised the evils of this, and will assuredly reduce the numbers of troops as rapidly as, and to the extent that, domestic conditions possibly warrant.

The Chinese Government is in full sympathy with the continued efforts which the League is making to bring about a reduction of armaments. It views this problem as one of extreme and immediate importance, and, therefore, would consider it a calamity should the meeting of the Disarmament Conference, which is scheduled to take place next February, be postponed; or, having met, should fail to reach an agreement providing for a substantial reduction in the present armed forces of the world. My Government will, therefore, support any feasible plan having this end in view.

The Chinese Government is in full sympathy with the efforts which the League is making to implement the provisions of the Covenant with regard to the obligations of the Member States to seek peaceful solutions of such controversies as may arise between them. It views with disapproval acts which tend to arouse national passions and thus make more difficult the peaceful settlement of such controversies as may arise out of differences of national policies or incidents in which their respective nationals may be involved.

To the endeavour of the present Assembly to bring into harmony the Pact of Paris and the Covenant of the League of Nations the Chinese Government gives its wholehearted approval. As the Canadian representative pointed out the other day, the principle upon which the League of Nations was originally founded was the maintenance of world peace, the negation of war, and the adjustment and settlement of international differences by peaceful arbitration; and the present Assembly is justified in giving this supreme question its most serious attention. But it is particularly important to devise ways and means whereby may be prevented or corrected the taking by one State of military action, or the threat of such action, upon the territory of another friendly State, which, though not denominated an act of war by the State committing it, in substance amounts to one. Unless definite sanctions follow acts of non-conformity with the above-mentioned principle of the League, the abolition of war and the establishment of peace will remain noble ideals difficult, if not impossible, of attainment, and the atmosphere of international suspicion of which Lord Cecil spoke yesterday will be aggravated, instead of being diminished.

My Government regards the Convention which resulted from the Conference on the Limitation of the Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs as an agreement far in advance of any earlier international agreement, and it recognises that the Chinese people stand to benefit greatly by the rigid and conscientious enforcement of its provisions by the several parties to it. It is hoped by my Government that this approach to a satisfactory restriction of the supplies of manufactured narcotic drugs to the world's medical and scientific needs will render more certain and prompt the solution of other related problems. In this connection my Government notes with interest and approval that, by direction of the Council of the League, the Advisory Committee on Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs will, at its next session, consider questions relating to the production of opium.

The Chinese Government has not failed to note the extent to which the League, during the past two years, has, through its committees and technical organisations, attempted to determine the causes of, and to suggest means of escape from — or, at least, amelioration of — the evils resulting from the present worldwide economic depression. The fact that this depression is worldwide furnishes evidence of the mutuality of interests between all nations, and, therefore, of the need that exists, which only such an institution as the League of Nations can supply, for co-operative action. Each nation has its own distinctive economic and social problems, and yet the conditions which give rise to them have a significance for other nations. Thus, for example, the great fall in the value of silver, which furnishes the basis for China's monetary system, has reduced the purchasing power of the Chinese people, with the result that they have not been able to buy commodities from other countries to the extent they otherwise would have done. Thus, the export trade of those other countries has been prejudicially affected. Potentially, China, with her more than

four hundred millions of population, furnishes a vast market for the products of the other countries of the world. Could this potentiality be realised, a great stimulus would be supplied to the commerce and industry, not only of Asia, but of Europe and America as well.

I have, perhaps, already spoken at too great length. I will, therefore, only add that it is the hope of the Chinese delegation that the present session of the Assembly will be a most fruitful one. You may be assured that the Chinese delegation will lend such aid as lies within its power to secure this result.

The President :

Translation : M. Briand, first delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Briand (France) :

Translation : As first delegate of France, I have come here this year, as in previous years, to make a sincere and ardent declaration of faith in the League of Nations. I was afraid at one time that I might be prevented from doing so, and I can assure you that the prospect caused me the greatest distress. I am glad that circumstances have enabled me to take part in the work of this Assembly.

I am particularly glad to be present at this meeting, since it opened in somewhat disquieting circumstances; the work of the Assembly cannot be said to have begun in any atmosphere of optimism.

The sole talk was of the stagnation of the League, the disappointment it had caused in the minds of the nations: some even went so far as to say that a kind of disaffection was causing men to lose interest in its activities.

Personally, I do not take such rumours or such information at their face value. The League has become powerful and has now acquired a moral standing which makes direct attack difficult. It has very few declared enemies; but no one will be surprised to hear me say that not everyone is its friend; and among those whose habits have been upset by it, whose interests have been threatened, are some who, not daring to attack it openly, allow no occasion to pass for disseminating rumours to its detriment.

Naturally, nations, like individuals, when they are passing through difficult times, when they are ready to take offence at the slightest thing, tend to look for a scapegoat on whom to pronounce sentence, and at such times people are always more ready to lend a willing ear to adverse criticism.

Yet, although it is true that the nations are to-day passing through a difficult period and have great cause for anxiety, it would be extremely unfair to blame the League of Nations. When we examine the position we find, on the contrary, fresh reasons for placing confidence in this institution of ours.

The serious time through which we are passing is primarily, it must be admitted, a consequence of the war. It is one of the last of the tidal waves caused by that terrible upheaval, and it is breaking over the nations and doing terrible damage.

It is only fair to say that there are yet other reasons for this difficult situation. I cannot go into all of them; I have not enough experience to do so, and, moreover, they are too many and too varied. Let us admit, however, that the economic welter in which the world is placed is due also to the fact that, after the war, the nations were seized with a frenzied desire to produce. Nations and individuals threw themselves into their task in a spirit of individualism — I dare not say of egoism,

but I am not sure that that description would not be more correct.

They produced without discipline, without method, and without the spirit of co-operation, which was really more necessary at that moment than at any other. Then, suddenly, they found themselves faced with the consequences of this economic anarchy. Some countries are being crushed under the weight of stocks, the disposal of which presents almost insuperable difficulties. They are now looking round for a remedy and, naturally, are at last thinking of co-operation. They say: "But there is a League of Nations! What is it doing? What has it done? Why has it allowed us to be a prey to such anxiety, disquietude and suffering?"

Our President, in a very eloquent speech, warned us against the belief that the League could work miracles. The League can accomplish its task of co-operation, but it is not capable of spontaneous generation in economic and financial matters, and it cannot substitute in individuals or nations the spirit of co-operation for the spirit of individualism and egoism.

The present unrest is largely due to that lack of discipline and of solidarity to which I have just referred. Almost everyone is prepared to admit this now. Everyone is looking at his neighbour seeking for points of contact, and, since these are already largely to be found in the League and yet the miracle has not occurred, naturally everyone is ready to turn round and judge the League. Some of these judgments are considered and reasonable and must be taken into account. That is clear from this general discussion, which has enabled some of our colleagues to express here well-founded observations.

At such moments of—I might say—hesitation, the secret enemies of the League naturally think the time favourable to attack it. We have only to read certain news items, certain articles, to see that the old hopes of the early days have revived in certain quarters. Think of the time when the League was founded; think of its origins. What irony was poured upon this effort at universal solidarity! How little encouragement was given to its founders, generous-hearted men of open mind, loving peace! They had to begin in an atmosphere far more electric, more difficult, more depressing than that in which we live at present, and it is to their honour that they never lost heart, but set themselves to their task with perseverance, and braved, in their own countries, the worst enemy a public man has to face—ridicule.

The League began its life in an atmosphere of doubt. Yet it went on, it worked on, it rendered service, it inspired confidence: and to-day, in spite of all, it has struck root too deeply in the minds of the nations for a few gusts bending the tree-top to shake it seriously. It stands too firm for direct or indirect assaults to do it much damage. And this is well; for, if by force of circumstances a decisive blow could be struck at our institution, and the confidence of the nations in it could be shaken, it would be a black day for the whole of humanity. The future would be dark for the nations, for all mankind.

For it is to the League that the nations must look to find a remedy for whatever difficulties are assailing them. It is, too, in the League that they can find the means to avert the risk of war. They feel this; they know it; they are clearly aware of it. And, in spite of all, although the first hours of this Assembly were disturbed by gloomy forecasts, in proportion as the discussions advanced, confidence in the League was seen to revive and to reassert its strength.

Moreover, when we look at the annual report before us—I need not dwell upon that report, or at any rate upon some of its details, important though they are, because they have been quite sufficiently dealt with by previous speakers—when, I say, we look at this report, we see that it would be quite unfair to accuse the League of having failed in its duty.

Last year was filled with all kinds of activities varying greatly in character. Associations like the Commission of Enquiry for European Union took up certain urgent problems. In so doing, they brought encouragement and relief to some countries which were suffering particularly acutely. Meetings were also held between statesmen representing countries to whose interest it was to get into contact with one another. The meetings which took place in Paris and London, and in Italy, and will soon be held in Germany—all such activities, even when limited to certain nations or representatives of nations, are imbued with the League spirit. The League is the guiding force behind these meetings and this work. It was thanks to the League that they were enabled to take place at all.

We are no longer at a stage when our work can be divided into water-tight compartments, and I agree with those speakers who called the Assembly's attention to the universal character of the League. All problems concern all the nations Members of the League, and it would be a great mistake for certain nations to isolate themselves and deal separately with problems in which the whole League is interested and cannot but be interested. If such an attempt were made, it would be fatal to our institution; but no one here would allow such a thing to happen, and all the activities in which we have taken part come under the aegis of the League. Without the League they would be impossible.

Viscount Cecil has said that, when we consider some of the conditions governing the prosperity of the peoples and the ways and means of meeting the crisis, we are obliged to admit the importance of the moral aspect of the situation.

This has been somewhat neglected, and I must concede that, in normal circumstances, in questions of production, self-interest is generally placed above what I may call the ideological factors. Nevertheless, that factor, fortunately for humanity, has a strength of its own, which is frequently irresistible, a strength we have no right to neglect, especially in an association such as ours.

When there are in the world nations which not only do not agree, but are opposed to one another, a sort of uneasiness is felt everywhere, and to-day such uneasiness reacts with astonishing rapidity on what is called the business world, which formerly was set on a sort of Olympus, high above peoples and ideas.

We have recently had proof of the importance of these ideological factors. The peoples were passing through a difficult period; already there was talk of a collapse. A meeting of representatives of the European nations was held at Geneva within the League of Nations, and under its auspices. At the close of their work they said to one another: "Is there nothing we can do from the moral point of view to reassure the peoples and restore confidence?" We talked the matter over, and decided to draw up a manifesto in which we most strongly affirmed our confidence in peace—a manifesto in which we said to the nations: "Do not listen to pessimistic rumours. Do not be discouraged; take comfort. There is no danger of war; here are our signatures as guarantee."

You will remember the effect produced by that manifesto; and yet those were merely ideas, merely phrases. Nevertheless, business men immediately recovered confidence, and the result

was a considerable improvement in the economic field. Hence the state of international relations does undoubtedly influence economic life.

It is therefore not a matter of indifference to the League, and it is, moreover, a result of its moral influence that two great nations like Germany and France should, for the last five years, have been seeking opportunities to draw together, to give each other guarantees of peace, to discuss certain questions together. I was one of those responsible for this *rapprochement*, and I am glad of it. Whatever may happen, it will be the act of my public life in which I take the most pride. But such a thing was possible only in this atmosphere. It was possible only owing to you, to your help, to the spirit you have created; otherwise, such an attempt would have been vain.

I must here refer to the very fine speech of my colleague Viscount Cecil, who swept aside with perfectly justifiable scorn certain insinuations to the effect that his country took a kind of fiendish interest in keeping certain nations apart in order to ensure its own supremacy. There is nothing new about that criticism; it has often been made. I consider, however, that Lord Cecil was right to protest on behalf of his country. For my part, I second his protest, and am prepared to bear witness that, in the effort to bring about a *rapprochement*, Great Britain has never ceased to lend her assistance to the two countries. Great Britain collaborated with them in these attempts; it gave them the mark of its approval and reinforced them with the authority of its signature.

I therefore associate myself wholeheartedly with Viscount Cecil's protest. It is untrue to say that England has any secret wish to create difficulty and friction or to do anything liable to cause trouble between two nations like Germany and France.

I affirm, then, that everything that could have been done for the improvement of relations has been done within the framework of the League in accordance with its principles and as the outcome of its efforts, and that the same will be true to-morrow.

At this time, when we are trying to bring about a *rapprochement*, I would scorn to lie to you or try to mislead you. Things have not always been easy for me; I have often come into conflict with the conditions — and the normal conditions too — of public life. I have often been involved in controversies; in both France and Germany our efforts have met with more or less violent resistance, and those who were striving to obtain a better understanding often intercepted and received hard blows. I have received some myself; and on bad days I feel the effects like a return of rheumatism.

But such things cannot deter public men, and it must be placed to the credit of the League that men from different countries have been meeting in Paris and London and in Italy to talk over their problems and dispel misunderstanding; that representatives from Germany have come to Paris, where they were well received — and I am glad of it; that to-morrow French statesmen will be asked to go to Germany; that, in the conversations held there under the eyes of the nation itself, the foundations may be laid of collaboration not merely verbal, but really practical and effective. This is a development which I desire with all my heart and in which I shall be only too glad to take part if I am allowed to do so.

All this took place in an atmosphere of understanding and mutual confidence. To facilitate such contacts and such co-operation we must avoid anything that may shake confidence. We must not hesitate, in a society where confidence is the essential element, to speak of our problems and to give our neighbours full information. We shall

thus avoid much misunderstanding and many an unpleasant surprise from the polemics of those whose minds are not attuned to reconciliation or co-operation.

By the creation of such an atmosphere of confidence among the peoples and, when each nation, before acting, remembers that it is not alone and that it is to its advantage to act in a truly international manner, then all mistrust vanishes, cordiality is restored by loyalty and frankness, and the violent controversies which excite the nations, keep them apart and set them against each other have no hold.

From this point of view, much progress and many improvements have taken place. Recently I took a step which caused anxiety to some of my colleagues, and possibly that anxiety is not entirely dispelled even yet. I refer to my invitation, at a difficult moment — a moment which threatened to become even more difficult — to the European nations to get into touch with one another, to form an organisation within the framework of the League, making use of its administrative organs.

The events through which we have passed have shown the importance of such meetings; they enabled the morale of certain nations which were passing through a period of distress, doubt and great hardship to be restored. In Central Europe there were nations which could not employ their harvests to ensure their means of existence or even the continuation of their enterprises. They were vainly seeking the necessary capital; they could not obtain it except at usurious, extortionate, hopelessly high rates of interest.

Our association, if it has not been able to do all it would have liked to do, has provided some relief, created some contacts. Measures have been taken to improve the cereals market; the foundations have been laid of an International Institute of Agricultural Mortgage Credits. I am sure that, in years to come, the nations to which I referred just now will be proud of these results.

I repeat that the Commission of Enquiry for European Union must not be regarded as compromising the universality of the League, for it is the League's own creation. I hope that the Assembly will give it the encouragement which I consider it deserves.

And now, while apologising for having already addressed you at some length, I come to the subject in which you are all chiefly interested, the subject which has occupied the principal place — I might say the place of honour — in the various speeches you have heard, the subject that is bound up with the dominant idea of this institution, with the will to organise peace on increasingly sound lines, that it may be safe from attack in any quarter — I refer to the Conference for the reduction and limitation of armaments which is to meet on February 2nd of next year. You know how difficult it has been to prepare for that Conference, and I must protest that, if there has been any question of delaying it, of adjourning it, such a thought has certainly never been entertained in France.

It is the sad privilege of my country that in such matters people are always ready to think the worst of her. It has been remarked that the Conference had not yet met and that, lurking in the shadows, there is a country on the watch ready to snatch at any favourable opportunity to bring about its adjournment. That is not so. France will not ask for the Conference to be adjourned; France will do nothing to bring about such an adjournment; and I may say that, if any such attempt were made, France would be among the first to oppose it.

The convening of the Conference — I have said it before from this platform, with all the force at

my command—represents the fulfilment of a solemn undertaking embodied in the Covenant of the League. If the Conference did not take place, the League would have failed in one of its most solemn undertakings and, I maintain, would thereby have deeply perturbed the conscience of the peoples. But, as things are, I do not think there is a single nation that has any such hidden intention. Moreover, to view things in a fair and reasonable light, we have to admit that, since it first arose, the problem has made headway in the minds of the peoples; the race for armaments, the armaments fever, are things of the past; the mind of the peoples is no longer set on war.

My own country, to mention no other, has lost no opportunity of limiting its armaments; it has reduced the period of military service by two-thirds; it has reduced its effectives by one-half; by a whole series of provisions it has progressed towards the ultimate aim set forth in the Covenant.

For five years, this question has been under discussion in one of your Commissions. You know what difficulties that Commission encountered and you will not have forgotten that sometimes, when it adjourned, it seemed that it would never meet again and that agreement could never be reached on questions of principle, which were apparently incapable of solution.

I may claim, as first delegate of France, that anyone re-reading the Minutes of that Commission will find that at all those difficult functions France boldly intervened with compromise solutions which enabled the Commission to continue towards its goal. Often the solutions she proposed were acceptable; they were adopted, and, thanks to them, it at length became possible last year to contemplate a definite term, a definite purpose, a definite date.

The meeting has been fixed, and we must all be there. Not to be there would be to fail in our undertaking, and it behoves all of us to arrive animated by the spirit of the Covenant.

When we examine the Covenant, we find that it is soundly conceived, that it is a solid construction, and the only regret I have to voice here is that some of its provisions should still have remained as it were veiled, like one of those statues that are always going to be but never are uncovered.

Beneath the shroud, however, a searching eye can discern the contours of the statue; it is possible to tell what lies hidden behind that shroud. What the founders of the League all wanted, what they were trying to embody in the Covenant, was peace, a means of placing the peoples in such a state of tranquillity as should enable them to forget the horrors of the war and to devote themselves wholeheartedly and unreservedly to the work of peace. When that result had been achieved, the huge outlay that a nation expends on material forces would be found to be needless.

Similarly, the authors of the Covenant had devised means for replacing material force. They were not pure ideologists; they knew quite well that between peoples, as between men, subjects of discord may remain long after the cessation of hostilities. Proportionately as they envisaged the disappearance of individual material force, they prepared legal solutions and collective sanctions; they called upon the peoples to agree to conciliation, to arbitration. They saw a progressive reduction in armaments in proportion as security increased; they saw the peoples, in the settlement of their conflicts, turn more and more to the judge instead of resorting to force. We need only read the Covenant to realise that all these various considerations were in the minds of the authors and founders of the League.

It would not be right to say that the nations have made no progress along that road; many improvements have been made. While men like myself who talk of peace are exposed to ridiculous attacks, those, on the other hand, who talk of war are most certainly not regarded in a very friendly way. The word "war", the vision of what war means, cause among the peoples reactions with which Governments will have to reckon. The peoples refuse to be again led on to catastrophes of such a nature. What they want is to maintain peace at all costs; that is their dominant thought.

Let no one suggest that it is a somewhat ignoble thing for a people, whose pages of history are full of glorious feats of arms, to take refuge in the thought of systematic peace. Let no one look on that as a means of undermining or almost destroying its moral fibre. No, the last war showed men to be imbued with such heroism, such a fund of courage, that anyone who suggested now that the nations are cowardly would be given scant hearing. The peoples to-day love peace because they have a horror of war, because they want to work in complete tranquillity, in complete security, and because they know that their work will be largely unproductive if warlike preoccupations serve to impede it.

But I should have no hesitation in avowing, along with the speakers who have preceded me on this platform, that from that point of view great progress has already been made. That fact entitles us to expect much from the Disarmament Conference which is to meet on February 2nd. We must all come to that Conference with that idea in mind, and with a determination to accept whatever means will permit of the achievement of our desires. My country is ready to do so; it has already acceded to Article 36 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. I have acceded in her name to the General Act of Arbitration. France is a country which does not look to war as a means of furthering her interests. She has said beforehand: "A court . . . a judge . . . that is what we want". I trust that, in a not too distant future, all the nations Members of this institution will say the same.

I now pass to the question of security, a word which my lips hardly dare utter. It is one of those words over which contests have so often raged, which have so often stood as obstacles in the way of certain experiments, that those who employ it appear to do so not in order to act but in order not to act.

This word, however, is written in the Covenant of the League. That is quite natural. If the authors of the Covenant had not kept a place for it, they would have been guilty, for the most generous-minded Members of the League might have been deceived.

As regards security then, has progress been achieved? No one can deny that it has. I, who stand on this platform, have done all that was in my power to increase the sum total of security. The Paris Pact was conceived with that purpose in view; certain work which you have undertaken and in which you are still engaged is calculated to add to guarantees of this nature.

War is a crime. Such was the dictum of the nations who signed the Paris Pact. Until then, we must not forget, war had actually remained, in certain circumstances, a licit means for settling disputes. It is appalling to think that, in this century, war should have been considered a normal means of putting an end to disputes that might arise between nations. The Paris Pact laid down that it is an impious act to have recourse to war. that war is a crime against mankind. All the

nations signed the Pact, thereby declaring that they renounced the possibility of making that fatal gesture—a declaration of war. That is something; morally it is an excellent result.

One fact, however, we cannot disguise: cases still exist in which war may occur. That fact is apt to be forgotten, and it is right not to become obsessed by such an idea; still, it is a contingency that has to be borne in mind. The League of Nations, I willingly admit, had realised this. Lord Cecil will not contradict me if I say that on that point it had thought out a whole system which, had it been adopted, would have obliterated once for all that terrible question-mark. For three whole weeks we met in order to establish that system. I will not discuss the reasons why it was found impossible to put it into application; but it must be admitted that if it had become a living reality, if mutual assistance against the contingency of which I was speaking could actually have been organised, the problem before the coming Conference would have been very much simplified. That system, however, was left standing there, like one of those ever-veiled statues to which I have just referred, those statues of which only the outlines can be discerned. I do not know what Lord Cecil may think about it now; perhaps he will not think I am going too far if I say that like myself he probably would not be sorry if such an institution were ready to function among the nations.

But what was not done, and what perhaps can never be done again in the same way, must be sought in another form. We are drawing near to the conclusion of a term, to a date towards which the peoples are looking with increasing expectation. When, on February 2nd, all the nations of the world, representing the highest ideal, the sum of authority and the sum total of force, are met here solemnly together for that particular purpose, when they are all sitting round the same table and have to consider this twofold problem—the reduction of armaments combined with recourse to juridical guarantees and sanctions relating to security—what will they do? That will be a solemn moment; and I proclaim here and now that never before has such a heavy responsibility lain upon the nations. That will be a decisive moment. Will they, who have power to do anything they choose, leave unanswered, staring them in the face, that terrible question-mark that still haunts us? That is the issue.

When that moment comes, all they need do is to utter the necessary words to supplement in the matter of security and mutual assistance what has already been done: all they need do is solemnly to affirm with a full realisation of the consequences which their words imply: "No more war! In no case, for no reason, in no circumstances will we allow war, which we have pilloried as a crime, to blaze forth again and still remain unpunished!"

They will have power to ensure that such an event shall never occur again. They will say whether they wish to establish contact with one another and to create between themselves reciprocal conditions of security such as to render it impossible.

If, when that moment comes, the Governments utter that word, make that gesture and perform that act in the sight of the peoples, sweeping away all possibility of future wars, and if the unknown elements in our constitution which form a blot on our Covenant disappear, then the peoples can light their bonfires, the peoples can rejoice, the peoples can contemplate the possibility of a big reduction of armaments, for the situation will be clear and definite, it will no longer be weighed down by the terrible risk of war which still burdens the life of nations and is one of the essential causes

of the unrest and instability from which the world to-day is suffering.

The President :

Translation : M. Mayard, first delegate of Haiti, will address the Assembly.

M. Mayard (Haiti) :

Translation : I feel that I owe you an apology, for to me has fallen the honour of addressing you on behalf of my nation, on the occasion of the examination of the Council's annual report to the Assembly of the League. My delegation would have been more adequately represented, and you, I know, would have been only too pleased, had my colleague and co-delegate, M. Dantès Bellegarde, occupied my place, but he has unfortunately been prevented from attending this session by his duties at Washington.

M. Bellegarde had, by his talents and personality, won for himself and for our country the esteem of the eminent representatives of the nations assembled here at Geneva, and I should like to thank the Agenda Committee for having appointed him its Chairman, a position which carried with it membership of the General Committee of this Assembly.

We are a congress of nations rather than of representatives, and I regard your choice of him, therefore, as an honour to our delegation and to our country as a whole. I am extremely grateful, and feel encouraged, despite my lack of experience and the fact that I am a newcomer in your midst, to put before you Haiti's views on the report submitted to you for consideration.

When we consider the knowledge lavished upon the activities of the Council, the Secretariat and the various international offices, when we realise the heavy work those activities have entailed and the conscientious way in which that work has been carried out—the League is assuredly deserving of the highest praise. The Haitian delegation has nothing but respect and admiration for the distinguished men who have devoted themselves to the question of the reduction of armaments, the work of bringing the Covenant into harmony with the Pact of Paris, the questions of slavery, mandates, international arbitration, European Union, and all the various political, technical and legal problems.

The nations directly interested in these questions can afford to wait, patiently and confidently, for the final solutions which you will in due course submit for their approval. The fact that those other peoples, like my own, are far removed geographically from the area of the war and its aftermath—which were productive of such painful and delicate complications—does not prevent them, despite the fact that their small area and restricted population would seem to imply but a theoretical participation in the conduct of world affairs, from taking a real interest in what has been accomplished: because, when trouble reigns and catastrophe follows upon catastrophe, they are forced to bear their share of the common sufferings—as witness the history of the last two decades—and they, too, experience to the full the inevitable repercussions of disturbances more directly affecting other nations and groups of nations.

There is before us, however, another series of questions which embraces every category of States included in the scheme of international affairs, a series of questions independent of any considerations of power or continent, or indeed of distinctions of any sort; I mean questions that touch on world economic recovery.

The present serious crisis has done more than anything else to bring out the truth of a postulate that is too often ignored: the fact of the equality and essential interdependence of human communities, and the further fact which since the war has been brought home as never before to the man in the street, that "the world is one big village".

On the day when our session opened, the Paris and Geneva Press published a number of articles which, while not guilty of the bitter sarcasm found in a recent book—a very clever book, incidentally—were pleased to be mockingly sceptical at the League's expense.

Such a tone, such an attitude, is unjust—is at all events premature—and nothing proves this more clearly than the aspirations with reference to the present crisis voiced by the speakers here when commenting, on behalf of the several countries, on the report now before the Assembly.

First M. Alejandro Lerroux, whose wise remarks will surely be remembered, speaking as he did as Minister of a great country whose exploits have enriched world history, and which has done more than any other country for the spread of Christianity: he asked us, when addressing us in his capacity as Chairman, not to be content with partial measures, but to regard world affairs in their entirety and thus fulfil our duties to society and produce something coherent and tangible. His second great speech and the proposal he submitted yesterday further explained the views of democratic Spain, and her opposition to any expansionist military ventures calculated to engender hatred and conflict.

Following on his speech on the opening day of the session, M. Titulesco, the distinguished jurist who is now our President, asked the nations here represented to regard Geneva not as a land of miracles but as a meeting-place of men of goodwill; his concluding words were: "In our hands lies the supreme hope of the world, perhaps its last hope".

Then M. Grandi, who while employing the circumspection of language proper to a statesman, yet put more life into what he said and approached the subject in a more objective manner than is usually the case at international congresses. He warned us that "individual national action is not enough, while the creation of exclusive groups might injure, rather than further, the cause of co-operation, security and peace". Again, more pointedly still, condemning exclusive arrangements—he was thinking, no doubt, of the network of world economic interest and world remedies for them—he said:

"If the desire to establish a real system of peace, it must be based on real international interests. That is a delicate problem of adjustment as between the particular interests of individual States and the organic system of international co-operation. . . . We all form one single group, and our dearest hope is to see it expand rather than disintegrate. We trust that the League of Nations may become a true reflection of the solidarity of nations, of all States, great and small, European and non-European, all helping to further their common civilisation, a civilisation which it is our duty not only to protect, but to strengthen and expand."

How can doubt and mistrust persist in the face of such reassuring and definite statements as these from such a delegate of such a nation?

Some moments before, M. de Madariaga, as delegate of Spain, reverting to the theme of universal interest, already so forcibly advocated by

M. Leroux, and speaking with all the elegance and vivacity characteristic of his nation, expressed himself as follows:

"The League must be able to inscribe upon its portals and to use as a motto for its action this sentence adapted from the old classic: 'I am the conscious and organised world, and no nation can be foreign to me'."

Shortly afterwards, the Assembly took a decision which constituted an act of practical international solidarity on the occasion of the disasters which befell millions of human beings in China as a result of the Yangtse floods, and the delegate of India, His Excellency Sir B. L. Mitter, who struck a more definite and a more tragic note than anyone else, said:

"In our view, the League machinery ought not to be employed for the purpose of arriving at regional agreements in the economic sphere. No doubt the urgency of the economic crisis accounts for this development, but we in Asia share in this crisis, and, to take an example, I do not think that the Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company should have been set up by means of League machinery in a form limited to European countries without Asiatic countries having an opportunity of putting forward their views at this Assembly."

His Excellency, Dr. Curtius, the representative of a great people which has suffered much from the vicissitudes of fate, has, in all his speeches from this platform, expressed his nation's desire for worldwide sympathy, its anxiety that the League's activities should benefit all nations without distinction.

All the statements made reflected the same earnest desire. I am sure you will not think it necessary for me to repeat any statement of this kind made by the British delegation, as the head of that delegation is none other than Lord Cecil, that crusader in the cause of peace and brotherhood. Moreover, it is an essential in the organic structure of the great Empire he represents that the various peoples it comprises are, instead of being subjected to a hard and fast system, allowed freedom to pursue, and do in fact pursue their several economic interests along the roads in which fate has placed them, and it is this characteristic that forms the strength and the greatness of that vast association of peoples.

Nor will you expect me to repeat any of France's well-known views on such a point. My delegation has nothing to say of France, as the national existence of Haiti may be described as a fact of French history in America. I have nothing to say, because the head of the French delegation, M. Briand, is to-day the man who, by his incomparable work for the construction of the new world, personifies in the highest degree the traditions which have caused France to be called the soldier of peace and the patron of the small nations.

In view of this unanimity among the nations assembled here, the delegation of Haiti would be failing in its most essential duty if it did not express the hope that, at the present session, the League will be defining its objects and enlarging its sphere of action, do all in its power to ensure that each State receives the assistance it needs, whatever its importance in the world or in whatever geographical zone it may be situated.

The delegate of Spain has fixed approximately the formula for the action required. The League's watchword must be: "I am the conscious and organised world, and the sufferings of no nation can be foreign to me." Above all, the League should act accordingly.

Henceforth, nothing can be allowed to present this — no motive of political convenience, no particularist reservation on the part of any continent. Such is the earnest wish of every one of us here, and it voices the desire of the whole world.

The nations which are still holding aloof from the League as a result of unfortunate misunderstandings are the first to act in the spirit of these ideals. It is with feelings of deep satisfaction and a certain pride that we — the American States represented at this Assembly — have seen our great neighbour, the United States of North America, transcend the bounds of its frontiers and tell Europe, in the words of its illustrious President, that the whole of mankind is on the verge of bankruptcy and that we are all suffering from the same evil and should help one another.

The Hoover proposal is inspired by a spirit which is really that of the League; it is in the interests of each nation to help all the others and of all nations to help each one.

Since the United States of America have thus extended a fraternal hand to Europe and asked that the bonds of union may be forged once more, and since, for the moment, the unfortunate position of its own domestic affairs prevents it from carrying out its President's generous proposal with regard to Latin America, it is right for you and and it is vital for us that the League should make a suitable return, a return which is at the same time in accordance with the spirit of international solidarity informing the whole Covenant, by placing its experience at the disposal of the small countries which in our Continent are suffering the consequences of the world crisis, and by extending its aid to them.

Nearly all American countries produce raw materials and tropical products. As, generally speaking, we cannot exchange our products with one another, they being of a similar nature, our market in Europe, and, in these circumstances, it is really impossible to reconstruct Europe economically without helping us.

You will note that what we are asking is not so much financial assistance in the form of a State loan as economic assistance — that is, assistance for our agriculture, whose production is necessary for the world.

In Haiti, the financial operations carried through some years previously during the disorders consequent upon the war in Europe had the effect of placing our finances in a sound position, so that our Treasury was able to make anticipatory payments in respect of its national debt, and, when all foreign securities fell in the slump on the Paris stock exchange last April, the Haitian bond quotations remained stable and satisfactory. For more than fifteen years, no fiscal measure has been taken and no public credit made available in the commercial interests of the country as a whole, so that we are now in the paradoxical position that, on the one hand, the State is rich and, on the other, the nation has become impoverished. Our Treasury is discharging its obligations in respect of the national debt with punctilious regularity; yet all classes of society in Haiti are now in dire financial distress.

For more than ten years, before she herself came under the iron grip of the law, our sister republic, Cuba, had to provide work for some hundreds of thousands of Haitians. The Dominican Republic, which shares our island with us, also extended a helping hand to us, and, only a short time ago, in March, when floods destroyed the crops, carried off animals and even caused loss of human life, bringing ruin and famine to various

parts of our territory, it was from these neighbouring countries that help came to us. I should like to thank them on behalf of my nation, here in the presence of the representatives of the countries of the world. But now, alas, all these countries of Latin America are themselves suffering from the crisis, and you have seen the consequences. War — civil war — has broken out over almost the whole extent of our Continent. I should like to say here that the insurrections in this part of the world are due, not so much to mere rivalry or ambition, as is sometimes thought, as to the fact that the economic equilibrium has been upset. Experience has gone to show that when these countries are prosperous perfect peace reigns in them. Indeed, that is the rule in the case of all societies whose national economy is still imperfectly organised and stabilised.

Thank God, there have been no disorders in Haiti; but, during the financial year 1929-30, our imports fell by 25.30 per cent and our exports by 15.42 per cent as compared with 1928-29.

As compared with 1928-29, the value of coffee exports dropped 19.32 per cent in 1929-30 as a result of the fall in the prices of coffee on the world market, despite the fact that the amount actually exported had increased by 20.19 per cent.

Cotton exports increased nearly 200 per cent in weight in 1929-30 — compared with the preceding year, though we suffered losses on that commodity amounting to nearly three million *gourdes* (the *gourde* being equivalent in value to the Swiss franc). Thus, the people of Haiti have worked harder and made less every year.

As the result of this steady reduction in the resources of the producing class, the standard of living has dropped to the lowest known level, and never before have our people suffered such distress as at the present time.

The Haitian delegation hopes, therefore, that, at this session, ideas — the ideas of all of us — will be translated into League action and that the Assembly will include in its programme the setting up of a Committee to study urgently solutions for remedying the economic depression which is causing such havoc in Latin America, closely connected as it is with the European and the world crisis.

We hope that real headway may be made with the study of questions of agricultural credit, the adjustment of Customs tariffs in the League spirit of international solidarity, quotas, and the most-favoured-nation clause in commercial conventions, regard being had to these problems as they affect the American States.

I said just now that President Hoover's Government, by intervening in the financial affairs of Europe, seemed to have indicated the direction of League work in America.

There is, however, additional and yet more satisfactory information for me to give you. You all know that last spring the Federal Senate, which determines the foreign policy of the United States, passed, in agreement with the Executive, a resolution prohibiting the utilisation of the Federal Treasury's guarantee for loans accorded by American banks to the small Latin-American States, thus putting an end to the old inter-American policy, which was not really compatible with Article 10 of the League Covenant.

This marks the beginning of a fresh era, the normal international system replacing the former special inter-American system. It marks the abandonment of the "exclusive system" of this part of the world, to borrow a very descriptive term used here three days ago.

Consequently, in Caribbean America, if not all over Latin America, the small countries which need financial assistance to restore or strengthen their economic position will be free to apply for such assistance in any part of the world from those countries with which they have the most regular and most considerable relations.

The international law which came into being at Versailles more than ten years ago will soon be substituted for law deriving from treaties *inter nos*, or simply from *de facto* continental situations, provided that you decide to act as circumstances demand. The liberty of small peoples like ourselves can have no reasonable limits other than those determined by the rule of benevolent and beneficent interdependence of peoples, propounded here at Geneva.

"Liberty" makes me think of Lamartine: M. Louis Barthou, in his learned study on Lamartine's political career, has shown him to have been a seer like the old *vates*. "*Siéger au plafond*" would really seem to be a favourable position for scanning distant horizons and seeing ahead of one.

Extolling this city of Geneva, the League's home, whose motto: "*Un pour tous et tous pour un*" is so in keeping with the League spirit, the great French poet and politician said in one of his inspired odes: "*La liberté du faible est la gloire du fort*". I repeated that line to myself while I was listening yesterday to M. Motta's vigorous utterance concerning the duties of the League, which demand action even more than study and discussion.

I admired that noble citizen of a noble country — a small country which, amid the general collapse, has remained so prosperous only because it has remained free, thanks to the respect which it inspires in all of us, but more especially to its own virtues and its courage which have enabled it to shape its destiny to its own requirements and its own national genius.

I thought of all the good, both material and moral, that the nations of the world, great and small, owe to this illustrious land, not forgetting the generous hospitality accorded here each year to the peoples and races who meet here as one, on the common ground of human ideals.

I was tempted — may the shade of Lamartine forgive the sacrilege — to paraphrase his verse to bring it into harmony with the world's needs to-day: "*La liberté du faible est l'intérêt du fort*".

Yes, the *interest*; for, at this time, when the world economy has been shaken to its foundations by the blunders of "monopolised" and Taylorised large-scale production, by the insensate speculations of financial magnates, does it not become increasingly manifest that the distress of the small industrious peoples does in the long run, through the interplay of unsuspected repercussions, mean the undermining, the ruin of the great Powers and hence of world civilisation?

35. — GENERAL DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE DELEGATIONS OF DENMARK, NORWAY, THE NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN AND SWITZERLAND.

The President:

Translation: I have received the following draft resolution from the delegations of five countries: Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland:

"Being convinced that the crisis which is at present creating such serious disturbance among the nations of the world is due to a number of economic and political causes, one of the principal sources of which is the lack of mutual confidence between the nations;

"Being convinced that the realisation of the undertakings contained in the Covenant regarding the reduction of armaments will be one of the most important means of re-establishing mutual confidence between the nations and alleviating their crushing economic burdens, while a resumption of competition in armaments would fatally lead to an international and social disaster;

"The Assembly,

"Addresses a solemn appeal to all who desire the application of the principles of peace and justice on which the Covenant is based to devote all their efforts to the creation of a world opinion strong enough to ensure that the General Disarmament Conference will lead to definite results involving in particular a gradual reduction of armaments which will be continued until the object mentioned in Article 8 of the Covenant is attained.

"Considering the importance of carefully preparing the ground for the work of the said Conference and, in particular, of avoiding fresh increases of armaments in the present state of affairs;

"The Assembly,

"Requests the Council to urge the Governments convened to the said Conference to show their firm determination to support the efforts to ensure peace and re-establish mutual confidence by abstaining, pending the result of the Conference, from any measure leading to an increase in the present level of their armaments."

In accordance with the usual custom, this draft resolution will be printed and circulated, and I shall submit suggestions later as regards the action to be taken on it.

36. — ENTRY OF MEXICO INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: TELEGRAM FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO.

The President:

Translation: The Secretary-General and myself have just received the following telegram announcing that the Mexican Government accepts the invitation unanimously addressed to it by the Assembly:

[*Translation*].

"I have received the message in which your Excellencies inform me that the Assembly of the League of Nations at its meeting yesterday, September 8th, decided, on the proposal of Germany, the British Empire, Spain, France, Italy and Japan, supported by other delegations, to forward to me the resolution inviting Mexico to accede to the Covenant of the League of Nations and to lend her support as though she had been invited from the outset, considering that the League of Nations should now in all justice repair this omission which is wholly contrary to its true spirit. I am also informed that the resolution was adopted unanimously by the Members represented at the Assembly.

"In reply, I am glad to state that the Government of Mexico, which has been absent from that great institution for reasons over which she had no control, now at once accepts the satisfaction thus given.

"Mexico agrees to enter the League on the terms announced and offers, in a loyal spirit of friendship, her constant co-operation in the great task of maintaining peace and promoting international co-operation.

"On this occasion, Mexico thinks it necessary to state, when accepting, that she has never recognised the regional understanding mentioned in Article 21 of the Covenant. On starting her

new work, Mexico has pleasure in renewing to all the peoples and Governments which constitute the League of Nations her sincere greetings and in expressing her firm desire to obtain with them the best results for the welfare of humanity.
— Genaro ESTRADA (*Secretary of Foreign Affairs*)."

At a later meeting, I shall ask the Assembly to take the necessary action with regard to the invitation to Mexico and its acceptance.

The Assembly rose at 12.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH, 1931, AT 4 P.M.

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37. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The agenda consists of the continuation of the general discussion on the report on the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga (Spain) :

You will perhaps allow me to use a military expression — as I am going to talk about armaments — and to explain my presence on this platform by saying that I am here under orders.

Spain's views on disarmament have already been briefly but authoritatively explained by our Minister for Foreign Affairs, who is the first Spanish delegate to the Assembly. Our delegation, however, and in particular the leader of the delegation, thought it well that the question should be propounded afresh from a more general standpoint, which does not necessarily coincide with the official Spanish view, but is, as it were — so far as that is possible — an international and objective standpoint.

The two points of view are not substantially different. They lead to identical conclusions, but, although the conclusions may coincide, there is still one important distinction in that they can be arrived at by different means.

The great Disarmament Conference will be upon us in less than five months from now — not six or seven or eight, but five months — so much is fixed.

We are thus, after twelve years, nearing the end of the first stage in our work ; and it seems that the moment has come to survey the past and to say whether we have or have not wasted time during those twelve years.

I am afraid there are a number of superficial considerations that may seem to justify a certain scepticism, and even the sarcasm and the sneers referred to this morning by M. Briand, the distinguished first delegate of France. In the course of those twelve years, we have witnessed an imposing procession of Commissions and Committees. First, there was the Permanent Advisory Commission for Military, Naval and Air Questions. Then, on Lord Cecil's initiative, came the Temporary Mixed Commission, followed, after a few years, by the Co-ordination Commission, which was unable to co-ordinate its own constitution with the realities of the situation and consequently died an early death, unhonoured if without reproach. Then there was a Committee of the Council, concerning which it was debated with scholastic

subtlety whether it was the Council in Committee or a Committee of the Council.

Finally, there came the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, the bold title of which gave promise of something definite, and which created round itself a solar system, a whole constellation of Committees and Sub-Commissions—we had reached the point when we could not think of any more—Sub-Commission A and Sub-Commission B, a Mixed Committee on Technical Questions, a Committee of Experts on Budgetary Questions, a Sub-Committee on Civil Aviation and probably other cogs that I have forgotten in that most intricate piece of machinery.

But the fact remains that all those Commissions and Committees and Sub-Committees helped by their very number to engender a feeling of despair. I remember that Sub-Commission A, which sat from May to November 1926, consumed vast quantities of paper for its Minutes, and it was estimated that the Polish delegation could have walked home on League paper. That was the sort of spirit engendered by the plethora of Committees dealing with the question.

I may say here, incidentally, that the amount of work produced by the Military Sub-Committee led to extremely unjust criticisms of the military, naval and air experts who had worked with us. Now that we are nearing the end of our work, the Assembly will perhaps allow me to say frankly that never has it been my privilege to observe a more devoted or capable body of men, or one more eager to achieve results or more gifted with a spirit of balance, a spirit that enabled them to reconcile the loyalty they owed to the defence of their respective countries with the loyalty they owed to a new international system which must have run counter to their natural tendencies.

However, when all is said and done, and admitting that such scepticism and sarcasm are—ironically—more or less justified, are there any real grounds for pessimism with regard to this first stage of our work? In my opinion, no such grounds exist. On the contrary, the results of this first twelve year stage justify in the highest degree the methods, machinery and existence of the League.

Let us just look back to the time when the League, with a faith which now, after twelve years, we can only regard as heroic, first set itself to rouse the nations to disarm. Nations had just been at each other's throats. Europe's sacred body showed gaping wounds, and over Europe's soil still hovered traces of the poison gas which blinded her soldiers and—worse still—of those insidious fumes which poisoned the minds of the European nations. Then it was that we called upon those countries to discuss disarmament.

We had to begin by calming passions and staunching wounds. We had to create a technique of international co-operation by means of Committees, the Assembly and the Council, a technique so perfect that—if I may venture to say so now with due respect—we are not even conscious of its existence here, though we use it every day in all its perfection. That technique we owe chiefly to two men to whom I should like to express my admiration for what the Assembly owes to their creative genius—Sir Eric Drummond and M. Jean Monnet.

Those of us who have been here from the outset will remember the great psychological difficulties we had to overcome. Lord Cecil, I am sure, will remember the early stages and the Temporary Mixed Commission, presided over by M. Viviani with an energy which, perhaps, was a legacy of the war.

He will remember how much easier things became when we were able to welcome in Geneva M. Albert

Lebrun—so keen and vigorous of mind—now President of the Senate, and Colonel Fabry; and the further progress we made after the arrival of M. de Jouvenel, with his open mind and lucid brain; and, finally, how, when the general situation had so greatly improved through the agency of that wizard of peace whom we have heard this morning, M. Paul-Boncour arrived in our midst, with his youthful crop of silvery hair, his blue eyes and his gift of eloquence.

In the meantime—not independently of Geneva, but still under the influence of the Geneva spirit—the relations between France and Germany continued to improve, until one day there entered the League's portals the representatives of that great country which was destined to occupy here the position due to it.

I wish I could draw a veil over the incidents that occurred at that juncture; but I have no right to, for I conceive it to be my duty to proclaim here that free, parliamentary and democratic Spain disavows and repudiates the action of which a usurping Government, having first muzzled public opinion, was guilty when Germany presented herself before the League.

I may say, here and now—not next week or the week after—that Spain, as long as she is free, will never seek to employ pressure unworthy of her, with the object of securing in the Assembly or the Council of the League the position she considers she should occupy in order the better to serve the League.

Side by side with the gradual pacification produced by all these events, the work of disarmament was proceeding, we were beginning to gain a better understanding of the real substance of the question and of the objective difficulties of the problem, until at length we succeeded in framing a Convention to which I shall ask to be allowed to revert later, but regarding which I may say now that it would be most unjust to describe it as inadequate, since it does in fact represent a first stage of the highest importance, offering great promise of success in the task to which we have set our hands.

A certain pessimism is, however, justified, and I think it is perhaps due to what might be called the duality of development in these matters during the last ten years. We have advanced along parallel lines and two series of acts have been pursued independently of one another.

On the one hand we have had a whole series of solemn declarations with a view to establishing on a firm basis peace, justice and judicial settlement between the nations. First there was the Covenant and then the increasing success of the Hague Optional Clause; then came the suggestions of the Protocol and the eminently successful work of Locarno, the Treaties of Arbitration and Conciliation, the list of which is still lengthening, then the Paris or Briand-Kellogg Pact, then the General Act and now the Convention to Strengthen the Means of Preventing War.

Side by side with that series of acts, all designed to secure peace, we observe another series which, while not expressly designed to promote war, seem to indicate forgetfulness or ignorance of the efforts being made at the same time. Such acts are the continuance of armaments, increased expenditure on military forces or at least an admittedly inadequate reduction of them. We see what we are perhaps inclined to ignore—the perfecting of military technique and organisation, which allows of the increase of the potential aggression of all nations, while maintaining or even reducing the figures of armaments or of the budgetary appropriations. We see a psychology of precautions, defence and mistrust, which makes it possible, for instance,

for all the principal military nations, despite the fact that they signed the Protocol of 1925 (which prohibits the use of gases in warfare) to engage actively in preparing for chemical warfare. There is a contrast between the acts of the National Defence Ministries and those of the Ministries for Foreign Affairs, as if the States, having for their own adopted the Gospel injunction, refused to let their right hand know what their left hand is doing, or as if, imitating the undesirable practices of those people whose religion sits lightly upon them, and who go to a service or to Mass on Sunday and reserve the other six days of the week for the seven deadly sins, they were content to come to their annual September service at Geneva, and to reserve the remaining eleven months of the year for the gratification of their national individuality.

Human psychology is so complex that it is possible to trace these international vices to a hidden virtue, which adopts a distorted means to express itself.

I am often tempted to attribute the phenomena I have just noted to a certain rather attractive virtue to be found in one extremely useful class of collaborators—I refer to the modesty of our legal experts. Those who have drafted most of our texts are so modest that they seem always to be at pains to attribute the smallest value to their own productions. Thus, scarcely had the Covenant been launched on its international career when it was subjected to a regular campaign of interpretations, which curiously enough invariably had the effect of lessening the value of the texts and never of strengthening them.

The Covenant is an organic whole and no one article of it can be taken independently of the rest. It is divided into articles for convenience in numbering; but these have no separate existence, they constitute a single whole no part of which can be weakened without similarly affecting the whole organic body, for that is what the Covenant is.

By diluting certain articles—and I will mention those articles so as not to seem to avoid any obstacles in my path—by diluting Articles 10 and 16, those concerned have managed to weaken Article 8, and that is why it is so ineffective to-day.

There is an essential unity in the Covenant, which results from the legal organisation embodied in it, but there is a more important and deep-seated unity, that of the spirit which inspired it. In my opinion, we have committed a very grave error in trying to extend the scope of the Covenant and in trying to produce a marvellous crop of interpretations which were more often than not weaker reproductions, wasting the sap of the Covenant in external manifestations and possible extensions, instead of keeping the texts well pruned that the sap might run down the trunk deep into the ground and penetrate into the conscience of men and nations. Only by making the Covenant a more vital force in the conscience of the peoples, not by weakening it by a multitude of interpretations which only obscure its true meaning, shall we succeed in arresting the course of war and consolidating peace.

It would perhaps be well to get back to the Covenant itself, if only by means of a small Convention consisting of a single article stipulating that the contracting parties are agreed that the Covenant means just what it says. But then all of us here must say so and act accordingly.

One illustration of the seriousness of this phenomenon might be obtained by comparing the results of the Covenant and those of the Paris Pact with those obtained from the fruitful combination of the two. I do not propose to expatiate on this theme before an Assembly which knows more about it than I do; I will merely say—and I

do not think anyone here will contest it—that from the fact that Members of the League are parties both to the Covenant and to the Paris Pact we must conclude that neutrality is a thing of the past.

Neutrality, then, no longer exists. If that is so, why are we still thinking of it and trying to define the laws of war in such a way as to defend the rights of neutrals?

We have outlawed war. Why then do we continue to study the laws of war? We have killed neutrality. Why do we continue to study laws applicable to neutrals? It is as if we were to restore the laws of inequality in order to define the rights of people who no longer exist. But, it may be objected, there are the States non-Members of the League. Here, I admit, is a serious difficulty, but I think it is eminently desirable to be clear in our minds about it, to face it fearlessly and make the position plain.

We owe to non-Member countries, not as a matter of bare courtesy but as a matter of fundamental frankness, to tell them that we honestly and sincerely respect the reasons which have obliged them to remain outside the League; but, when we have said that, we have the right to take the facts as they are, and one incontestable fact is this: that, until the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have combined with the rest of us to produce a system calculated to banish neutrality for ever, the ideal of complete disarmament will never become a reality.

It may be argued, I know, that the guarantee of neutrality is a guarantee of the *status quo*, but I confess I have never been able to understand that argument. What does it mean? Does it mean that the *status quo* cannot be guaranteed and that we must therefore entertain the possibility of war in order to change it? If so, no one could subscribe to such an argument, for war can never be deemed legitimate even if its object be to change the *status quo*.

Does it mean that, when we have disarmed, we can no longer change the *status quo*? The *status quo* is not permanent—no *status quo* can be permanent. Mankind does not—never will—respect frontiers bristling with machine-guns or a succession of pact filling reams of stamped paper. Mankind will claim its rights. It seems to me that we have sufficiently acquired the habit of co-operation here—and it is our right and our duty to trust the statesmen and the nations most directly concerned—to be justified in the hope that when it becomes possible to change the *status quo* by peaceful means in the interests of Europe and the whole world, this will duly come to pass. But whether that is or is not possible, we cannot admit that the *status quo* can or should be changed by war.

War is henceforth impossible for civilised countries, and such an argument must therefore be banished from our discussions. I mention it, however, because it seems to me that the Covenant, which in international law is, in essence, profoundly revolutionary, has remained reactionary in its vocabulary. Its ideas have progressed so far that they have gone beyond the form in which they were originally expressed. Thus, we find in the Covenant terms which seem as obsolete as certain fossil formations, such as the horse's toe or the academician's sword.

This applies to Article 16, for instance, which says that the Covenant-breaking State shall be deemed to have committed an act of war against all the other Members of the League. But it has not committed an act of war, for war is in the nature of a duel. Duels, however, take place only between men of honour, and a State which violates the Covenant can no longer be classed with an honest man. The League must seriously set

itself to decide whether a Covenant-breaking State can retain the rights of a belligerent. That is a definite problem of international law which it might usefully study. It seems to me illegal for a country which has violated or broken its engagements to be able to claim the rights of a belligerent. It is precisely in that direction, the creation of the new international law necessitated by the revolutioning of the international code of morality by the Covenant that we ought, in my view, to direct our efforts.

If that is done and we take our courage in both hands and decide to strike out on that path in a spirit of full co-operation, without mental reservations, we shall come to admit that armaments are a question not so much of quantity or technique as of quality and policy.

I am not going to argue in favour of a *status quo* in the matter of armaments—I hope to prove this in a few moments. I do not say that the reduction of armaments does not interest us: far be it from me to say that. In my opinion, however, the problem of armaments is dominated by a question of political quality and not of technical quantity. I will give you an example to explain what I mean. When a man carries a revolver in the street the length of the barrel and the calibre are of no importance: what is of importance is to know whether he is a hooligan or a policeman.

The same applies as regards the difference between two conceptions, which should be analysed, because they are a little blurred and we are apt to confuse them in our minds: I mean the mechanical conception of international society and the organic conception of international society. These two conceptions must necessarily lead to essentially different results. For the sake of greater clearness I propose deliberately to exaggerate the contrast between them.

Assume an international society based exclusively on the mechanical principles of an egoistic individualistic power of nations—all pulling in different directions without regard for common interests—and assume (which is improbable) that those countries, which are actuated exclusively by national egoism, agree to discuss armaments. What will be the result of any Convention concluded by them? There can, it seems to me, be only two possible results: either complete failure, or such an adjustment of the respective armaments of the nations represented at the Conference as would make those armaments correspond more exactly or less inexactly to the political power of the several nations.

It might happen that, for historical reasons, two countries, A and B, whose political strength was practically equal, came to the Conference with military forces which were far from equal, the one perhaps double the other. The result of the Conference would be that, since each nation was actuated by a purely mechanical conception giving full play to its national egoism, it would get out of the Conference all that was open to it by reason of its technical capacity and the diplomatic skill of its representatives.

At the close of the Conference each country would come out with a naval and air force strictly proportionate to its political strength when it entered the Conference.

That is not disarmament. It is an adjustment of military forces producing a new map of the military forces of the world; it may even result in a local, partial or national increase of armaments, in order that the effectives finally agreed upon may correspond to the respective political strengths at the opening of the Conference.

Let us now consider the other extreme. Pre-suppose a perfect international organic system

in which each nation feels itself to be, as it were, an organic part of a universal world body, serving that body and being served by it: national egoism—still a factor—will have the opposite effect. By hypothesis, the collective organism will be responsible for the national defence of all the members composing it, since they are all equally valuable to it; national egoism will make it to the interest of every nation acceding to the Convention to reduce its armaments to an absolute minimum, since in any case it will be sure of being protected by the whole body.

Thus, according to whether you conceive the international whole as a system of mechanical forces or as a conscious collective organism, the resultant position will be that, under the first hypothesis, each nation will try to leave the Conference with the highest possible maximum of military forces proportionate to the political force at its disposal; or, under the second hypothesis, it will try, from national egoism, to reduce to a minimum the military, naval and air forces which it has to support and pay for, with the ultimate object, however, of placing them at the service of the whole body.

What is the present position? Obviously it lies between these two extremes. Life is essentially a compromise. Even after twelve years of the League, it may be said perhaps that we still have our feet planted in the mechanical system and our head, our brain and perhaps some portion of our heart in the organic system. Thus we shall come to the Conference next February with a divided mind, feeling that we do not know where to place our faith: in national egoism, individualistic and exclusive, which bids us not to trust in the whole body but to rely simply on national defence, trying to obtain the highest possible military, naval or air strength; or on international idealism, on the organic sense of the common life of the whole, whereby a nation will be allowed to put its trust in the new moral force of which I have just spoken and to try to lessen its financial burdens, and reduce to the lowest point its military, naval and air burdens, seeing that it will be invited to contribute to the collective defence of the League.

While concrete data may be lacking, we have before us a relatively simple programme to adopt. Before concluding, I shall ask the Assembly's permission to set forth briefly the minimum programme which I consider essential.

First, we must seek by every means in our power to strengthen and build up the organic spirit which will enable us to come to the Conference in the right spirit. That applies, not only to ourselves, but to the countries not yet Members of the League: that is to say, we must seek by every means in our power to instil this idea into the minds of the nations, and not this idea only, but the feeling that the Covenant exists, that it means what it says, that its demands are specific and that we are bound in honour to defend one another against the attacks of international brigands. That must be our first duty, our most urgent duty. That must form the subject of our propaganda from now until February and all the time the Conference is sitting. Next, we must try to achieve a certain number of concrete results, to attain a certain number of definite objects, of which we must not fall short and, beginning with as large a reduction as possible of effectives and material—let us not rely on the idea of limitation—our second aim must be a considerable reduction of the national expenditure on armaments.

Here the Assembly will, I trust, allow me to make a short digression. The Spanish delegation is very much struck by this anxiety for petty economy, a preoccupation which sometimes crops

up in the Assembly and which is superficially — but only superficially — justified by the crisis through which we are passing but which, if we compare the League budget with the so-called national defence budgets of the world, really raises a doubt whether the League is acting wisely.

I should like to work out a little sum with you. If the nations of the world had forwarded to the Treasurer of the League Secretariat in 1930 a bare 5 per cent of what they expended in 1930 on their national defence, and if the League Treasurer had invested that sum in a bank at 5 per cent, that 5 per cent interest on the first 5 per cent would have been sufficient — would still be sufficient — to pay for the League, the International Labour Office and the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague, for the rest of the world's history without ever having to apply for a centime to Members of the League.

Lastly, I feel I must insist on what, to my mind, is the most striking merit of the Convention. The Convention creates a permanent institution for disarmament. The greatest service (and this applies to all our activities) the League can render in the various spheres in which it intervenes would be to create permanent institutions which should enable the international spirit to manifest itself perpetually.

We shall have a permanent disarmament institution. Armaments to-day are manifestly international facts but, in law, they are still, in spite of Article 8, exclusively national, and the League's aim must be to transform into a *de jure* international matter what is already a *de facto* international matter. I repeat that armaments are international facts, because directly a country makes a change in its armaments manifest international reactions occur.

Consequently, it can be no more lawful for a country to change its armaments without international authorisation than it would be for a citizen of Geneva to walk about the streets of the town with a machine-gun or a revolver.

Lastly, it seems to me necessary to stress the fact that the Convention must be based on Article 8, not from mere caprice, still less from any fanaticism on the part of the League. It must be built up on Article 8 because once we begin to deal with Article 8 we shall be finally committing ourselves, and once we have signed a Convention based on Article 8, we can be under no regime but that of the Convention — that is to say, the regime of reform represented by the Convention — and no longer under the regime of international anarchy in the matter of armaments — the evil from which the world is suffering to-day.

Having said what I felt was due in praise of the Convention, I hope the Assembly will allow me to say in what respect we consider it may perhaps be defective. On that point I shall submit no resolution or concrete proposal. I merely wish to make some suggestions; for I may state emphatically that if the time has not come for them to be translated into fact, if the other delegations are not ready to follow us, we, for our part, are prepared to affirm that a time will come when that stage of perfection will be reached.

We believe, although this does not exhaust the list of possible improvements — that the Convention would be enormously strengthened if it were backed up by another Convention placing civil aviation under an international regime.

This is an old idea here, an idea which was discussed by the Sub-Committee on Civil Aviation which met at Brussels in 1926. The three arms, the army, the navy and the air force, are closely bound up with one another so far as armaments are concerned, and it is useless to hope for a

dramatic disarmament in any one arm without a similar change in the others. It does not seem possible to hope for air disarmament of any appreciable importance if we do not take into consideration the possibility of transforming civil aviation in a night, in an hour, into a military weapon. It seems obvious that the only remedy for this evil, the only precaution against this risk, is to place aviation under an international regime.

It may be said of course that, once war has been declared, such an international regime would be purely illusory. But any argument based on what will happen when a war is declared is irrelevant. The League can have no interest in what happens from the moment war is declared. During the period preceding war, we can apply powerful brakes which will probably suffice; but a moment will come, perhaps a few days before war actually breaks out, when the war spirit will gather such momentum as to render our brakes useless and destroy our hopes. Our efforts must therefore be concentrated on the period preceding war, on the period when the nations do not yet desire war and are still too indifferent to be infected with the war spirit. Then our brakes will be sufficiently powerful, and it is at that moment that the existence of a strong and exclusively national air force might produce in a people dangerous psychological effects, panic and a tendency to lapse into the war spirit.

For that reason, despite the arguments that may be advanced to the contrary, all based on what might happen after the declaration of war, we still believe that an effort to internationalise civil aviation should be made, seeing that aviation is a new development which has not yet taken root, as it were, in military spheres.

And we believe that, between the present day and February, it should be possible to do something definite in the matter.

We think further that the Convention is manifestly unsatisfactory as regards the limitation of implements of war. We think it would have been possible to make some attempt at once to limit implements of war, apart from budgetary limitation — a valuable means, however, which should be retained — and to institute a direct limitation based on a threefold system: first stocks, then a Convention for the adequate supervision of the international trade in arms, and, thirdly, a Convention for the adequate supervision of private and national manufacture. We are not convinced by the arguments that have sometimes been advanced against these two conventions. The first is, of course, in existence already, and the reason it is not in force is that there are still some ratifications to be received; but it actually dates from 1925. The second is still delayed.

I am afraid that, during the five years which have elapsed, this second convention has been somewhat whittled down by the various committees that have dealt with it, and we still believe that the only way to achieve an effective limitation of war stocks is by a composite system consisting of budgetary and direct limitation together. Direct limitation might begin, I repeat, with stocks, a method which will be found unsatisfactory during the first few years but which will rapidly improve, and might be followed by the Convention on the trade in arms, with, finally, a Convention on manufacture.

Are we to go to this Conference in a defeatist spirit, fearful of disaster? I think not. True, if the Convention fails it will be a disaster, but we need not go so far as to say that such a disaster would justify us in becoming discouraged and renouncing the undertaking.

Adam Smith said that nations can bear much in the way of ruin. The League can bear much in the way of disaster and survive. Let us be anxious, passionately anxious, to succeed, ready to go on trying despite failure, should failure come. Let us regard possible failure as a disaster, let us exert ourselves to prevent it, but let us determine to continue even after the disaster, if disaster there be, for after all we know that we are upheld by the spirit of this Assembly.

A rumour has been current the last few days in the League lobbies that, on grounds of economy, the number of Assemblies is to be reduced. Let us hope that that rumour is false; but if it really has any foundation, let us resist such a proposal with all our might, for it is a mistaken one. The importance of the Assembly does not consist in the actual work it does, though I may perhaps be allowed to associate myself very respectfully with what the French Minister for Foreign Affairs said this morning regarding the importance and volume of that work. It is not so much the work of the Assembly as the existence of the Assembly that counts, the fact that we come here and get in touch with each other. The questions we debate, the problems we discuss, simply constitute, as it were, the material body which by a universal law is necessary if the spirit is to come and dwell in our midst, and we can only pray that the list of questions on the agenda will increase, so that, the body having acquired more substance, the Assembly may endure and the effect of the Geneva spirit be more abiding.

We need not be alarmed to find that spirit — again I should like to associate myself very respectfully with the words of M. Briand and M. Motta — manifesting itself elsewhere than at Geneva. What does it matter if statesmen meet away from here? All the better, provided they meet and consult in the spirit of Geneva. For that spirit, Ariel-like, is mobile and, though born here, can hover over the cupolas of Rome, the great buildings of Berlin, the slender spires of Paris, the massive towers of London, the pinnacles of the Kremlin and even the tall roofs of the Capitol and the White House. There is nothing to regret in this. On the contrary, let us rejoice to find the spirit of Geneva traversing the whole world.

More and more, the nations have insisted that the Press which, at first, did not attend our meetings very assiduously, shall come here and fill the Press galleries and learn what is going on. Why? Do the nations understand anything whatever about our dull reports, our complicated resolutions, our technical problems? No. What they feel is that behind the dense thicket of our commissions and committees and in the bush of our reports and our resolutions — perhaps not a burning bush though it may be a smoking one — they can hear an august and solemn voice. It is the voice of the world, of the world conscience, which proclaims: "I am the mother of all countries. Serve your country, but see to it that your country serves me also."

The President:

Translation: M. Garay, delegate of Panama, will address the Assembly.

M. Garay (Panama):

Translation: The speeches which have been delivered from this platform by eminent orators on the questions of disarmament, security, the international organisation of peace, and the solution of inter-State disputes by judicial settlement or arbitration, have awakened in me many personal memories, and you will perhaps pardon me if I evoke them now.

In 1924, in the Salle de la Réformation, during the discussions on the famous Geneva Protocol, when Mr. Macdonald, M. Herriot, M. Beneš, M. Politis and other equally well-known speakers addressed the Assembly, I also ventured to speak and to say that, in the matter of disarmament, my country beat the record and could claim to have won the world championship. It was quite true. Unfortunately, misunderstandings have occurred in certain circles and in the Press which have given rise to the belief that Panama was a republic born to international life, and that it had never possessed an army, and that it was consequently no trouble and no credit to it to have disarmed.

Allow me to say that that is entirely incorrect. My country had an army — a small one, I admit, but an army nevertheless — which was dissolved some time after the proclamation of our independence, the maintenance of order and the enforcement of law being entrusted to a national police force. Thus, after seven years, an unfortunate mistake has been put right.

There is another matter on which I wished to speak to-day — the visit paid to Latin America at the beginning of this year by the Secretary-General of the League and certain officials of the Secretariat. On the invitation of the Government of Panama, Sir Eric Drummond was the guest of the Republic for some days, and his visit produced the happiest results.

His visit had the effect of reviving the interest of our nation in the League and in Geneva affairs, as was well said by the President of the Council in his opening speech to the present Assembly. The countries visited were enabled, thanks to the Secretary-General's visit, to obtain a more direct and more exact idea of the institution of which they are Members.

On the other hand, the Secretary-General came back from Latin America with greater experience and enhanced authority. He had entered into direct contact with our leaders and our peoples and was thus enabled to understand more clearly and more exactly our conditions of life and our mentality.

As regards my own country, Sir Eric Drummond had an opportunity of studying at close hand that love of peace which has characterised the people of Panama throughout its history and accounts for many of the sacrifices we have made and many of the servitudes we have assumed for the common good of the world. Sir Eric Drummond and his companions trod the ground where the international assemblies created by the political genius of Simon Bolivar, our great liberator, were held in 1826. Those assemblies made our capital city the precursor of Geneva and our assembly hall the forerunner of the *Salle de la Réformation* and the *Bâtiment Electoral*, so that we can regard the protocols signed more than a century ago as the venerable ancestors of the Covenant of the League.

If the objects of the League are to be wholly fulfilled in the case of countries situated so far from Geneva as ours, it is not enough for us to send permanent or temporary delegations to the Assemblies, the Council or the various conferences of the League. The relations must be reciprocal — Mahomet must go to the mountain and the mountain must go to Mahomet.

We welcome the happy initiative which led to the visit to Latin America of Sir Eric Drummond and the Secretariat officials who accompanied him, and we entirely associate ourselves with the views expressed by M. Lerroux in his opening speech, in which he emphasised the desirability

and usefulness of such journeys and meetings — *prises de contact*, as he called them.

Again, we still hear the echoes of the inspired words uttered by the head of the Swiss delegation, M. Motta, whose conscience recoils at the bare thought of our being actors, whether voluntary or unwitting, in a gigantic international masquerade. In listening to him, I was glad to feel that I already shared the sentiments he voiced so eloquently in this Assembly. Barely seven months ago, we received Sir Eric Drummond at the National Institute of Panama on the occasion of a university ceremony organised in his honour by the Panama Society for International Law, at which I had the honour to preside. I made a speech on that occasion, in which I said some things that I should like to repeat here, as they contain (though expressed in rather negative form), a profession of faith in the future of the League.

"It is maintained that the old aphorism, '*Si vis pacem para bellum*', continues to inspire the policies of the great Powers and that to-day, as yesterday, the best way to guarantee peace is to prepare for war; but this curious argument would lead us to the absurd conclusion that, when the nations of the world organise pacific means of settling their disputes and seek to promote arbitration, conciliation, organised justice and comparative or total disarmament, they are working indirectly for the cause of war.

"Indeed, if we admit that warlike preparations ensure and guarantee peace, we must also admit conversely that peaceful preparations ensure and precipitate war. This deplorable philosophy would mean that hypocrisy is the only true policy for States in the matter of international security, and that would be far from flattering to our Western civilisation.

"If the world were no better than that, if it were so essentially opposed to the idea of justice and probity, the cause of peace could have no further justification, and our only hope of salvation would then lie, not even in war, but in general destruction."

Let us seek to penetrate with the beams of hope this sombre and discouraging pessimism, to which so many minds are a prey; let us beware of spreading its contagion.

The President :

Translation : Mr. Collins, delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Collins (Australia) :

I had the honour of attending the first Assembly of the League of Nations, in 1920, and therefore am in a position to note the great progress and the many important developments that have taken place in the organisation of peace and international co-operation. When I was here last, there was evidence of careful thought and wise preparation; and the Secretariat, though in its infancy, had already given promise of the high efficiency to which it has, since attained. There were at that time many critics and sceptics who prophesied an early decease of the League; but happily there is no longer any need anxiously to take its pulse and to measure its temperature, in order to assure ourselves of its health. To-day it is a well-established institution, a fully recognised and indispensable instrument of international intercourse, and the confidence it has inspired augurs well for the future.

Already in this gathering there have been notable references to questions of economy, and I too desire to make some remarks upon that subject. I

know perfectly well that we are not justified in measuring the achievements of the League in terms of pounds, or francs, or dollars; nor should we be justified, on past results, in attempting any large-scale curtailment of its activities. It is not, however, necessary to have any inside knowledge of the working of the League to know that many States Members are asking themselves whether this unquestionably useful organisation is not spending more money than is warranted or can be afforded.

Those who are closely associated with the world's financial position are aware of the tremendous efforts which are being made by nearly every country to reduce national expenditure and to balance budgets. This position renders it necessary that the attention of the Assembly be drawn to some considerations that are important from the League's point of view. I am anxious, however, to assure my colleagues in this Assembly that everything I have to say is to be understood as being in support of the League of Nations. Australia believes in the League and has been, since its inception, both a willing and an enthusiastic member of it.

I desire to associate myself with the attitude of the leader of the British Empire delegation, who said : "It would be the falsest of false economy if we were to do anything, more particularly at this time, to reduce the authority and prestige of the League of Nations, or still worse to reduce its efficiency."

The situation of the League of Nations in relation to its expenditure has become one of much importance. The League itself can raise no revenue and is entirely dependent upon the States Members. Its position in this respect has hitherto been one of comfort, for, at a time when budgets could be balanced, the various countries did without great difficulty provide money on a generous scale which gave to the League an opportunity of extending its activities and of carrying out its functions without being in any way hampered by a lack of funds; in this respect the League of Nations had little need to think of the morrow.

Times have changed and there is a spectacle of countries struggling with adversity, and unable, without sacrifices that not long ago might have been deemed impossible, to find money for development and other internal services that are not merely desirable, but in some cases almost vital. Under these new conditions, it is imperative to review the expenditure of the League of Nations, partly because relief must be found for the budgets of States Members, and partly because dissatisfaction must be avoided, for it is impossible to disguise the fact that members of the public of our various countries, who have been called upon to make enormous personal sacrifices, would view with grave displeasure the continuance of any national expenditure which is avoidable. This aspect of the matter is one, I submit, that is of the highest importance.

A short definition of the purposes for which the League was created might be found in the statement that the League was brought into being in order that it might create harmony amongst the peoples of the world. This idea has found expression in many directions; and, in defence of an expenditure that might be held to belong more properly to domestic than to international expenditure, we often hear the argument that the extension of the activities of the League, into what at first sight might appear to be a domestic domain, is justifiable on the ground that it tends to promote a better international understanding. For my part, I raise no objection to that argument; indeed, it is one of the grounds

upon which I appeal to the Assembly to take action to review, and as far as possible to reduce, the expenditure of the League. If the impression gets abroad that the expenditure of the League is on a lavish scale, an injury will be done. In that case, the harmony, which it is the main purpose of the League to foster, will suffer, and, instead of happy agreement, there will be discord and unrest.

Taxation is regarded as a necessary evil, and is a fruitful source of discontent; the expenditure of the League entails taxation additional to that which is required for the ordinary Governmental services. Thus, in a sense, the League of Nations imposes taxation upon the peoples to whom it owes its existence, for the States Members are under obligation to bear stated proportions of the expenditure, whatever it may be. This is the moment when full expression can be given to that which we profess to admire so profoundly — namely, international co-operation; now is the moment for concerted action in effecting economies. Let us then cut down our expenditure as far as is consistent with safety, so that discontent may be avoided, and harmony shall prevail. We must, of course, be careful to safeguard the work of the Disarmament Conference and must approve of ample provision for all contingencies that may arise in that direction.

I do not desire to particularise further on this occasion, but I may say that, in my opinion, there is room for saving both in the reduction of work that has been undertaken by the League, and in reduction of the cost of carrying out essential services; and I submit that the retrenchment which has been forced upon States Members should now have its counterpart in the realm of League expenditure.

Unless all economies that may be possible are carried into effect, it may be inevitable that States Members, hitherto willing and prompt in the payment of their contribution to the League, will find themselves unable to continue upon that satisfactory footing, and the burden of the contributions in arrears, already considerable, may become greater. Thus, higher contributions may be exacted from other States Members, in order to make up the deficiency arising from the default; and, in that case, there will be disparity where equality of sacrifice is on all grounds eminently desirable.

Our colleague from New Zealand has put forward a proposal for the appointment of a Committee to investigate the expenditure of the League and to report upon the savings that can be made. On behalf of Australia, I heartily support the proposal, but would add that, in my opinion, it is necessary that any such committee be asked to report in time for this Assembly to be able to decide upon the economies which can be effected in the budget of 1932.

In conclusion, I may say that my remarks are intended to be constructive, and I strongly urge that this Assembly shall take the initiative in placing the budget of the League upon a basis that is consistent with the condition of the several budgets of the States Members.

38. — EXAMINATION OF THE QUESTION OF THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PROTOCOL OF SEPTEMBER 14th, 1929, RELATING TO THE REVISION OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE. — PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY THE DELEGATIONS OF

SWEDEN, THE NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, JAPAN, DENMARK, SPAIN AND FINLAND.

The President :

Translation : The delegation of Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway, Japan, Denmark, Spain and Finland have submitted to the Assembly a proposal concerning the examination of the question of the coming into force of the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, concerning the revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. The text of the proposal submitted by these delegations is as follows :

"The Assembly, at its last session, expressed the wish that the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, relating to the revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice should obtain as soon as possible the ratifications necessary for its entry into force. As this condition has not yet been fulfilled, it seems desirable that the Assembly should examine the situation which has arisen as regards the question of the entry into force of the Protocol. The necessity for such a discussion is generally felt by the various Governments concerned.

"The undersigned delegations venture accordingly to propose to the Assembly the following resolution :

"The Assembly places on its agenda the examination of the situation as regards the entry into force of the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, relating to the revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. It refers this question to its First Committee."

In accordance with precedent, this proposal will be printed and distributed to the delegations, and I reserve the right to make suggestions to the Assembly later as to the action to be taken regarding it.

39. — COLLABORATION OF WOMEN AND THE PRESS IN THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE : ACCESSION OF THE DELEGATION OF URUGUAY TO THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SPANISH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The delegation of Uruguay has just sent me the following communication :

"The Uruguayan delegation, acting on special instructions from its Government, desires to state that it accedes to the proposal made by the Spanish delegation to the twelfth Assembly of the League of Nations¹, with a view to ensuring the collaboration of women and the Press with the object of contributing in an effective manner to the permanent organisation of peace."

This is not a new resolution, but merely the accession of Uruguay to the Spanish draft resolution, and I propose that the Assembly should merely take note of this communication.

The Assembly rose at 6 p.m.

¹ See previous meeting.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1931, AT 10 A.M.

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President : M. TITULESCO.

40. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion of the report on the work of the League.

M. de Vasconcellos, delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

M. de Vasconcellos (Portugal) :

Translation : The Portuguese delegation conceives it to be its duty, as in previous years, to render account to the Assembly of its share in the common work, and to submit such comments on that work as may be necessary, these in themselves being a feature of its co-operation.

We have just passed through one of the most difficult years in the history of this generation. Mankind has been a prey to crises which beset it on every hand, and is still suffering from the effects : over-production, under-consumption, lack of confidence, shortage of credits, defeatism — all aspects of the super-crisis of instability in a society in process of transformation after the terrible upheaval of the great war.

It was inevitable that the League should be affected. On all hands it is being asked for effective remedies for these crises, and invariably it is overwhelmed with criticism when it fails to find the ideal solution immediately. This is the culminating crisis, in which the League is called upon not only to perform the tasks imposed on it by the Covenant, but also to take on the monopoly of world international policy.

Fortunately, the Assembly has met. Defeatism cannot hold out against the spirit of Geneva.

Governments speak. Statesmen converse. The political and moral atmosphere clears. You will have noticed already a manifest slackening of tension in regard to the anxiety and apprehensions which confronted us at the outset of our meeting.

Because we have unwavering faith in the institution and work of the League, we trust that it may daily become more perfect in its constitution, more effective in its functioning. Any defect in its complex organic functions must claim our immediate intervention to remove the evil. Two years ago, we ventured to point out to the Assembly that the existing system of electing non-permanent Members of the Council might constitute a serious defect in its organisation, and might result in the exclusion of certain States from the Council. Facts have borne out our fears, and we were obliged to make the declaration which we published at the close of last year's elections. Later, my Government sent a memorandum to all the Member States explaining the reasons for our attitude. You will understand the satisfaction with which we noted the draft resolution submitted by the British Government, proposing that a special committee be appointed by the Council to examine the question. We thank the British Government for its action, we support its proposal wholeheartedly, and we shall later submit to the committee that is to be appointed the constructive solutions which we have in view.

I do not propose to enter into a detailed discussion of the Secretariat's report on the work of the League. I shall confine myself to pointing out in which departments Portugal has been able to offer most effective co-operation.

First, we had the gratification of welcoming at Lisbon the Conference for the Unification of Buoyage and Lighting of Coasts, a Conference which did us the honour of electing as President the late Admiral Ernesto de Vasconcellos, whom it was our misfortune to lose shortly after.

The important results of the Conference, set forth in the report, were obtained by effective co-operation between the various delegations and the distinguished representatives of the Secretariat to whom the Portuguese Organising Committee was happy to offer its modest but wholehearted collaboration.

In the matter of communications and transit, we made our contribution also to the Conferences on Road Traffic and the Unification of River Law.

We would mention the great success of the League at the Conference on the Limitation of Narcotic Drugs, in which we took part in the spirit of enthusiasm with which we regard that work of moral reform.

Portugal's contribution has been particularly effective in the financial and economic field; for it is not only at Geneva, by direct participation in the international work of the League, that a country can contribute to world recovery. A country which succeeds in restoring its own position without outside assistance, which presents a balanced budget, a stable currency and sound financial institutions, is making an effective contribution towards the solution of the crisis, in that it eliminates the factor of disorder and depression which would otherwise have been present.

It was during this last difficult economic year, after three years of financial reform, obtained by firm, skilful and far-sighted administration, that our Minister for Finance succeeded in crowning the work of recovery by his decrees for the legal stabilisation of the currency and the reform of the Bank of Issue, without having recourse to the foreign loan which most eminent experts considered indispensable.

I may add that this drastic budgetary reform did not mean that we neglected the necessary improvements in the public services. Adequate grants were allocated, again without recourse to a loan, for the equipment of the principal ports and the rebuilding of bridges, for the preservation of public buildings and monuments, for the conservancy of certain rivers and streams, for the construction of high-schools and other school buildings, and, more particularly, for the reconstruction of roads. Portugal, which is an admirable country for touring, now possesses an excellent system of modern roadways, which are carefully kept in condition.

At Geneva, we took part in the Conference with a View to Concerted Economic Action. We frankly explained our reasons for not signing the draft Convention. For technical reasons, into which we need not enter here, but on which we could not come to an agreement, we were classed in that Convention as a free-trade country, and thus credited with a fiscal policy which we have never pursued. The Convention fell through for want of signatories, despite the able and zealous efforts of its eminent President. We would point out in this connection the disadvantages resulting for the League from the divergences which have arisen in connection with certain economic Conferences, between the declarations and the votes of delegates at the Conferences, and the resolutions of their Governments or Parliaments, which have sometimes been in complete opposition to the sound principles recommended during the discussion and drafting of the Convention. We have sometimes been obliged to dissociate ourselves from a majority advocating an economic policy too liberal in theory for us to accept, and we have been astonished to find ourselves afterwards at one with that same majority in its practical decisions — often far more conservative than those we had upheld. What a startling symptom of the crisis is betrayed by this lack of coherence in facts, rather than among men!

Though we have been successful in bringing about the satisfactory situation to which I referred by sacrifices on the part of the country and by the steadfast pursuit of a plan of financial reconstruction, we have none the less suffered greatly from the world crisis. Ours is an essentially agricultural country, and its economy has been deeply affected by the tremendous drop in the prices of our agricultural products and by the difficulty of disposing of the greater part of them. For this reason, in the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, we strongly supported the Greek proposal to include products other than cereals in the scheme for the examination by the competent Committees of means to ensure their disposal.

We have been sparing neither of our help nor of our support as regards measures to ensure the marketing of cereals, and have even contemplated solutions which would entail our direct co-operation. But we cannot help thinking that it is equally fatal to the economy of a country whether it fails to sell its cereals or fails to sell its wine, its oil or its cork. If, by means of agreements on the lines of those concluded in regard to cereals, through exchanges of industrial and agricultural products, under satisfactory guarantees, serious economic crises can be overcome in countries which produce cereals only for their own consumption, that will, I think, constitute yet another felicitous example of the application of the principles of equality advocated by the League.

This is the more so, inasmuch as, so far as we are concerned, the crisis has not affected merely the products of Portugal itself, but has had most disastrous effects on those of our colonies. The fall in quotations and the accumulation of stocks

have had distressing effects on the magnificent progress of our colonial dominions. The Government and the people have courageously set to work to avert the danger, and the sacrifices required both of the mother-country and the colonies have been agreed to with patriotic devotion.

Speaking of our colonies, I cannot refrain from alluding to what I might venture to describe as the eloquent demonstration we have offered to the world, at the magnificent Colonial Exhibition at Paris, of the extent and success of our colonising achievements. It is an apt reply to unjust campaigns designed to discredit the great services rendered by my country in its colonies to the cause of civilisation, and systematically to disparage those services for ambitious ends, to-day happily doomed to non-fulfilment.

We are glad to find that enlightened world opinion is doing us justice at last, and the "discoverers of the world", as we have just been gracefully designated, have now themselves been discovered.

We have signed the Convention creating an International Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company. We are prepared to ratify it and to support other similar institutions, if its action can be extended to all countries that may require this type of credit and not be confined, owing to defective organisation, to too limited a sphere.

Next February the fundamental problem of disarmament will bring us to Geneva in the hope that a positive solution may crown the desires of all enthusiastic lovers of peace. The Conference for the reduction and limitation of armaments will find that Portuguese armaments have already been reduced to the limits compatible with the maintenance of order at home and in the colonies.

At the close of his speech, my distinguished friend, M. Lerroux, submitted a draft resolution entrusting to a League body the examination of means for preventing the dissemination of such false information as may hinder the maintenance of peace and goodwill among the peoples. We cannot but support this proposal, for, if such an institution had been in existence these last few years, 95 per cent at least of the alleged revolutions in Portugal would never have happened.

I cannot close my rapid survey without once more affirming our deep conviction that only League methods can lead to the maintenance and consolidation of peace, our indestructible and essential faith in the future and the prosperity of our institution, and our firm determination to observe and to obey the four commandments which our President laid upon us in his eloquent opening speech.

The President :

Translation : M. Hymans, first delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

M. Hymans (Belgium) :

Translation : I confess that I had much hesitation in taking part in this discussion, as I was afraid of lapsing into needless repetition. I was prompted to speak, however, by another disquieting consideration—I should not like my silence to suggest indifference.

My connection with the League of Nations dates from the origin of the League, and, in spite of the difficulties of the present hour, I still consider it the indispensable organ of a peaceful and regular international life.

I am aware, however, that, in certain circles, the discussion now taking place will cause a certain amount of disillusion and I should like to reply to the criticism or blame which may be levelled at the League by those who take a superficial view and who know and understand it but little. Such

people expect from the League and from the present discussion, which closes to-day, a sort of revelation, the announcement of some magic remedy, the passing of some resolution which will suddenly set the whole world right once more.

To begin with, the causes of the crisis from which all nations are suffering in varying degrees are too deep-seated for any hope to be entertained that the evil can be remedied suddenly by some specific. On the other hand, there is a misunderstanding, in my opinion, in regard to the League's rôle and functions. It is not an entity, a political person, a power, a sort of State which can issue laws and decrees.

The League is a meeting, an association of free States, of Governments, who have agreed to meet together and consult one another and come to an understanding, and have assumed certain obligations to co-operate with a view to the prevention of war, the specific settlement of their disputes and the conciliation of their interests.

But the League can only do what the States composing it desire, and the Governments whose representatives meet here can themselves do nothing without the support and approval of their Parliaments and the public opinion of their respective countries.

It follows that sometimes, too often perhaps, the Governments represented in this Assembly give utterance, under the influence of what has aptly been called the spirit—I do not say the climate—of Geneva, to approval of measures which, in their own country, meet with opposition from certain interests or sentiments, from passions or egoism or party considerations, and then find that they are powerless to carry them out.

The result is delay, hesitation, failure. We have experienced this in the economic sphere. I remember that, with some support from the Assembly, I conducted a campaign here for a tariff truce, for the principles of solidarity which served as the basis for the Commercial Agreement of March 24th, 1930. My efforts, however, did not prove successful.

I have championed the idea that Europe can develop and re-organise itself only by enlarging its markets, lowering its tariff walls and permitting the free circulation of goods; and, in the recent work of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, all the highly qualified experts—as they were described—and all the Government delegates once more strongly affirmed the same views.

But adverse winds have arisen, and the nations have been driven away from these ideas. Yet I do not abandon them. It is for the Governments to convert public opinion and overcome the resistance of private interests.

I am convinced that the time will come when events will dictate to the nations, as an imperative need, these ideas of mutual understanding and co-operation, and will demonstrate that there is no other way possible to bring about the recovery of Europe and of the world.

Again the discussions of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union have undeniably supplied us with abundant documentation, have laid down excellent rules of guidance and have even achieved certain concrete results. The International Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company has been created, and I venture to call the attention of the Assembly and the competent committee to the initiative suggested by a Belgian expert, M. Francqui, an eminent financier who has taken part in all the conferences of the last few years. M. Francqui proposes that an international bank should be created for the purpose of granting long- and medium-term credits.

This organisation would entail the co-operation of the financial institutions of the various markets, and

would act as an intermediary between landing and borrowing markets. The author of this proposal is convinced — and the experts seem to agree with him — that to bring such an institution into operation would help to restore economic activity. The question is important and deserves serious examination, and I am sure the Assembly will take that view.

In the course of these brief observations, I should like to say a few words on disarmament, or, rather, to use the terms of the Covenant, the reduction of armaments.

I am speaking on behalf of a small country which is essentially peaceful, both by conviction and in its own interest, a country that suffered terribly through the war, and to which the war has bequeathed a very heavy burden of financial charges.

We ardently hope for the success of the Conference convened for next February, and we shall take part in it with a keen desire to consolidate peace and lighten the burdens of military expenditure.

In the last few years, Belgium has considerably reduced the effectives of her army and the period of military service; she has, moreover, acceded without delay to all the conventions for the organisation of arbitration and the pacific settlement of international disputes; and, lastly, she has actively and usefully contributed to the work of the Preparatory Commission, on which she was represented successively by M. de Brouckère and M. Bourquin. I may be allowed to mention that I have received many congratulations on the services they have rendered.

But the part the small States have to play in the field of disarmament is naturally limited. Their policy will naturally depend upon that of the great States. That is in accordance, moreover, with the very spirit and letter of the Covenant. To carry out Article 8 fully and faithfully means leaving nothing to empirical formulas. It requires that account shall be taken of national safety and international obligations, of the geographical situation and circumstances of each State.

We must realise that the success of the Disarmament Conference will depend on the atmosphere in which it opens and in which it carries on its work; and its work will inevitably be long and difficult.

If, during the months to come, disquieting incidents occur, arousing passions and creating an atmosphere of fever or unrest, the success of the Conference will undoubtedly be imperilled. It is therefore imperative, in the meantime, to reassure the nations and draw them together, co-ordinating and conciliating their interests.

May I make an appeal to the great Powers? It is true that in our League and at international law all sovereign States are equal; but, in the nature of things and by the force of circumstances, peace and the maintenance of international order depend principally on the great Powers and not on the small. Small States may help the great, but the small States will never imperil the world.

I have listened attentively to the speeches made here by the representatives of the great Powers. They reveal a firm will to peace, and a desire for understanding and co-operation stimulated by adversity and necessity.

We know that conversations have been held between statesmen, and that those conversations will be continued. We hope that they may come to a successful conclusion, and that the action of the Governments will have the calming influence on public opinion necessary for the restoration of prosperity and the moral and economic welfare of Europe and of the world.

The President:

Translation: Dr. Curtius, first delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Curtius (Germany):

Translation: The general discussion shows that the position of the Assembly of the League of Nations this year has been determined in the main by two facts — the terrible economic depression from which most countries are suffering, and the approach of the Disarmament Conference. These two facts we must bear in mind in any appreciation of the League's work during the past year, or in any attempt to estimate the extent of the assistance which the League is likely to be able to give in present circumstances and the importance of the decisions which we shall be called upon to take this year.

It has often been said, in the last few years — no one, I think, will contest this — that the fate of the Disarmament Conference will be of decisive importance in determining the fate of the League itself. An equally potent factor in shaping the opinion of nations in regard to the League will be the extent to which the latter can help to overcome the crisis from which nearly the whole world is suffering. For this reason I will, like many of the speakers before me on this platform, confine myself in the main to questions relating to the economic and financial problems which are causing us such anxiety and to the problem of disarmament.

The German delegation, I need hardly say, will co-operate fully in the discussions on the other questions on the agenda and will take the opportunity of expounding its views in the competent committees — more particularly, its views on the question of bringing the Pact of Paris into harmony with the Covenant of the League, the question of European Union and the minorities question. I consider, however, that the nations, whose attention is now riveted on Geneva, will desire above all things to know whether the statesmen assembled here are capable of finding, or at least of helping to find, some way out of the crisis, and whether we are able to offer them reasonable grounds for hoping that, in the burning question of disarmament, tangible results will be obtained by the Conference which is to meet in February.

We are all acquainted with the events which, since our last Assembly, have done so much to aggravate the depression from which we were already suffering then. To the collapse of production and markets has, in many countries, been added financial catastrophe. The dangers of the economic situation have assumed alarming proportions; on the one hand, congestion of raw materials and foodstuffs; on the other, want and famine; concentration of capital and accumulation of gold in a small number of countries and shortage of capital and a crushing burden of interest in others; and then the most terrible manifestation of the collapse of the international economy; unemployment in the industrial countries, which next winter will increase to an extent which it is impossible to see at present, with the resulting army of despairing and desperate men who will be only too ready to lend an ear to extremist and revolutionary influences. No one can deny that the whole foundation of our economic and financial system and, indeed, the whole basis of our civilisation is tottering.

Naturally, the League and its organs have not been indifferent to this disquieting position and its attendant dangers; but here the grave question arises whether the results attained up to the present correspond even approximately to the imperious needs of the times. So far as I have

observed, not one of my predecessors on this platform has ventured to answer this question in the affirmative; and I think, therefore, I may take it that we are all agreed that the vital part of our work still remains to be done.

The most important result of the work accomplished up to the present by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union is the report submitted by the economic experts, and now before the League. Speaking at a meeting of the Commission of Enquiry, I said that the report must form the starting-point of a fresh phase in the economic evolution of Europe. The Committee, which had received the fullest powers from the Commission to submit any proposals with a view to improving production and trade in Europe, recommends economic *rapprochement* and economic union as being the most important, — if not the only — means of securing a radical economic recovery in Europe. The report points out that the realisation of such schemes can be pursued only in agreement with the non-European countries and that it should result in a more moderate Customs policy than is followed at the present time. Such guarantees are calculated to dissipate the distrust felt by the other continents as regards these European proposals.

Valuable though the bare statement of these principles of economic *rapprochement* by the Committee of Economic Experts undoubtedly is in itself, we must not leave things there. Under the influence of our discussions here, the Governments should set to work without delay and put this idea of economic *rapprochement* into practice as rapidly and completely as possible. The results achieved by these efforts will serve to show how far the nations of Europe realise the dangers resulting from the economic dissection of Europe and how far the will to co-operate on a broad and practical basis is really present in Europe to-day.

Again, the problem of preferential duties on wheat, which calls for a practical solution, will be another test of the spirit of collaboration in the League. The proposals of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union provide for preferential duties on wheat by way of an exception to the most-favoured-nation clause, such preferential duties being restricted as regards place, specific commodities and time. The objections raised from the standpoint of the most-favoured-nation system are quite comprehensible; but these can be overcome by the guarantees established by the International Conference of November 1930, and should give way in the face of the advantages which the realisation of this plan would have, from the standpoint of general interests.

These are not measures taken in the sole interest of particular countries to which preferential duties might be accorded; still less is there any question of the one-sided interests of those who have declared themselves willing to make sacrifices and to accord preferential duties. I venture to hope that this proposal, which is now beginning, after a long struggle, to make headway, will be accepted. The extra-European countries are also beginning to realise that an increase in the purchasing power of European countries will, in the long run, in view of the fact of world economic interdependence, benefit overseas countries also.

The apprehensions of non-European countries have found eloquent expression in several speeches to which I have listened with the greatest interest, and the position may be summed up, from their point of view, by saying that the League seems to be concentrating its efforts on the economic recovery of Europe, and to be neglecting the extra-European countries. Certain though it is that an increase in the purchasing power of European countries would benefit the non-European countries,

and while the latter will reap their share of benefit in what the League hopes to be able to do for European economy, it seems to me none the less desirable that the League should make more energetic and direct efforts than hitherto to remedy the economic crisis in extra-European countries.

It has been proposed, I hear, to set up small committees consisting of a few leading experts to be sent to the principal economic centres in Asia and Latin America to study the situation on the spot with the competent local authorities, with a view to reporting to the Assembly in 1932 and making appropriate suggestions. I think that idea is worthy of serious consideration.

Nevertheless, it may perhaps be possible, even without such a detailed enquiry, or even simultaneously with it to organise in one particular field practical measures for the benefit primarily of extra-European countries. I am thinking here of restrictions and the regulation of their agricultural products. The agricultural depression is undoubtedly even more acute than the industrial depression. Agriculture cannot solve its difficulties to the same extent as industry by means of the organisation and cartellisation of production. Again, the restrictions on production in certain countries and other expedients, such as the accumulation of crops, have, as experience has just shown, given no relief, but have proved useless.

International co-operation alone can furnish a real and effective remedy. All who are acquainted with the position know how great the difficulties are. Practical success in certain fields, such as the International Sugar Convention, which has just been concluded afresh, show what can be done when there is a real desire for agreement. As regards the agricultural and forestry products in question, the extra-European countries would primarily and directly benefit, while the European importing countries would no longer need to take prohibitive measures, set up insuperable Customs barriers or introduce import prohibitions in order to protect their agricultural products. I hope that the Second Committee will examine these brief suggestions more fully, and that proposals may be submitted to the Assembly.

I now pass from economic problems to the financial problems which are also a feature of the crisis.

The whole international system of money and credit is disorganised. The movement of capital from rich countries to poor countries — so necessary for the maintenance of the economic balance and purchasing power of the latter — has not only almost entirely ceased, but the countries rich in capital have withdrawn to an unforeseen extent the short-term credits they had accorded to the poorer countries.

The creditors, when opening these credits, which have brought in high interest over a period of many years, should have provided for the contingency that, in many cases, the capital would not be invested, in the poorer countries, in such a way as to be immediately recoverable. The holders of the credits might reasonably have supposed that there existed a sort of tacit agreement that the credits would not be withdrawn suddenly or just when they had greatest need of them. Bank crashes and Government intervention in private trade have been the unfortunate but inevitable consequences. These facts may be attributed in the last resort to the international financial situation resulting from political debts. Enormous political payments from one country to another have been effected without any economic counterpart.

These payments have continually had the effect of removing large amounts from the debtor countries, which were already poor in capital, and those

countries have thus been forced, in order to protect their currency, to adopt deflationist measures entailing high rates of interest and reduced purchasing power; hence a decrease in imports and increase in exports. If this continues, if the payment of political debts is effected by means of a reduction in imports and a forced increase in exports on the part of the debtor countries, most disastrous consequences must ensue not only for those countries, but also for world economy. This was clearly stressed in the report of the Basle Committee set up by the London Conference.

As the result of this disturbance of international relations in the matter of money and credit, gold is being accumulated in certain financial centres where it is lying idle because no use can be found for it in the form of loans and foreign credits. The gold standard has been one of the principal factors in the economic development of the world during the last century, but there is a risk that it may now efface itself.

It is to the eternal honour of the President of the United States of America that he should so clearly have seen the dangers ahead and have proposed and succeeded in putting through for one year the suspension of payments in respect of political debts. As representative of Germany, I desire to pay my tribute from this platform to the breadth of vision evidenced by the Hoover plan and to testify to the relief it has afforded my country. But, important though such a moratorium undoubtedly is, it is only in the nature of a temporary respite. Several of those who spoke before me have specifically stressed the point that the problem of international political debts necessarily demands, in the general interest, a comprehensive solution which shall really put an end to the crisis. That is the great task before the world.

Obviously, international co-operation in this field can succeed only, if every country is prepared to exhaust all the possibilities open to it of surmounting the crisis. The German Government, I may say, has done so, nor has it shrunk from the sternest measures or faltered before the most painful operations. That fact gives me the right to demand, not only in the interests of my own country, but in the general interest, that a resolute attempt shall now be made to accomplish in this field what can be done only by means of international co-operation.

What can the League do towards such co-operation? It cannot, of course, undertake the settlement of the problem of international debts. That problem must still be left to the Governments directly concerned. A whole series of proposals such as have just been discussed at the various meetings here at Geneva must be taken up and dealt with by the League itself; but all international efforts in the economic and financial field, whether the outcome of League or of inter-Governmental action, are subject to one preliminary condition — the restoration of reciprocal confidence in international political relations. Lord Cecil read to us the final words of the report of the Basle experts, and the truth of those words we cannot afford to neglect.

I am glad to note that, in all the speeches during the last few days which have dealt with the present general position, so much stress has been placed on the need for reciprocal confidence. I entirely associate myself with much that was said by the delegates of Great Britain, France and other countries on the subject. But if the League is to fulfil its mission, the Governments represented here must constantly bear in mind the principles on which confidence in the political relations of the States rests, and it is the League's duty to see that effect is given to those principles.

On this matter my point of view may perhaps differ slightly from one or other of the expressions of opinion we have heard, in that I do not attach so much importance to what we have already done at Geneva, but am interested rather in what still remains to be done. Real confidence implies a reciprocal relationship, and confidence between the nations cannot find and preserve a sure foundation unless it is based on a healthy recognition of reciprocal interests and ideas. That foundation must never be shaken, even in a country's time of direst distress. The solution of temporary difficulties must not be purchased at the price of still more serious future difficulties.

All attempts to re-establish the normal movement of commodities and capital are doomed to ultimate failure directly the principles of justice and equality in political relations are neglected. The League is called upon also to guarantee those principles even in cases in which the practical solution of the various economic and financial problems has not been expressly entrusted to it. If such an attitude could spread from Geneva and really be endorsed by Governments, it would extend from the latter to public opinion in every country; and thus the impatience, the excitability and ready irritation, which are very comprehensible in present conditions, would give place to a calmer, more confident outlook.

We must not try to disguise from ourselves a fact that should be frankly admitted — namely, that, in many countries, profound scepticism reigns and — what is perhaps worse still — growing indifference to the Geneva institutions. The circles in which this phenomenon is observed are by no means those which do not understand the idea of the League or are hostile to it. On the contrary, it is precisely those people who put their faith in the League that are becoming increasingly disillusioned owing to the absence of tangible results. It would, of course, be absurd to hope for miracles or to expect that our deliberations should provide an immediate remedy for the present distress. What people of common sense want are measures designed to get at the root of the evil and to effect an improvement in the situation. This difficult period of world depression can be turned to account, if it results in the realisation and the strengthening of the conception of real solidarity and of the need for co-operation on a basis of equality.

The German Government will certainly do everything in its power to promote such international co-operation. It is well aware that German interests and the general interest alike, imperatively demand such an attitude. Indeed, it was this conception of present-day problems that took us successively to the Chequers, Paris, London and Rome. I entirely concur in the view that the League has no reason to be jealous of these direct efforts of responsible statesmen, but has, on the contrary, every reason to encourage them.

The British delegate emphasised the importance which, at every stage in the evolution of international relations, attaches to Franco-German *rapprochement*, which, as he says, should not be confined to words, but should find expression in acts. Lord Cecil may be sure that the German Government fully appreciates the importance of this point. I am happy to say that the coming visit of French statesmen to Berlin will furnish an opportunity for a direct exchange of views, and I trust that results may be obtained in this way which will be of advantage to both countries and, in addition, serve the general interests of the world.

I now come to the second of the great problems with which the League is faced—and it is an urgent problem—disarmament. While the economic depression of which I have spoken is attributable mainly to events that have occurred outside the League, the latter has, on the contrary, been solely responsible from the outset for the manner in which the disarmament problem has been dealt with. Disarmament was proclaimed to the world in the League Covenant, and that was the principal task assigned to the League on its foundation. On that issue the League's fate depends, and that is the issue to be decided by the Conference convened for next February.

Following the example of many speakers who have preceded me on this platform, I also consider it desirable to explain once more before this Assembly—the last before the Conference—views of my country on the essential points. The preparation and work of the Conference is bound to be facilitated if the opinions of the various Governments are explained now as clearly as possible. Why disguise the fact that divergent opinions still exist? Let me state frankly from the outset that I can associate myself with many of the views expressed here up to the present, but not with all of them.

I should like to refer to the speech of the Italian delegate. I listened with the greatest satisfaction to his statements of principle on the relations between the pacific settlement of disputes, disarmament and security. I cannot but entirely agree with M. Grandi when he said that the pacific settlement of disputes and disarmament together constitute the decisive means of strengthening security.

All efforts designed to secure the final and complete abolition of war are bound to remain incomplete until the League has extended the system of the pacific settlement of disputes so as to guarantee a just and equitable settlement of even the most serious conflicts in the political field.

As regards the importance of disarmament as a factor in increasing security, the statements made in the Assembly in 1928 concerning the relationship between the reduction of armaments and increased international security are as true now as they were then. The conviction that, not armaments, but disarmament furnishes the real element of security is the essential characteristic of the community of States organised into the League of Nations, as opposed to the old methods of international policy. The security of States is a guarantee of peace only if all States participate to the same degree. The Covenant knows only one kind of national security for all its Members. Security based on preponderance of armaments will always imply a state of insecurity and constitute a danger for the other countries which are less strongly armed. It engenders distrust and inevitably revives the idea of the race for armaments, the complete suppression of which was one of the main objects for which the League was created. The feeling of being left without military defences in the face of strongly armed neighbours weighs on a nation and cripples it throughout, as any German who has had an opportunity of observing the effects of that state of affairs on his nation will be prepared to tell you.

It has been pointed out more than once during the last few days that the protection the League affords to its Members will remain purely problematical until the coercive measures at its disposal have been determined by the extension of certain other parts of the Covenant, and until the application of those measures is clearly defined. Nevertheless, I still think that idea leads to false

conclusions. We cannot point to the keystone of this peace organisation until we have ensured, by the adjustment of armaments, that the League's executive power shall be brought to bear against any Member of the League, only on a paritative basis and not by means of the support of certain strongly armed States against others.

Disarmament, within the meaning of Article 8 of the Covenant is, therefore, a preliminary condition without which there can be no question of developing the coercive procedure of the League. At the Conference, the real question—the reduction of armaments—must not be subordinated to questions which cannot be settled until disarmament has become an accomplished fact.

I note with satisfaction that any idea of adjourning the Disarmament Conference has been definitely and categorically rejected by several speakers here. Only after long negotiations did the Council succeed, at the beginning of this year, in agreeing on a date for the Conference. We must at all costs abide by that decision. Our nations, which are impatiently awaiting the Conference, would not understand if any other course were adopted.

The task assigned to the Disarmament Conference is to effect a real and effective reduction of armaments. At the same time the method of achieving the final object enunciated in Article 8 of the Covenant must be clearly established.

In view of the tremendous inequality of armaments, mere limitation at the present level would be equivalent to sanctioning those inequalities, would be tantamount to the failure of the Conference. More than ten years ago, as the result of a lost war, the obligation to reduce their armaments to a minimum was imposed on certain States, including my own country. That obligation has long been fulfilled. I would refer here to the tables showing the position with regard to German armaments, which the German Government forwarded in reply to the League's questionnaire and which have been distributed during the last few days. Those tables show how far Germany has disarmed: she no longer possesses any heavy artillery, any military aircraft, any tanks or submarines. They even show that Germany has, in some respects, kept below the figures authorised by the Treaty of Versailles.

In this connection I must again emphasise one point of primary importance. The counterpart of the obligations assumed by Germany in 1919 is a formal undertaking on the part of the other States that disarmament by Germany should be simply a prelude to general disarmament by the other Powers. German disarmament was to be the first step in a scheme of general disarmament. Twelve years have elapsed since then, and Germany has been a Member of the League for five years, without that undertaking having been fulfilled. If the Disarmament Conference does now at last meet, the German people cannot be asked to agree to any act which would imply the sanctioning of the present armaments position. A large and effective reduction of the armaments of the strongly armed Powers thus constitutes for Germany a preliminary condition for the success of the Conference.

If the Disarmament Conference is to arrive at a result which is politically acceptable, it must put an end, as regards the limitation of armaments, to the existence of different rules of international law for those who were victorious and those who were defeated in the world war. Equality of all States must be the starting-point. There cannot be two standards of weights and measures in the community of nations. The same methods must apply to all as regards the reduction and limitation

of the various categories of armaments. Otherwise, the Convention will not fulfil the psychological and moral conditions necessary for the accession of the German people.

I was extremely interested in the suggestion put forward by the first delegate of Italy to the effect that, pending the Conference and while it is sitting, the States should declare their readiness to postpone the execution of new armaments programmes. The German Government, as it were, anticipated this suggestion in its statement on the occasion of the negotiations concerning President Hoover's plan. I entirely associate myself with M. Grandi's views, and am convinced that the idea of an armaments truce would improve the chances of success at the Conference and facilitate its work. I warmly congratulate M. Grandi on his idea, and trust that it may be possible for all the States concerned to put it into practice. I for my part regard it as self-evident that the mere limitation or armaments as thus contemplated must only be a temporary measure of limited duration.

I cannot conclude my remarks on disarmament without saying that I associate myself with Lord Cecil's appeal to Governments. Let us give our delegates to the Conference the fullest and widest powers. It is the maximum and not the minimum of disarmament that we must aim at in our negotiations. Only if the States — especially the powerfully armed States — make sacrifices in the interests of a courageous, resolute and far-sighted policy of disarmament and peace, can the world be delivered from the nightmare by which it is haunted and which is obstructing it in the performance of its manifold international functions.

It is not merely a matter of saving in the national budgets or of the degrees of security in the different countries. No; I repeat, the fate of the League itself hangs in the balance. If the League fails in this task, it will fall short of the nations' expectations and of our united hopes. The failure of the Disarmament Conference would rob the League of its moral authority in a world of political tension, which is crying out for a solution, a peaceful and harmonious solution.

41. — ENTRY OF MEXICO INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: ADOPTION OF A DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has noted with great satisfaction the acceptance by Mexico of the invitation which is unanimously sent to her to accede to the Covenant and become a Member of the League.

The General Committee has carefully considered the reply received from Mexico and has unanimously asked me to propose the following resolution :

The Assembly,

Having by its resolution of September 8th, 1931, considered as an omission, which should in justice be repaired, the fact that Mexico is not mentioned in the Annex of the Covenant enumerating the countries invited to accede thereto ;

Having unanimously decided to repair that omission and therefore to invite Mexico to accede to the Covenant and to lend its valuable support to the League as though it had been invited from the outset ;

Having by this exceptional invitation — which must not be regarded as establishing a precedent — formally indicated that it accepts as having been fulfilled from the outset in the case of Mexico the conditions governing the entry of States into the League as set forth in Article I of the Covenant ;

Noting the reply of the Government of Mexico dated September 10th, 1931, by which it agrees without reservation to enter the League on the terms announced ;

Declares Mexico to have become a Member of the League of Nations and invites the representatives of Mexico to take part as soon as possible in the work of the present session of the Assembly.

If no one has any observations to submit, I shall consider the draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

42. — (1) COLLABORATION OF WOMEN AND THE PRESS IN THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE: (2) METHOD OF ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL: REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE SPANISH AND BRITISH DELEGATIONS RESPECTIVELY.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that, at its meeting yesterday morning, it referred to the Agenda Committee for preliminary examination two draft resolutions submitted to it the day before — namely, the resolution proposed by the Spanish delegation on the collaboration of women and the Press in the organisation of peace, and that proposed by the British delegation on the method of election to the Council.

The Agenda Committee met yesterday afternoon and sent me its report, which reads as follows :

"The Agenda Committee first examined the draft resolution submitted to the Assembly by the British delegation at its meeting on Thursday September 10th, 1931 (morning), concerning the method of election to the Council.

"After an exchange of views, in which the British delegation took part, the Agenda Committee decided to propose to the Assembly that the draft resolution submitted by the British delegation should be included in the agenda of the present session, and should be referred to the First Committee for preliminary examination.

"The Agenda Committee then examined the draft resolution submitted to the Assembly by the Spanish delegation at its meeting on Thursday, September 10th, 1931 (morning), concerning the collaboration of women and the Press in the organisation of peace.

"It agreed to recommend to the Assembly that this draft resolution should also be included in the agenda of the present session, with a view to its examination by the Third Committee, the latter being left to decide whether paragraphs (a) and (b) should be examined by another Committee."

If no one has any observations to make, the proposals of the Agenda Committee will be adopted.

The Agenda Committee's proposals were adopted.

43. — GENERAL DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE DELEGATIONS OF DENMARK, NORWAY, THE NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN AND SWITZERLAND: REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : At yesterday morning's meeting of the Assembly, a draft resolution was submitted by the delegations of Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland concerning the reduction of armaments.

In accordance with precedent, I propose that the Assembly should refer this draft resolution for preliminary examination to the Agenda Committee, requesting the latter to submit suggestions as to the action to be taken on the proposal.

The President's proposal was adopted.

44. — EXAMINATION OF THE QUESTION OF THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PROTOCOL OF SEPTEMBER 14th, 1929, RELATING TO THE REVISION OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY THE DELEGATIONS OF SWEDEN, THE NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, JAPAN, DENMARK, SPAIN AND FINLAND ON FRIDAY: REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : As regards the draft resolution on the above question, I propose that this also should be referred to the Agenda Committee for preliminary examination and report to the Assembly.

The President's proposal was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

26 OCT 1931

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1931, AT 4 P.M.

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45.— REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The agenda consists of the continuation of the general discussion on the report on the work of the League since the eleventh session of the Assembly.

M. Ferrara, first delegate of Cuba, will address the Assembly.

M. Ferrara (Cuba) :

Translation : The inspiring words we have heard from this platform have certainly revived our hopes

just when we were most inclined to be depressed, but no expression of goodwill that is not followed by some plan of action can be of any practical value.

This is a serious time for us all, and we must not be afraid to speak the whole truth.

It is a sad thing for our civilisation — indeed, a crying scandal — that, while materials which represent power, such as petroleum and coal, cannot find markets, and essential universal foodstuffs such as wheat, sugar, cotton, coffee, live-stock, and the like are lost to the world, the greater part of the population, even in rich countries, lacks the bare necessities of life.

Whatever the explanation, this phenomenon is none the less a slur upon our international social code, a disgrace to our intelligence. The fact that we have to leave stores of wealth unutilised, and at the same time to see vital activities paralysed, must bring home to us the urgent necessity of completely readjusting the general policy of the whole world. We must change our methods and our exclusive systems if the present depression is not to become a veritable catastrophe.

The interdependence of interests and the ever closer relations between all countries resulting from the mechanical spirit of our age preclude all possibility of settling down on the ruins of others. Mankind is to-day one and indivisible, and lives, suffers and rejoices as if it were one person. Nations, great or small, rich or poor, near or far, depend on one another, in bad times as in good.

The present economic depression first began in Europe, and other countries thought they were immune ; but it gradually became general, attacking all countries, especially those which had thought themselves safe from any possibility of collapse. Cuba, for instance, which relying on the enormous riches of its soil and the industry of its people thought that it would never know another crisis, has been harder hit than any other nation. That part of America which is composed of States producing raw materials and foodstuffs has suffered

even more than Europe herself from the effects of the European depression.

It could not be otherwise. A European crisis was bound to be a world crisis.

Europe's participation in world trade is so considerable that it represents 52.2 per cent — that is, more than half the trade of the whole world. The United Kingdom and Germany together account for one-quarter of the export trade of the world, and are consequently the biggest buyers of raw materials and basic foodstuffs.

The fall in Europe's purchasing power has, owing to the direct interdependence of economic phenomena, caused greater injury to the American countries than to the European countries themselves.

Indeed, if we measure the consequences of the present depression in terms of the sudden and unexpected fall in the exports of the various countries, we find in Europe — taking the three principal exporting countries — between 1929 and 1930, decreases amounting to 22.4 per cent in the case of Great Britain, 11 per cent in that of Germany, and 15 per cent in that of France.

As regards extra-European countries, in my own country, which has been obliged by dire necessity to limit its output of sugar, exports have dropped by over 50 per cent, while those in the Argentine have fallen by nearly 48 per cent, in Chile by 42 per cent, and in Brazil by 32 per cent.

Everyone has his own diagnosis of the world depression. Without going into the complex arguments of economists, we are persuaded that, in its nature and its form, the present depression depends exclusively on political causes *lato sensu*, and that remedies must be sought in the political sphere.

No one can maintain that the last war increased the wealth of the European belligerent countries. Inflation gave an illusion of prosperity and created rapid fortunes, but the aggregate of wealth fell considerably. A respected French economist, M. Charles Gide, has shown that, after the war, death duties revealed a reduction, ranging from 20 to 40 per cent, in the values of inherited property. Death duties covering a long period are a sure index here; but, even if the significance of this percentage is under-estimated, it must be admitted that private wealth has undergone a general reduction in Europe.

It might have been thought that the natural consequence would have been a reduction in public expenditure. In point of fact, however, the budget of nearly every country has increased to an unprecedented extent. If account is taken of the expenditure of the State and of local authorities, a constant increase is observed even in the principal countries. If 100 is taken as representing the public expenditure in 1913, the present gold expenditure may be estimated at 250, even in the most moderate countries, where the increase has been attenuated by currency devaluation, but there are large countries which have increased their expenditure as much as 400 per cent.

All the Governments have thus been obliged to increase taxation proportionately. The taxes chiefly affected in nearly all countries are the indirect taxes, particularly Customs duties. All protectionist systems, even the most exaggerated, are defended on the ground of budget requirements.

Every protectionist measure has the effect of creating other protectionist measures in the country itself — for every industry asks to be protected — and also in foreign countries, which, in their turn, demand protection.

An old economist, in an oft-quoted phrase, once said: "Of all poisonous bites, the least painful is that of the asp, for it renders its victims

unconscious, and they pass from sleep to death." He added that indirect taxes and Customs duties were rather like the bite of the asp.

The world is full of asps at the present time. We allow ourselves to be put to sleep by a fatal illusion, and while the increase in public expenditure is increasing the burden of taxation and reducing the purchasing power of the nations, excessive protectionist measures restrict international trade and suffocate the very industries they were designed to protect.

The restoration of confidence, the reduction of public expenditure and tariff reduction, with the consequent stimulus to trade, are essential conditions for world economic recovery. We therefore feel that the remedy lies mainly in the hands of statesmen.

If monetary causes do exist, those causes, it must be remembered, are also bound up with political considerations. It is obvious that payments cannot be balanced in countries which have to increase their public expenditure and at the same time to restrict exports. There is the old vicious circle. If there are no exports and industry is paralysed, unemployment in its turn entails further expenditure and fresh crises.

Among the countless blunders of post-war policy may be numbered the introduction by creditor countries of the most extreme protectionist measures, regardless of the fact that the debtor nations cannot even pay their debts except from their surplus exports.

Some regard the present crisis as a capitalist crisis, and many think that capitalism is on its trial. Frankly, the very opposite appears to me to be the case. The present depression is the consequence, not of our form of production, but of the difficulties placed by States in the way of the circulation of wealth.

We may talk of the crisis of a system, but it is not that of capitalism, which has always developed in conditions of full commercial liberty; it is rather a crisis of Government intervention.

On statesmen devolves the great task of bringing the economic world back to normal conditions, of re-instating in public life the great principles evolved through long experience, and of liberating us from the present political habit of living from hand to mouth by means of temporary expedients.

The tyrant Petrucci of Siena often used to repeat, during the Renaissance, a remark made by the Emperor Frederick, to the effect that "the times are superior to the brains".

Posterity must not say of us that our brains are inferior to the times in which we live.

The President :

Translation · Mr. Binchy, delegate of the Irish Free State, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Binchy (Irish Free State) :

If there is one thing which emerges from the Secretary-General's report, it is the extent to which the League has become a part of the organisation of the international society of our time. Reading through this report, it is difficult to think of any important field of international relationship in which the League does not perform some function or other, and in many respects these functions are such that they could not be performed by any other agency and they are, therefore, of the utmost value.

I have nothing to say here with regard to the substance of the particular matters dealt with in the Secretary-General's report. Many of them doubtless call for detailed and careful consideration, but that, I take it, is not the purpose of this

debate. That is rather the task of the various Committees to which the different sections of the report will be referred in due course, and we shall have an opportunity later of reviewing the work of those Committees.

To my mind, the peculiar function of the Assembly is to lay down the general directives upon which all the separate activities of the League and its organs should proceed. I think, therefore, that it may not be unfitting for me to conclude this general debate in which we have to view all the work of the League, not as a number of separate activities, but as a single whole, by asking the question whether any tendencies and developments are emerging which are incompatible with the principles on which the League has been founded and whether action by the League is called for to direct and control these tendencies in the interests of the general welfare of the world. An examination of this kind seems to me to be peculiarly necessary at this particular time.

During the past year, the States of the world have been called upon to deal with problems of grave difficulty and urgency. We have had an economic depression of unprecedented intensity and duration which has given rise to new and unexampled difficulties in the sphere of international finance and commerce. During the year, also, we have been called upon to deal with the problems arising from the work of final preparation for the general Disarmament Conference, and other problems have, in addition, presented themselves, some of them hardly of less importance than those to which I have referred.

National public opinion still tends to regard the very existence of an international problem as a reproach to the League of Nations. That is obviously unfair, but it is a fact, and it is a fact that requires to be emphasised, inasmuch as the existence of the problems to which I have referred tends to create a pessimistic frame of mind towards the League of Nations and may produce a diminution in that degree of public support on which the efficacy of the League rests. I mention it here to show that the very existence of the League of Nations depends to a large extent on its ability to reduce the likelihood of these vital problems arising, as well as upon its ability to make rapid and effective contributions to their solution if and when they do arise.

I have no intention of initiating a discussion on events which we have left behind us, but I do think that we must make an earnest and deliberate effort now to safeguard the position of the League. For that reason, we must consider whether the organisations and methods which we have evolved are effective in the circumstances to which the events of the last few years have brought us.

Let me take first the efforts of the League to deal with economic problems. In the year 1927, the World Economic Conference was held. That Conference proceeded on the principle of universality; its conclusions were based upon the principle that the economic difficulties of the time could be regarded as a problem which lent itself to treatment by the immediate worldwide application of a uniform remedy.

In 1929, when the League came to make provision for carrying out the recommendation of the World Economic Conference that the States of the world should proceed to a lowering of excessive tariff barriers by means of collective action, it proceeded upon the same principle. That recommendation was referred to a Conference to which all the States of the world without distinction were invited. When that Conference met, however, it assumed, as if by a process of natural selection, a definitely Continental character. The problems themselves

which the Conference was convened to consider were regarded as being of a regional, and not of a universal, character; and, tacitly, both the States which were represented at that Conference and those which were not appeared by their action to lend colour to the idea that the solution of economic difficulties which are peculiar to, or which specially affect, particular States can most usefully, in the first instance, be sought by the collaboration of the States concerned. After that Conference, the efforts of the League to promote concerted economic action among States became more and more efforts to promote that action among the States of Europe.

The next stage in the development of this phase was the publication of the French memorandum of May 1st, 1930. The broad principle of that memorandum was that the geographical position of the States in this part of the world creates among them a certain community of interests, and, as suggested in the memorandum, a Commission was set up to deal with the peculiar difficulties and problems of Europe, as a first step towards an economic solution on a wider basis. For the past twelve months, that Commission has been considering European economic problems. It has tried to approach them as a problem susceptible of solution by the immediate application of a uniform remedy equally applicable to all the States of Europe. Within the limits of Europe itself, it tried to preserve the principle of universality.

But, while the European Commission was engaged upon that task, it was being outstripped by events which were taking place outside the Commission, and even outside the League itself. In different parts of Europe, individual States were coming together and, without reference to the League, were starting to deal with difficulties on a regional basis.

A year's intensive effort to solve European economic problems on uniform principles of general application throughout Europe has not achieved the necessary measure of success. In the meantime, the new tendency in the direction of regional arrangements has been growing. No doubt there is much to be said both for and against this new development. It has already become manifest that opinions with regard to it are sharply divided.

It cannot be ignored that this new tendency, as followed up to the present in the economic field, in the absence of some effective method of League co-ordination, has given rise to alarm in certain countries whose trade and commerce may be prejudiced as a result of regional agreements which have been, or are likely to be, concluded and that there is great danger of the growth of an atmosphere of suspicion and ill feeling between nations which would be fatal to international co-operation and peaceful economic progress. Nor can we afford to forget that rivalry and jealousy which have their origins in the economic field have invariably tended in time to have reactions in the political relations between States, with results which it is unnecessary to emphasise.

It therefore behoves us to give immediate and earnest consideration to this movement towards regional arrangements with a view to the prevention of the growth of international ill feeling and to the preservation of the prestige of the League. We may not like this movement; we may feel that it is contrary to all the principles which this Assembly has been affirming and re-affirming since the League was established. But it is clear that we cannot ignore it. And once we recognise its existence as a fact, can we deny that safeguards must be sought which will secure that regional and fractional agreements shall be integrated into the general system in such a way that the dangers feared may be averted?

I think that our experience of the problem of disarmament leads us to similar conclusions. It is manifest that the difficulties of the individual State in connection with disarmament lie mainly in the limited problem of its own security. In other words, the difficulties which lie in the way of disarmament are largely of a regional character. Events have shown that disarmament is not a single general problem: that it is constituted by a large number of special limited problems, and the measure of success hitherto achieved in this field has resulted from a recognition of that fact. In the case of disarmament, as in the case of the economic problem, while we here in the League have been attempting to build from above, individual States and groups of States have started to construct from below.

I am not going to multiply examples of this development, this tendency of States to take action in groups outside the auspices of the League. Its existence has been frankly and fully recognised, both in the discussions in this Assembly and elsewhere. May not this tendency be to some extent due to a certain lack of harmony between the exact nature of the international problems with which we have been dealing and the methods which we have been employing in our endeavours to solve them? If that is so, then I think that the situation calls for appropriate action on the part of the League.

In the first place, let me refer now to the danger of condemning too hastily and without qualification the tendency to which I have referred. If the methods which we have been following here, the method of universal solutions, the process of building from above rather than from below, had achieved a greater measure of success, we would, I think, have been justified in regarding innovations with suspicion. But, taking things as they are, we must be very careful lest, by pronouncing too hasty a judgment, we should debar ourselves from the use of methods of international collaboration which, properly conceived and directed, by the League, might be fruitful in their results. I think we must be doubly careful in the present case, because the development to which I have referred is a natural growth, and natural growths of this kind usually have their roots very deep down in the structure of society. Society, whether national or international, has a way of devising new means to provide for its needs.

The League is not at this moment called upon either to approve or to condemn this development. But we must accept it as a fact, and I think we must go further and accept it as evidence of other facts which we have hitherto taken into account either insufficiently or not at all. We must definitely realise now that the structure of international society is not what we have hitherto assumed it to be in the hypothesis on which we have proceeded. International society cannot be regarded as being composed solely of individual States. It also comprises a number of larger or smaller international societies. It is necessary to take account of this fact in devising means for dealing with international problems. While there can be no question of abandoning the ideal of universality upon which this League of Nations was founded, we must recognise that this ideal may have to be obtained progressively. There may be intermediate stages; what cannot be accomplished in one step may be accomplished in two or more.

Let me remind you that there is nothing in the Covenant to prevent regional combinations the objects of which are not inconsistent with its terms. Let me remind you, too, that universality is important, not as the means, but as the end. Accordingly, the task before us is, not to approve or condemn the

tendency which I have described, but to recognise its existence and to endeavour to control it with the purpose of ensuring that it will further the objects which we Members of the League have in common. This I consider to be one of the vital problems confronting the League. My Government believes that the League must evolve a technique which will enable it to exercise a sufficient influence upon these groupings, their formation and subsequent conduct, to ensure an ultimate harmony between their objects and the objects which we have pursued in common here for the past twelve years.

If the League cannot do this, then I fear very much that its main activities will be narrowed and that much of the effort which we have expended here for the past twelve years will have been in vain.

I do not propose to attempt to define at this stage a League technique of the kind that my Government considers essential. What is required is something which will enable the League of Nations — and by the League in this connection I mean the Assembly, the Council, the Secretariat, the technical organisations: in fact, all the League's executive machinery — something which will enable the League to perform substantially the same functions and to exert substantially the same measure of directing influence in the case of these regional arrangements as it has performed and exerted in the case of all the international arrangements which have been negotiated or concluded under the auspices of the League since its establishment.

If the League of Nations can successfully evolve a technique of this kind, I do not think that the tendency towards regional groupings will injure the prestige of the League or imperil the attainment of the objects which we have put before it. The ultimate responsibility for the development and operation of such a technique must, however, rest upon the States which compose the League. It is among the Members of the League that this tendency has grown up, so that we ourselves can make its effect upon the League what we will.

If the Members of the League desire to conclude regional commercial conventions and regional political treaties, they should be prepared to abide by the letter and by the spirit of their obligations under the Covenant and the declarations which they have made here. They should be prepared to consider the general rules under which regional agreements should be negotiated. They should even be prepared to accept a certain measure of control by the League — in regard to the principles, at least, in accordance with which such arrangements should be concluded. If the Members of the League of Nations are not prepared to do this: if groups and blocks of States are formed outside the auspices of the League; if the States concerned take up the attitude that the internal arrangements of those groups and their policy towards other States are solely their own concern outside the jurisdiction of the League and its organs; if in this way groups of States are formed within which and between which the principles of the Covenant are a dead letter, then I think the League will have become merely an empty framework outside of which will be found the realities of international life.

If, on the other hand, the Members of the League are prepared to adapt and to bring within a universal framework the methods which they have devised to meet their particular international needs, the League of Nations will have become the real forum of the world.

The President:

Translation: As the list of speakers is now exhausted, I shall close the discussion on the

work of the League of Nations since the last Assembly.

I should like to thank the delegations who have been good enough to accede to my requests. Thanks to their zeal, we have been able to terminate the discussion in the space of five days, at the same time leaving two afternoons free for meetings of Committees.

**46. — GENERAL DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE:
DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE
DELEGATIONS OF DENMARK, NORWAY,
THE NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN AND
SWITZERLAND: REPORT OF THE AGENDA
COMMITTEE.**

The President :

Translation : The Agenda Committee has met this afternoon, under the chairmanship of Dr. Hyder. It examined the draft resolution relating to the reduction of armaments submitted by the delegations of Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland at the meeting of the Assembly on Friday, September 11th. It decided to propose to the Assembly that the draft resolution should be included in the agenda of the present session, and referred to the Third Committee for consideration. If no one has any objection, I shall consider this proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

**47. — EXAMINATION OF THE QUESTION OF
THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PROTO-
COL OF SEPTEMBER 14th, 1929, RELATING
TO THE REVISION OF THE STATUTE OF
THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNA-
TIONAL JUSTICE: PROPOSAL SUBMITTED
BY THE DELEGATIONS OF SWEDEN, THE
NETHERLANDS, NORWAY, JAPAN, DEN-
MARK, SPAIN AND FINLAND ON FRIDAY:
REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.**

The President :

Translation : The Agenda Committee also examined the proposal concerning the entry into force of the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, relating to the revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, submitted by the delegations of Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway, Japan, Denmark, Spain and Finland, and decided to propose to the Assembly that this proposal also should be placed on the agenda, and referred to the First Committee for consideration.

If no one has any objection I shall consider this proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

The President :

Translation : I should like to accord my warm thanks to the Chairman of the Agenda Committee for his prompt compliance with my request, which has enabled us to take a decision at the present meeting.

The Assembly rose at 5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH, 1931, AT 3.30 P.M.

CONTENTS :

48. LIMITATION OF THE EXPENDITURE OF THE LEAGUE.
Adoption of a Draft Resolution submitted by the Fourth Committee.
49. ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

President : M. TITULESCO.

48. — LIMITATION OF THE EXPENDITURE OF THE LEAGUE : ADOPTION OF A DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE FOURTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The Chairman of the Fourth Committee has asked me to place on the agenda of the present meeting a draft resolution on which he considers it desirable that the Assembly should express an opinion without delay, in order that the Committee may take account of it in their work.

The draft resolution which has been distributed to the delegations reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Being convinced that it is imperative not further to increase the budget of the League for 1932, which will have to provide for the expenses of the International Disarmament Conference, and hoping that it will even be possible to reduce the draft budget ;

Makes a strong appeal to its Committees to follow the principles of economy dictated by present circumstances ;

Requests these Committees to limit and, if possible, to reduce to the indispensable the programme of work to be undertaken in 1932, and especially to abstain, as far as practicable, from making recommendations which might involve avoidable expenditure.

I will ask the Rapporteur of the Committee, M. Politis, who is also its Chairman, to explain to the Assembly the considerations which led the Fourth Committee to submit this draft resolution to us.

M. Politis (Greece), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Fourth Committee :

Translation : On behalf of the Fourth Committee, I have the honour to propose to the Assembly the adoption of the draft resolution distributed to day.

The Fourth Committee, which is responsible for the sound administration of our finances, has felt strongly and unanimously, from the outset, that, at a time when the world economic and financial crisis is forcing all the States to observe the strictest economy, it is the League's duty to follow their example. That duty is the more urgent in view of the fact that, owing to the convening of the Disarmament Conference, the coming financial year will involve extraordinary expenditure to the amount of approximately four million Swiss francs or, nearly one-fifth of our normal budget.

Economy has already been aimed at in the framing of the draft budget. The most laudable attempts have been made to reduce expenses. The Supervisory Commission has, nevertheless, had to make further reductions, and the Fourth Committee in its turn will have to examine the possibility of additional restrictions.

The Fourth Committee feels, however, that the same spirit of economy should guide the work of the other Assembly Committees, and that this point should be brought to their notice so that, without condemning the League to stagnation, or even to an undue slackening of its activities, they may shape those activities as far as possible in such a way as to avoid expenditure which is not indispensable. The Fourth Committee accordingly asks the Assembly to request the various Committees to be guided by a spirit of economy and to limit, and if possible reduce to the indispensable

minimum, the programme of work for next year, abstaining more particularly from making recommendations which might involve avoidable expenditure.

The Fourth Committee is satisfied that the Assembly will share its anxiety in this matter and will adopt the draft resolution which it now submits as a question of urgency and without reservation. May I add that it hopes that, in order the better to emphasise the significance of your approval, that approval will be unanimous.

The President :

Translation : If no delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Fourth Committee's draft resolution unanimously adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

The President :

Translation : I propose to communicate to the chairmen of the other five Committees the reasons which led the Fourth Committee to submit its proposal to the Assembly.

49. — ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the election of three non-permanent Members of the Council.

Following the practice of my predecessors in this office, I would remind you of the provisions of the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, making rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

Article 1, paragraph 1, reads as follows :

"The Assembly shall each year, in the course of its ordinary session, elect three non-permanent Members of the Council. They shall be elected for a term commencing immediately on their election and ending on the day of the elections held three years later by the Assembly."

Before opening the ballot, I would again remind you of the provisions of Rule 22(a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, which apply in this case.

The rule reads as follows :

"1. The Members whose representatives are to sit on the Council as non-permanent Members of that body shall be selected by the Assembly by secret ballot.

"2. 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."

"3. 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.

"4. 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 computing the absolute majority prescribed for the first and second ballots, I think the Assembly will agree with me that, as at previous sessions, we should here, by analogy, apply the rule contained in the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, concerning "the rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility".

This resolution lays down that the Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting papers deposited, blank or spoilt votes being deducted.

In electing the non-permanent Members of the Council, blank or spoilt voting papers must not be counted when the number of votes is reckoned. The absolute majority should be calculated on the basis of the total number of valid voting papers.

If no one has any remarks to make, I shall assume that the Assembly, adopting the precedents of previous sessions, considers that this practice should be maintained. (*Agreed.*)

I would emphasise the point that, to be valid, voting papers must bear the names of States and not the names of representatives of States. Further, any voting paper containing more than three names will be void.

May I ask Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, first delegate of the British Empire, and Dr. Curtius, first delegate of Germany, to come to the platform and act as tellers?

(*Viscount Cecil of Chelwood and Dr. Curtius took their places on the platform as tellers.*)

The President :

Translation : We will now proceed to ballot by roll-call.

(*The ballot was taken.*)

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----|
| Number of votes cast | 50 |
| Voting papers blank or spoilt | 2 |
| Voting papers valid | 48 |
| Absolute majority | 25 |

The votes obtained by the States are as follows :

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| China | 48 |
| Panama | 45 |
| Spain | 43 |
| Hungary | 2 |
| Mexico | 2 |
| Portugal | 2 |
| Belgium | 1 |
| Bulgaria | 1 |

I declare that China, Panama and Spain, which have obtained an absolute majority, are duly elected non-permanent Members of the Council for a period of three years. I have pleasure in offering my congratulations to those States, and I trust that their collaboration on the Council of the League may be most fruitful.

I wish also to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

The Assembly rose at 4.45 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TWELFTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD, 1931, AT 10 A.M.

CONTENTS :

50. PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF STATES NOT REPRESENTED IN THE ASSEMBLY.
Proposals of the Third Committee and of the General Committee of the Assembly.
51. CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES.
Second Report of the Committee on Credentials.
52. WELCOME TO THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF MEXICO.
53. ERECTION OF A MONUMENT IN THE CITY OF SANTO DOMINGO, CAPITAL OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC (ISLAND OF SANTO DOMINGO OR HAITI), TO THE MEMORY OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.
Adoption of a Draft Resolution presented by the Delegations of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.
54. PENAL AND PENITENTIARY QUESTIONS : IMPROVEMENTS IN PENAL ADMINISTRATION.
Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolution.
55. TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS.
Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolutions.
56. CHILD WELFARE.
Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolutions.
57. TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN.
Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolution.
58. PROTECTION OF MINORITIES.
Report of the Sixth Committee.
59. MANDATES.
Report of the Sixth Committee.
Resolution.

President : M. TITULESCO.

50. — PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF STATES NOT REPRESENTED IN THE ASSEMBLY : PROPOSALS OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE AND OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : Before inviting you to discuss the agenda, I feel it my duty to inform you of certain measures which I have taken, with the consent of the General Committee, since the last plenary meeting of the Assembly.

At six o'clock on the evening of Saturday, September 19th, I received from M. Munch, Chairman of the Third Committee, a letter stating that the Third Committee thought it desirable to invite the representatives of countries which had taken part in the work of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission together with the countries invited to the General Disarmament Conference to assist, in an advisory capacity, in the Third Committee's discussions on the resolution relating to an armaments truce. The following were the countries concerned : Afghanistan, the Argentine Republic, Brazil, Costa Rica, Egypt, Ecuador, Salvador, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and United States of America.

The Chairman of the Third Committee left it to the President of the Assembly to decide on the procedure to be followed in forwarding these invitations, whether through the Council or through any other channel.

Being anxious to safeguard the Assembly's prerogatives, I felt that, when the Assembly was sitting in plenary session, it was not for the Council to forward an invitation extended by the Assembly, but that the latter should take such measures as might be necessary through its own organs.

In view of the urgency of the Third Committee's request and in consideration also of the fact that

that Committee had been unanimous and that its views were thus representative of all the delegations to the Assembly, I felt that it would not perhaps be expedient to convene a plenary meeting of the Assembly, as that is always bound to involve some delay.

I thought that, with the assistance of the General Committee, I myself might come to a decision on behalf of the Assembly and take the necessary measures. This I accordingly did. I convened a meeting of the General Committee that same evening and consulted it as regards the procedure to be followed and the other relevant questions arising out of the Third Committee's unanimous suggestion.

After examining these various questions, the General Committee of the Assembly adopted the following resolution :

" The General Committee of the Assembly,

" Having taken note of the request formulated by the Third Committee to the effect that the States not represented at the Assembly which participated in the work of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission, together with the States invited to the General Disarmament Conference, should be requested to participate, in an advisory capacity, in its discussions on the draft resolution concerning an armaments truce ;

" Notes that the President of the Assembly, having regard to the urgency of the matter and in view of the decision of the Third Committee, and especially of the unanimity of that decision, can, in agreement with the General Committee, take a decision in the matter without further procedure ;

" Considers that steps should be taken to carry the Third Committee's proposal into effect.

" Requests the President of the Assembly to take the necessary steps with a view to giving immediate effect to the present decision and to inform the Assembly of his action in the matter at its next plenary meeting "

Acting on this resolution, I immediately addressed on Saturday night to the ten States I have mentioned an invitation to take part in the work of the Third Committee and, if possible, to appoint representatives for that purpose who would be able to come to Geneva at once.

I have received acceptances from Costa Rica, the United States of America, Egypt and Turkey, and the representatives of those countries, who have already arrived — or are about to arrive — at Geneva, will take part in the Third Committee's proceedings.

The Assembly will welcome with feelings of satisfaction these representatives of countries which are desirous of collaborating with it in the great work of disarmament. The Argentine Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, both of whom replied sympathetically to the invitation addressed to them, stated that, owing to the shortness of the time at their disposal and to material circumstances, it would not be possible for them to appoint representatives. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, whose reply has been published in the *Assembly Journal*, states that it would willingly associate itself, subject to certain conditions, with an armaments truce.

Such are the steps I took as President, in pursuance of the Third Committee's request, and such are the results that have followed. I was anxious to inform the Assembly in detail, in order that it might feel quite sure that its prerogatives have been jealously safeguarded.

The Assembly approved the action taken by its General Committee.

51. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES : SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

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

As delegations have been informed through the *Journal of the Assembly*, the Committee on Credentials was requested by me as President to examine the messages accrediting the representatives of the United States of Mexico to the Assembly.

M. de Agüero y Bethancourt, Chairman of the Committee on Credentials, will address the Assembly.

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

Translation : The Committee appointed by the Assembly to examine the credentials of delegates met again at the offices of the League Secretariat at 4 p.m. on September 15th, in order to ascertain whether the representatives of Mexico were duly accredited to take part in the work of the Assembly.

The Secretary-General of the League handed to us the following telegram which he had received on September 14th from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United States of Mexico :

" I have the honour to inform you that the President of the Republic has appointed as delegates of Mexico to the League of Nations :

" M. Genaro ESTRADA, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs ;

" M. Emilio PORTES GIL, Minister of the Republic in France, former President of the Republic ;

" M. Fernando GONZALES ROA, delegate on various international Committees.

" As substitute delegates :

" M. Eduardo SUAREZ, Head of the Legal Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs ;

" M. Manuel GOMEZ MORIN, former Under-Secretary for Finance ;

" M. Alfonso REYES, Ambassador of the Republic in Brazil.

" As Secretary-General :

" M. Salvador MARTINEZ DE ALVA, Director of the the Mexican Office at Geneva.

" And as Secretary *per interim* :

" M. Alfredo MARTINEZ BACA. "

" As the delegates now in America cannot come to Geneva immediately owing to the distance and the shortness of time available, M. Portes Gil will represent Mexico at the present Assembly.

" I have the honour to ask you, Sir, and through you, the League of Nations, to note this communication and to accord your assistance to the Mexican delegation ; I would take this opportunity of assuring you of the sincere and constant co-operation of Mexico and of her representatives "

After examining this telegraphic communication, the Committee is of opinion that the representatives of the United States of Mexico are duly accredited.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has heard the report of the Committee on Credentials.

If no one has any observations to submit, I shall consider that report adopted.

The report of the Committee on Credentials was adopted.

52. — WELCOME TO THE DELEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF MEXICO.

The President :

Translation : It is my pleasant duty to invite the Mexican delegation to come and take the places reserved for it in this Assembly.

(The Mexican delegation took their seats in the Assembly.)

To-day, for the first time, the representatives of the United States of Mexico have taken their place among us, and it is with deep and sincere pleasure that I offer them, on behalf of the Assembly, a most cordial welcome.

The fifty-three nations Members of the League assembled here have made a spontaneous gesture, an unprecedented gesture, but also an exceptional gesture. Desirous of repairing what they considered an injustice, they invited the noble Mexican nation to join them, to associate in their work and thus to extend still further that great network of international goodwill which, under the aegis of the League, to-day covers almost the whole globe.

Mexico understood the value and the significance of the Assembly's gesture, and, actuated by a broad spirit of collaboration, responded readily to our appeal.

It is a deep pleasure to us all to see an increase in the number of States represented at Geneva. The Assembly has always felt that the object of the authors of the Covenant would never be fully attained until the League comprised all the nations of the world, seeking in peaceful co-operation instead of by force ways and means of meeting the ever-growing difficulties with which the whole of mankind has to contend.

Mexico's contribution to the League will be characterised by the two essential qualities of her proud and noble race—courage and loyalty. Of these she has already given us proof. In responding to our appeal, in showing that she is not daunted by the heavy tasks imposed upon the League to-day, Mexico has manifested her determination to battle courageously in our ranks against the difficulties of the present hour.

In unreservedly accepting the obligations of the Covenant, Mexico has shown her loyalty towards all the nations of the world; and by her acceptance of our invitation, too, she swells the ranks of the Latin-American delegations, who are so deeply valued by the League because their untiring work and ready co-operation are derived from the greatest treasures of the human heart—idealism and disinterestedness.

The Mexican delegates will see how great a place Latin America holds among us. We are happy to make that place still larger to-day, and we are always waiting to enlarge it again and make room for other American States whose absence, doubtless only temporary, has not abated the goodwill we feel for them.

As President of the Assembly may I add that it is not only the States that we welcome here but also their representatives themselves. The fact that the Geneva spirit has come into being and has vanquished so much opposition is largely due—there can be no doubt of it—to the strong personal friendship which unites the statesmen who are called upon to co-operate closely in carrying out the League's aims. That friendship, too, can always be extended.

The Mexican delegates may be sure that it will be extended to them as to others, and they will find us ever ready to show, in the daily work we shall henceforth do together, that we hold them in the same warm regard that I have voiced in welcoming them to-day.

The first delegate of Mexico, M. Portes Gil, has asked to speak. I invite him to address the Assembly.

M. Portes Gil (Mexico) :

Translation : On behalf of my country I should like to thank the President of the Assembly and the delegates for their generous welcome to Mexico. You may be assured that Mexico values and appreciates the cordiality with which she has been asked to become a Member of the League of Nations and the very satisfactory terms of that invitation.

In order to convey her gratitude in a practical and useful manner, Mexico offers her services to the League in a spirit of co-operation and goodwill, with a view to the attainment of the ideals of understanding and international collaboration which the League is pursuing.

The fact that Mexico has for years endeavoured to obtain for her working classes really humane conditions of life constitutes the best of guarantees that we have come here inspired with every intention of promoting the welfare of mankind and thereby achieving world peace.

Mexico has accepted the invitation to join this organisation with a feeling of pride and confidence, convinced as she is that her loyal efforts will help to facilitate the tremendous task which the League has undertaken.

The friendly terms in which Mexico was addressed by the representatives of the different countries which submitted and supported the motion and the unanimous approval of this Assembly have largely contributed to efface any memory of the situation which existed before to-day.

I consider that the delegates have thereby earned not only the gratitude of Mexico, which I have great pleasure in voicing here, but the gratitude of the League, for which they have gained an additional Member and one which—I may be allowed to proclaim it here with just pride—will work with zeal and enthusiasm and bring its disinterested contribution to the attainment of the League's ideal.

53. — ERECTION OF A MONUMENT IN THE CITY OF SANTO DOMINGO, CAPITAL OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC (ISLAND OF SANTO DOMINGO OR HAITI) TO THE MEMORY OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS: ADOPTION OF A DRAFT RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY THE DELEGATIONS OF BOLIVIA, CHILE, COLOMBIA, CUBA, THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, GUATEMALA, HAITI, PANAMA, PARAGUAY, PERU, URUGUAY AND VENEZUELA.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is a draft resolution concerning the erection of a monument in the city of Santo Domingo to the memory of Christopher Columbus. This draft resolution, which was presented to the Assembly by the delegations of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, has been duly communicated to the Assembly and reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Views with entire satisfaction the happy initiative of the Government of the Dominican Republic, adopted officially and unanimously by the twenty-one sovereign States of the New World represented at the fifth and sixth International Pan-American Conferences held in Santiago de Chili and Havana, to erect, in the city of Santo Domingo, capital of the Dominican Republic (Island of Santo Domingo or Haiti), at one time the centre of the discovery and colonisation of the meridional hemisphere, a lighthouse monument to perpetuate the sentiments of admiration and gratitude of humanity towards Christopher Columbus, the discoverer of the New World and one of the greatest benefactors of mankind;

Considering that the great lighthouse monument will be raised within the central airport of the Antilles and that it will be the guide to sea and air navigation for the greater part of the Atlantic and the Caribbean Sea, a circumstance which places the proposed work within the aims of the League of Nations;

Considering also that the above-mentioned first universal homage to the man who did so much to extend our knowledge of the globe, will house in adjacent palaces a library and museum of documents relating to Columbus, and other sources of intellectual culture, at the disposal of humanity, thus coming within the intellectual co-operation activities of the League;

Expresses a vote of deep sympathy with the happy initiative of the Dominican Republic, an initiative which, besides being an act of homage due to such a genius as Columbus and such a nation as Spain, creates and will sustain perpetually around it elements propitious to the progress and development of international communications and, consequently, propitious to the development of goodwill between the States of both continents and the perfection of human intercourse.

As soon as I received the draft resolution, I submitted it to the Agenda Committee, which, after examining it, proposed in its report that the draft should be included in the agenda of the present session but left it to the General Committee to decide upon the procedure to be followed for submitting it to the Assembly.

In agreement with the General Committee I shall, if no one has any objection, propose that this draft resolution be adopted unanimously. The Assembly would thus be expressing its appreciation of the happy initiative of the Dominican Republic, which constitutes a just tribute to the genius of Columbus himself, and at the same time creates and will immortalise factors favourable to the progress and development of international communications and hence of goodwill between the States of the two continents and calculated to assist the perfecting of human relations.

The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

54. — PENAL AND PENITENTIARY QUESTIONS: IMPROVEMENTS IN PENAL ADMINISTRATION: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Fifth Committee on improvements in penal administration (document A.70.1931.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Alá, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and M. Pella, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Pella will address the Assembly.

M. Pella (Roumania), Rapporteur :

Translation : In submitting to you the results of the Fifth Committee's work on the problem of penal administration, I think it unnecessary, particularly in a matter which concerns the humanising of the system for the enforcement of penalties, to inflict a penalty on you by reading a somewhat lengthy report.

I shall confine myself therefore to a short summary of the more important questions dealt with by the Fifth Committee. The draft resolution unanimously adopted by the Committee dealt with three problems — namely, the progressive unification of penal law, co-operation between States for the prevention and suppression of crime and, lastly, the execution of the penalty and preventive measures of detention, or, more precisely, the question of the treatment of prisoners.

As regards the first problem, certain delegates pointed out that the activity of the League in this domain had already been most productive. The Conventions for the suppression of international offences such as traffic in women and children, slavery, traffic in drugs, obscene publications and, quite recently, counterfeiting currency have all tended to show that States were desirous of presenting a united front against these crimes by means of the unification of the indictments in the laws of the different countries and of the fundamental principles for the suppression of the crimes in question.

These international conventions were framed or completed under the auspices of the League. Further, more numerous draft conventions have been examined by the League, and I might mention by way of example those dealing with the forging of cheques, shares, bonds and other documents of value.

In view of the importance of the work already done by the League and by various independent institutions, the Fifth Committee considered that the best method to follow would be to ask certain specially qualified organisations in what manner the assistance of the League of Nations might be of value with the object of achieving such unification.

Since I maintained in the Fifth Committee the need for the progressive unification of penal law, I desire, in my own personal capacity, to state that there is no question of the unification of the criminal law of States as a whole. There is no question of attacking and abolishing, through international unification, institutions which are deeply rooted in the life of each nation and which have contributed, in all countries, to the development of criminal law. The progressive unification of penal law must aim at establishing certain fundamental principles for the suppression of crime; even when there is a question of uniformity as regards such principles, which may have a doctrinal significance, unification can of course be attained first of all in matters in which they have an international application — for instance, in the case of international crimes and offences.

It is important, therefore, to select these questions carefully, beginning with those in which international unification appears to be most urgent and most practicable. In other words, progress might be made wherever the way has already been prepared by international conventions signed and ratified by a number of States.

Again, consideration could certainly be given to regional unification in regard to questions which, although not yet ripe for uniform solution in the

legislation of all countries, nevertheless admit of unification as between such countries as have acquired common elements of civilisation: I have in mind the common elements resulting from community of race or from the common circumstances which attended the historical development of certain nations.

Such elements, moreover, have had a great influence in the formation of a legal mentality to some extent common to the nations in question. Unification of this kind, more restricted in space, but at the same time more extensive in its scope, also represents one of the surest means of preparing the ground for the progressive unification of penal law.

The solution of these problems in the internal penal law of States will, moreover, be greatly facilitated by a general phenomenon which cannot be disputed — the influence of the international spirit on the juridical conceptions of the civilised nations, the effect being in some degree to internationalise municipal law.

As regards the second problem — international co-operation for the combating of crime — this is obviously the concern not of municipal but of international penal law. Although incontestably crime in general must no longer be regarded as a legal entity, but rather as a pathological phenomenon of a social nature, it is evident that we must endeavour to perfect rules of international penal law, as constituting the foundation of international co-operation for the repression of crime.

The work of certain Conferences or Committees of the League, in regard to extradition, the communication of judicial and extra-judicial documents in criminal matters, and international police co-operation, prove that it is no new problem that is being submitted to the League.

In this sphere, as in that of the progressive unification of penal law, the Fifth Committee proposes that the Assembly should obtain the opinion of certain organisations as regards the manner in which the assistance of the League might be of value and, when the replies of these organisations have been received, that the States Members should be asked whether they wish the League to lend its assistance in the solution of such questions also.

The third problem dealt with in the draft resolution is the execution of the penalty and preventive measures.

In this connection, as the report states, a penalty can no longer in these days be regarded merely as the infliction of pain or as a means of expiating a crime. Apart from quite exceptional cases, when the criminal has to be eliminated, a penalty is to be looked on as a means of readapting the offender to social life; as regards the execution of the penalty, in certain countries too much room is left for arbitrary administrative methods; in other words, the execution of penal sentences entailing deprivation of liberty is, as has been said, exempted from the application of the principles which must govern all criminal law.

While in these days crime is no longer regarded as an abstract notion, and it is the character of the delinquent that must be kept in view, those responsible for supervising the execution of the penalty obviously have quite as important a task as those who pronounce it. A penalty executed in a barbarous spirit would fail in its real aim, which is to reform and humanise the delinquent. The League of Nations cannot, therefore, ignore the social and humanitarian aspect of this problem.

In this connection, we may mention an extremely pertinent remark by the representative of the British Empire on the Fifth Committee to the effect that unlike the other evils which the League is

trying to remedy in its social and humanitarian work, and which are due to natural causes or to individuals acting contrary to the laws of certain countries, the particular evil in question is almost always the fault of a Government.

No progress can be made, therefore, except with the voluntary co-operation of Governments, and the League's action here might be extremely effective.

In relation to this question, the Fifth Committee had before it standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners drawn up by the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission. Many problems might be brought up in this connection. I will merely mention the treatment of juvenile delinquents, habitual criminals, abnormal criminals, political offenders, and certain problems relating to the separation of offenders, to the progressive system designed to avoid the risk of moral contagion and to solitary confinement. Other questions might be mentioned, for example, open-air labour, work in mines, and — last but not least — the burning question of deportation.

As regards convict labour, I would mention certain problems such as the quantity of work given to a prisoner, its duration, the protection of workers in prisons, and remuneration for work; nor can we ignore the very delicate problem of discharged prisoners and the perfecting of measures for their assistance.

The mere mention of certain of these questions, by way of illustration, shows that the Fifth Committee is not at present in a position to discuss the substance of the problem of the treatment of prisoners. It considered it preferable to propose to the Assembly that it should refer the standard minimum rules to the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission with a view to their reconsideration in the light of the replies and observations received.

After receipt of the Commission's reply, it would be expedient to consult the Governments on the question whether the League could best assist in this connection by co-operation with the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission or by setting up a special Committee of the League.

I cannot conclude my statement without stressing point 2 of the draft resolution, which provides for the development of the policy of co-operation between the League and organisations dealing with penal and penitentiary problems.

In point of fact, the League has latterly been following the work of certain institutions dealing with these problems: the Howard League, the International Penal Law Association, and the International Penal Law Union have been consulted by the League on the standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners; the Secretary of the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission attends all the meetings of the Child Welfare Committee; the League Secretariat sent a representative to a Congress organised at Prague last year by the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission and was represented by the Legal Adviser of the League of Nations and by a member of the Legal Section at the Congress of the International Penal Law Association at Bucarest in 1929, at the meeting of the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law in 1929, and at the Third Unification Conference, organised by the Bureau at Brussels in 1930.

I have mentioned, merely by way of illustrations, a few of the institutions which deal with prison problems on an international plane and which are already in touch with the League of Nations. As regards point 2 of the draft resolution, the Fifth Committee earnestly desires to encourage the Secretariat in this field by requesting it to develop the policy of co-operation with all organisations

dealing with the grave problems connected with the prevention and suppression of crime and with the prison system.

If you will allow me to forget for one moment my temporary position as Rapporteur and to think of myself in my permanent capacity as a professor of penal law, I should like to express to the Secretary-General the profound satisfaction felt by all learned circles which are dealing with these problems at the interest with which he has followed their work. For one fact is of incontestable importance: that the League represents primarily a moral force directed against evil, and it cannot remain indifferent to the increase in crime, which is keeping pace with the continuous transformation and internationalisation of contemporary social life, by becoming international itself. It is for Governments to decide whether the League shall intervene directly in this question or not. We must not forget, however, that all history testifies to the uses and pacific power of penal law, which is itself called upon to combat the hostile forces of nature and those unfortunate aberrations of the passions which lead individuals and communities towards the abyss of crime.

The proceedings of the Fifth Committee resulted in the framing of the following draft resolution, which was adopted unanimously and is now submitted to the Assembly for approval:

The Assembly,

Having been invited by the Council in January 1930 to consider the best way in which the League of Nations could co-operate with the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission and other organisations in their efforts to assist in the improvement of prisons in accordance with modern economic, social and health standards;

Having noted the observations of the States Members and non-members of the League of Nations and of the organisations which have been consulted regarding the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (see document C.620. M.24.1930.IV);

Considering that, if the improvement of penal administration by co-operation between Governments is to receive the support of the League of Nations, the latter will need the advice and assistance of a body of experts;

Considering, further, the importance of the efforts which have already been made, both by means of a number of international conventions and by certain organs of the League of Nations and various institutions, to achieve a gradual unification of penal law and to establish co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime:

Requests the Secretary-General:

(1) To refer to the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission the replies and observations received regarding the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, and also the Report and Minutes of the Fifth Committee, and to ask it to reconsider these rules in the light of the aforementioned replies and observations;

(2) To develop the policy of co-operation with organisations dealing with the international aspect of penal and penitentiary problems;

(3) To ask the International Labour Office to continue its study in connection with prison labour;

(4) To forward the Report and the Minutes of the Fifth Committee to the International Penal Law Association, the International Bureau

for the Unification of Penal Law, the International Criminal Police Commission, the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission, the Howard League for Penal Reform, the International Law Association, the International Penal Law Union, and any other international organisations which may be proposed by the Governments to the Secretary-General, and to ask them in what manner they consider that the assistance of the League of Nations might be of value with a view to achieving a gradual unification of criminal law and the co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime;

(5) After having received the observations of these organisations, to forward them, together with the Report and Minutes of the Fifth Committee, to the States Members of the League, and to ask them whether they wish the League of Nations to lend its assistance also in regard to the questions referred to in No. 4;

(6) After having received the answer of the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission on the Standard Minimum Rules, to ask the Governments of States Members of the League whether they consider that the League could best assist in connection with the treatment of prisoners by co-operation with the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission, or by setting up a special Committee of the League to study this problem.

The Secretary-General is asked to submit a report to the next Assembly on all questions contained in this resolution.

The President:

Translation: The first speaker on the list, Count Carton de Wiart, delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

Count Carton de Wiart (Belgium):

Translation: I should like, with your permission, to make a few brief observations on behalf of the Belgian delegation, though I would add that we accept the conclusions of the report which has just been read.

The question dealt with in the report consists of two parts, the first of which relates to the prison system. As we know, a memorandum on this system has been published by the Howard League, which has introduced this problem into our discussions, on the ground that the treatment of prisoners should be regarded more and more from a humanitarian point of view. The memorandum itself has been communicated to the Governments and also to a number of qualified organisations, and the only step to be taken for the moment is, as indeed is proposed in the Fifth Committee's report, to refer the observations of the Governments or of the organisations consulted to the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission.

I would merely mention, among the observations furnished by certain organisations, the remark of the Child Welfare Committee to the effect that, where children are concerned, there should be no question of prison. As the Committee says, there is absolute antinomy between the terms "child" and "prison". We therefore hope that the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission, to which the results of this consultation have been submitted, will, if it thinks fit, draw up a general body of rules, which will have been revised and completed, and that the problem will then be deliberated afresh and without previous commitments.

A second very important question has been submitted for the first time by the Fifth Committee : unification of penal law and international co-operation in the prevention and suppression of crime. This question, which is a new one, has given rise to certain apprehensions on the part of several delegations.

Naturally, no decision which the Fifth Committee may propose can in any way commit us for the future. My own delegation considers that the League should follow up the enquiries undertaken with a view to securing a certain measure of unification in penal law.

Not only, as our eminent Rapporteur has just said, are there certain offences which must, by their nature, be regarded as offences of an international character, such as the traffic in women and children, the traffic in drugs, obscene publications and counterfeiting currency, forging bills of exchange or cheques, but all offences tend, by reason of the faster *tempo* of our civilisation, to assume an international character, and technical progress itself is opening up to what may be termed the *iter criminis*, a field of activity which simply ignores our narrow frontiers.

It seems desirable that, subject to reservations made necessary by differences of civilisation and climate, the goddess of justice, Themis, should not present too different a countenance to men, according to the mere frontiers within which they live.

Unification of penal law and co-operation between the nations with a view to the more effective combating of crime are demanded alike by conscience and clear interest, and it is thought that these considerations, and the expression given to them in the League (which is nothing but a concrete form of the solidarity uniting all nations, which are in reality members of the same body), should lead to the creation of collective rights and duties.

However—and this is my final point—the deliberations of the Fifth Committee and the conclusions submitted to us must leave us an entirely free hand for the future. These new problems of the unification of penal law and co-operation in the prevention and suppression of crime will first be submitted for an opinion to the qualified organisations which will be asked what methods they consider the League should adopt in dealing with them. Not until the replies from these organisations have been received will the States themselves be consulted as to whether they desire the League to deal with this question, which is still quite new to it.

On these conditions, and subject to these reservations, we heartily endorse the conclusions of the Fifth Committee, which have been so competently explained from this platform by Professor Pella, whose legal erudition has long been recognised.

The President :

Translation : Lord Lytton, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Lord Lytton (British Empire) :

I want, in a very few words, to call the attention of the Assembly to the difficult position in which my delegation was placed by the proceedings in the Fifth Committee on this subject. We had on our agenda the report of the Secretary-General dealing with the subject of penal administration and I was prepared to express the views of my delegation on that subject.

The discussion opened, however, with a long report from the Roumanian delegate, the Rapporteur, which travelled far beyond the subject on the agenda and dealt with such large questions as the

unification of criminal law and international co-operation in the suppression of crime.

I submitted to the Committee that this wide extension of the subject was not only outside the terms of our agenda but was, in fact, beyond the competence of the Fifth Committee. As, however, the sense of the Committee was clearly against me, I did not press my objection, and the discussion, both in the Fifth Committee and in the Sub-Committee to which the matter was referred, took place, not on the report of the Secretary-General, but on the wider report submitted by our Rapporteur.

The Assembly will notice that the report now before it, together with the speech of the Rapporteur which introduced it, deals with subjects which, I submit again, with all respect, the Fifth Committee has no mandate to discuss. They are matters which only a committee of legal experts would be qualified to consider.

This report was presented to us at a late hour on Monday night and I had to content myself with a statement to the effect that my delegation would accept no responsibility for those portions of it which went beyond the range of penal administration.

I only raise the subject now in order to express the hope that, in future, some means may be found of preventing the recurrence of such a procedure. I cannot help feeling that it is contrary to the best interests of the League itself that new subjects should be introduced in this way without notice and without affording delegations any opportunity of obtaining instructions from their Governments upon them.

The President :

Translation : Mlle. Campoamor, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Campoamor (Spain) :

Translation : I should like to begin with a reference to what has just been said by the delegate of the British Empire, though from a rather different point of view. I am really in a difficult position, as I must first say, on behalf of my delegation, that there was, at the outset, full agreement with regard to the report both in the Committee and in the Sub-Committee.

The difficulties to which the wide range covered by M. Pella's report—in so many respects a thoroughly scientific and excellent one—was likely to give rise had been foreseen, and it was with a view to taking into account the reservations of the British delegate that the fourth and fifth conclusions of the report merely asked that the observations of various organisations concerned, which are of importance from the scientific standpoint and which have been studying these questions for many years, should be forwarded to the States Members of the League.

I should like to point out, in particular, that the last two paragraphs of the report, which deal with the codification of penal law and the co-operation of States in the suppression and prevention of crime, originated in a proposal submitted to the League in 1924 for the co-operation of the States in combating crimes at ordinary law.

All the other suggestions and enquiries subsequently undertaken by the various organisations are taken from the report just submitted to you, and, in 1930, on the occasion of the International Lawyers' Congress, a proposal relating to the possibility of suppressing international offences was also studied.

It may therefore be said that the report is simply a collection of the desiderata submitted by the various scientific organisations to the League.

The gradual unification of penal law ought of course to be studied by a committee of experts, but it should be confined to the factors constituting the solidarity of peoples personified by the League, and should take into account the elements of the offence—that is to say, the special factors of climate and of race which vary so greatly in each country, as well as the general biological and social elements which are the same everywhere.

International offences are becoming more frequent every year, and those who commit them constitute a sort of criminal State, against whom various international organisations have had to contemplate bringing to bear what Garufalo calls the solidarity of the nations in the campaign against crime.

I do not think it expedient or advisable to consider or examine these important, complex, and far-reaching questions, and will confine myself, on behalf of my delegation, to supporting points 4 and 5 of the conclusions of the report. At the same time, I should like to allay the fears expressed by the British delegate, who has thought fit to make a reservation. This reservation may be considered redundant, since the two points of the conclusions I have just mentioned merely deal with the transmission of the Report and Minutes of the Fifth Committee to the seven international organisations enumerated.

In point 5 of the draft resolution, it is stated that, after having received the observations of these organisations, the Members of the League of Nations, to which they will be referred, will be asked whether they wish the League also to study the questions referred to in No. 4.

I must say that our work on the Sub-Committee was considerably facilitated by the sympathetic attitude of the British delegate. We were thus enabled to arrive at the present result, which takes into account both the aspirations voiced by the Rapporteur and the very just and legitimate reservations of the British delegation.

In conclusion, I beg to support the report, and I would ask the British delegate to recognise that we are all in agreement here, as we were on the Sub-Committee, since we are adopting a procedure which in no way affects the ideals of the various countries with regard to the suppression of international offences.

The President :

Translation : M. Alâ, delegate of Persia, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Alâ (Persia), Chairman of the Fifth Committee.

Translation : I should like to say that this draft resolution is the outcome of a compromise unanimously accepted by the Sub-Committee and the Fifth Committee, and that it covers the three points mentioned in the report.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall regard the Report of the Fifth Committee and the accompanying draft resolution as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

55. — TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Report of the Fifth Committee

on the question of the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs (document A.65.1931.V).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Sawada, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Sawada, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Sawada (Japan), Rapporteur: It is with great pleasure that I present to this Assembly the Report of the Fifth Committee on the activities of the League during the last twelve months in regard to the opium question. In laying the report before you, I wish to invite your special attention to the more important questions which engaged the consideration of the Fifth Committee.

In the first place, the most outstanding event during the period under review was the convocation by the League of a Conference for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs and the conclusion of a Convention for that purpose. By virtue of this Convention, the League is in possession of an effective instrument for combating the evils due to the abuses of drugs. The underlying idea of this Convention is to subordinate the economic aspect of the manufacture to higher humanitarian and moral aims. Thanks to the system established by this Convention and also by the Geneva Convention of 1925, already in force, there will be at the League a sort of central counting-house for the world traffic in drugs. By this system, each Government is called upon to account for any discrepancy which may exist between its import and export figures, even to a small quantity of several kilogrammes.

Among the other important features of this Convention, I may say that this instrument covers a far larger number of drugs than are covered by the preceding conventions. Provision is made for a complete system of estimates and their supervisory organs, and the new Convention will strengthen the powers of various League organisations, especially the Advisory Committee and the Permanent Central Opium Board.

It is a cause of satisfaction to note that out of fifty-seven countries which participated in this memorable Conference, thirty-six have already signed the Convention. December 31st next is the last date set for signing it. It is my sincere hope that many more States will sign the Convention and join in this great crusade for combating one of the most dangerous social evils of modern times.

In this connection, I have great pleasure in informing you that the number of countries which have ratified or acceded to the Geneva Convention of 1925 now amounts to forty-seven. This Convention heads the list of all the League Conventions as regards the number of ratifications received.

Among the questions discussed, the Fifth Committee took the view that the limitation of the manufacture of drugs is a first step towards a subsequent limitation of the production of raw materials, and therefore welcomed a resolution proposed by the representative of Panama. This resolution asks that all material which may serve as a basis for discussion at a Conference for the limitation of production should be collected. After discussion, the Committee adopted unanimously the following resolution:

The Assembly,

Taking note of the wish of certain Governments that a conference should meet in the near future to consider the possibility of limiting and controlling the cultivation of the opium-poppy and the cultivation and harvesting of the coca-leaf; and

Taking note also of the decision reached by the Council at its sixty-second session, in January 1931, to ask the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs to consider the possibility of summoning a conference of the Governments concerned and to report to the Council on the subject :

Asks the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs and the competent Sections of the Secretariat of the League of Nations to undertake, as soon as possible, the collection of all material that may serve as a basis for the discussions of a Conference on the Limitation of the Production of Opium and the cultivation and harvesting of the coca-leaf, and for that purpose to send a questionnaire to the Governments Members and non-members of the League.

Another resolution of considerable importance was also adopted at the suggestion of the Polish delegate, which was to the effect that the Secretariat should collect and analyse all legislation relating to narcotics. The terms of this resolution are as follows :

The Assembly,

Recalling the recommendation adopted by the tenth Assembly instructing the Secretariat to draw up a list of the laws and regulations at present in force in the different countries on the traffic in opium and other dangerous drugs with a view to the preparation of a compilation or analysis of this legislation ;

Observing that the performance of this task has had to be delayed owing to the necessity of preparing for the work of the Conference on Limitation :

Expresses the wish that the Secretariat, within the limits of the funds at its disposal, should undertake the preparation of this compilation of laws with a view to publishing it as soon as possible after the entry into force of the Convention for limiting the manufacture and regulating the distribution of narcotics, and that this compilation should embrace all laws or regulations concerning the supervision of the manufacture of and trade in narcotics and the measures taken to combat the drug habit.

The Committee has taken note with satisfaction of the declaration made by the various delegations as to the measures adopted by their Governments in controlling the traffic in narcotics with a greater efficiency, and I should like to draw your particular attention to the part of my report which gives a detailed account of these declarations.

In presenting my report to the Assembly, I should fail in my duty if I ended without expressing the hope that the Conference which is to meet at Bangkok, Siam, on November 9th of this year, at the invitation of the Siamese Government, will make a further important advance in the campaign against the abuse of opium.

With these remarks, I propose the following draft resolution :

The Assembly adopts the report of the Fifth Committee and the resolutions contained therein.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the report of the Fifth Committee and the accompanying resolutions adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

56. — CHILD WELFARE: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report of the Fifth Committee on child welfare (document A.71.1931.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, Countess Apponyi, Rapporteur, took her place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Countess Apponyi, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Countess Apponyi (Hungary), Rapporteur :

Translation : I do not propose to read the report on Child Welfare, which has already been distributed. I simply wish to direct your attention to the points which I consider most important — namely, the questions of assistance to foreign minors and the execution of maintenance orders for children abroad, which exceed the limits of the competence of the Child Welfare Committee. As these questions concern, not only children, but adults, the Council decided, at its meeting on May 20th last, to set up a temporary special Committee to investigate them. At its meeting on September 4th, it named twelve countries the Governments of which would be invited to nominate experts to form this special Committee. It took into consideration the interest manifested at previous international conferences by certain countries in questions relating to assistance, and also the desirability of having emigrant and immigrant countries represented.

The Council also fixed the first session of this special Committee for October 1932, unless circumstances should call for any change.

On the proposal of the delegate of the British Empire, the Fifth Committee unanimously decided, in view of the special importance during the present crisis of the treatment and prevention of juvenile delinquency, to request the Assembly to make an urgent recommendation to the delegates of the countries which have not yet established special juvenile courts to press for this reform, and for the association of women therewith to the fullest extent authorised by the national legislation.

The Fifth Committee recommends that the Assembly should inform the Child Welfare Committee of the great importance it attached to the improvement of the position of illegitimate children, requesting it at the same time to maintain on its programme, among other questions, the examination of the best means of facilitating the marriage of parents with a view to legitimising the children.

I should like to emphasise once more the need for a solution, even if only temporary, of the question of assistance to foreign minors, for to a great extent the future fate of all mankind depends on the conditions which govern the children's existence and the spirit which governs their education.

The Fifth Committee therefore submits to the Assembly the following draft resolutions :

I. The Assembly,

In view of the special importance during the present crisis of the treatment and prevention of juvenile delinquency :

Decides to make an urgent recommendation to the delegates of the countries which have not yet established special juvenile courts to press for this reform, and for the association of women therewith to the fullest extent authorised by the national legislation.

II. The Assembly takes note of the Child Welfare Committee's report on the work of its seventh session, recommends that the Committee continue its work in conformity with the suggestions and decisions contained in that report, and expresses its satisfaction with the work done.

The President :

Translation : As no other delegate has asked to speak, I shall consider the report and the accompanying draft resolutions adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

57. — TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Fifth Committee on the question of the traffic in women and children (document A.72.1931.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, Mrs. Plumptre, delegate of Canada, took her place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Mrs. Plumptre, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Mrs. Plumptre (Canada), Rapporteur :

The report of the Fifth Committee on the traffic in women and children is now in the hands of the delegates. I shall, therefore, only call attention to two or three salient points.

The report shows how actively the Traffic in Women and Children Committee is carrying on its work, with the able co-operation of the Secretariat of the League.

The Fifth Committee concurs, although with regret, in the decision that financial conditions do not permit of the printing of the Digest of Laws relating to this traffic which has been prepared by the Secretariat. It respectfully urges, however, that the Assembly will regard this work as temporarily postponed and not as completely abandoned.

It is very encouraging to note recent accessions to the 1921 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women, but we must regret that there are still twelve States Members of the League which have not acceded and five others which have not ratified their signatures. The abstention of Members constitutes a very serious weakness in the work of the League, for the traffic in women is organised internationally and will only be suppressed by equally well-organised international action.

During the past year, the Traffic in Women and Children Committee has devoted particular attention to the activities of the *souteneur*, and the report before you contains a resolution suggesting a study of the effect of penalties inflicted upon these human parasites, who are mostly quite young men living upon the proceeds of the degradation of others.

Women police have proved themselves so successful in combating the activities of the agents of this traffic that the Fifth Committee requests the Assembly to bring this matter particularly to the attention of those States Members of the League which do not already employ women in their police service.

The circulation of obscene publications, with which we would include obscene films, has a direct importance on the traffic in women and children. Obscene postcards are frequently used as the first

means of approach to children and young people, and as these and other similar publications emanate mainly from a few centres and are distributed to all parts of the world, it is obvious that international action is required to secure their suppression.

The work upon which the Fifth Committee has reported clearly demonstrates the importance of a central body, like the League, whose humanitarian operations are not confined within national barriers. The traffic in women and children is only one manifestation of a network of worldwide, underground, criminal activities in which are interwoven the illicit traffic in habit-forming drugs, the circulation of obscene publications of all kinds, the issuing of counterfeit money and varied forms of smuggling. In all these activities the risks are great, but the potential gains are greater in the eyes of the dangerous criminals who are engaged in them. To make the risks greater than the rewards requires the united efforts of the legislative, judicial and police forces of the world, supported by an informed and intelligent public opinion : and the abstention of Members of the League from the Conventions seriously weakens the international offensive against these criminals.

In the discussions of the Fifth Committee, it was emphasised that the need for complete international co-operation against these evils — and especially the traffic in women and children — is particularly urgent at this time, when economic pressure and widespread unemployment are forcing many to seek new methods of earning money. Money is hard to get: everyone has to work harder than usual to earn it ; and, therefore, among others, the agents of this traffic will be particularly active and persistent. On the other hand, unemployment, with consequent suffering from cold and hunger, may predispose many women and girls to consider ways of earning money and to listen to proposals which, in easier times, would be repulsive to them.

We would, therefore, through this Assembly, respectfully urge all States Members of the League which have not already done so to accede to the various Conventions of the League ; and, by implementing to the full the responsibilities which all signatories have undertaken, to do their share in safeguarding those who, hard pressed by poverty and discouragement, are in peculiar need of friendship and protection.

On behalf of the Fifth Committee, I have now the honour to present to the Assembly the report and draft resolution embodying the recommendations of the Committee. The draft resolution reads as follows :

The Assembly,

1. *Having taken note of the report of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee, welcomes the new accessions to the 1921 Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women and Children, and expresses the hope that further ratifications will be registered in 1932 :*

2. *Considers that the studies already made on the part played by souteneurs in this traffic show the need for further consideration of this subject ;*

3. *Recommends that the Traffic in Women and Children Committee should consider the possibility of ascertaining, with special reference to the recurrent conviction of habitual offenders, the results of the penalties on souteneurs, as defined in Article 1 of the Additional Draft Protocol of the International Convention of 1921 for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children ;*

4. *Commends to the attention of States Members of the League the draft protocol (document*

C.267.M.122.1931.IV, page 9) supplementing the 1921 Convention, submitted for their observations;

5. *Thanks the Traffic in Women and Children Committee for its work and invites it to continue its efforts to suppress this infamous trade, especially at this time, when unemployment and economic distress afford special opportunities for the activities of its agents.*

The President :

Translation : If no one desires to speak, I shall consider the report of the Fifth Committee and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

58. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Sixth Committee on the protection of minorities (document A.67.1931.I).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Motta, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and Baron Yrjö-Koskinen, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Baron Yrjö-Koskinen will address the Assembly.

Baron Yrjö-Koskinen (Finland), Rapporteur :

Translation : I have the honour to present to the Assembly the report unanimously adopted by the Sixth Committee on the protection of minorities.

The President :

Translation : As the Assembly will have noted, this report is simply an account of the discussions in the Sixth Committee.

If no one wishes to speak I shall consider the Sixth Committee's report adopted.

The report of the Sixth Committee was adopted.

59. — MANDATES : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the Sixth Committee on the question of mandates (document A.68.1931.VI).

(On the invitation of the President, Dr. Lange, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Dr. Lange, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Lange (Norway) Rapporteur :

Translation : The work in connection with mandates forms one of the most important tasks entrusted to the League. It is very natural, therefore, that every year the Assembly should deal with this question which, as you know, is particularly entrusted to the Council under the terms of the Covenant.

The work relating to mandates consists in supervising the administration of the mandated territories on behalf of the international community, and noting how far and by what means the mandatory Powers are performing the task entrusted to them of helping those countries, which might be described as minors, and educating them in preparation for independence.

The purpose, as it were, of the institution of mandates is the eventual acquisition of independence, and this year the problem has arisen of determining under what conditions a country should be recognised as having reached a stage in its development at which it can cease to be a mandated territory and acquire independence.

The Permanent Mandates Commission studied this question with great thoroughness, and the Council and Sixth Committee have both expressed their great appreciation of its work. The Rapporteur to the Council declared that, in the conditions defined by the Mandates Commission, the Council now possesses a criterion for determining, in individual cases, whether a country is ready to pass from the status of a mandated territory to that of independence.

I shall not go into details as regards either the criterion or the report, but I feel it my duty to point out to the Assembly the importance of this fact. It may be said that, in this connection, the year 1931 will rank as an important date in the history of the League.

I shall confine myself, then, to submitting the draft resolution which the Sixth Committee has instructed me to present to you, and which reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Having taken note of the work accomplished by the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council in regard to the execution of Article 22 of the Covenant :

(a) Renews the expression of confidence in them voted by the past sessions of the Assembly and again congratulates them on what has been achieved through co-operation between them ;

(b) Expresses its gratification at the constructive and particularly useful work which the Council has just performed with the help of the Permanent Mandates Commission in determining the criterion to be applied when it is proposed to bring to an end the mandate regime in respect of a country placed under that regime ;

(c) Specially notes in the Council's resolution on this question the importance attached to the maintenance of the principle of economic equality and to guarantees for the effective protection of racial, linguistic and religious minorities.

(d) Expresses the hope, as in previous years, that through the prosecution of the joint efforts of the mandatory Powers, the Council and the Permanent Mandates Commission, the mandatory system may continue to ensure the achievement of the ideal of civilisation proclaimed in Article 22 of the Covenant.

The President :

Translation : If no one desires to speak, I shall consider the report of the Sixth Committee and the draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 12.45 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH, 1931, AT 10.30 A.M.

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60. — WORK OF THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION: RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President:

Translation: The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the resolutions proposed by the Sixth Committee on the Work of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union (document A.66. 1931.VII).

(On the incitation of the President, M. Motta, Chairman and Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, took his place on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: M. Motta, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland), Rapporteur:

Translation: You have before you the draft resolutions proposed by the Sixth Committee concerning the work of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union. I wish merely to explain in a few words the meaning and scope of those resolutions.

I may mention first of all that the reports submitted to the Assembly by the Commission of

Enquiry for European Union were examined by two Committees, the Second and the Sixth. The Second Committee had to examine the technical side of the work of the Commission. This examination has been completed and the results will be found in the reports which the Second Committee will submit to the Assembly on the economic and financial work done during the past year.

The Sixth Committee had only to examine the question of the constitution and organisation of the European Commission and its methods of work; in particular it had to decide as to the advisability of continuing the Commission's work during the year about to begin.

All the delegations without exception agreed that the results obtained were satisfactory and that consequently the work of the Commission for European Union must be perseveringly continued.

The delegations also agreed unanimously that the criteria laid down by the Commission for European Union as regards its constitution and organisation were in complete accordance with the letter and spirit of the resolution adopted by the Assembly on September 17th, 1930.

These criteria may be summarised as follows: The European Commission is a commission of enquiry of the League of Nations. It will submit its reports to the Assembly every year. The Commission has as its Secretary the Secretary-General of the League. It can have recourse to the technical organs of the League. The extra-European States Members of the League have the right, if they think necessary, to take part in the meetings in order to submit their observations. The European Commission can further establish liaison — and has done so — with the Governments of States which are not Members of the League.

If I were to define the nature and essence of the European Commission, I should say that it was an organ of the League of Nations, conceived in the spirit of the Covenant and seeking to draw closer bonds of solidarity between the European States, while bearing in mind that even problems which are apparently European are frequently connected with others of interest to non-European States.

The Sixth Committee recommends that the European Commission should have recourse, whenever possible, to the technical organs of the League. It requests it, and even recommends it, to refer directly to the League any problems which it might have examined, but which ought to be examined on a more elaborate scale than that involved by the continent of Europe alone — on a world scale, in fact.

We were anxious to consult the Second Committee as to whether the technical organs of the League were equal to meeting, with the necessary rapidity and elasticity, any demands which the European Commission might make upon them.

The reply we obtained from the Second Committee was entirely satisfactory. The general rule then is as follows: The European Commission must have recourse, for its technical work, to the technical organs of the League; but there are exceptions to every rule, and it may happen that, in particular cases, the European Commission may usefully set up special committees outside the technical organs of the League.

As this is a question of some importance, I should like to read you a passage from a letter which the Chairman of the Second Committee sent to the Sixth Committee and which bears upon the very points I have just mentioned. This passage is as follows:

"After having obtained information as to the organisation and methods of work of these permanent organs, the Second Committee con-

sidered that, as a general rule, and apart from certain special cases which may arise, these organs seem to be in a position to afford the Commission of Enquiry for European Union such co-operation as it may have to ask of them.

"The budget of the Financial Section and the Economic Intelligence Service for the year 1932 does not, however, provide for any meeting in addition to the three regular sessions of the Financial Committee and the three meetings of special committees which the normal work of the Financial Committee will probably render necessary.

"The scheme for an International Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company prepared by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union has involved, in respect of preparatory work during the present year, an expenditure of 27,981 Swiss francs for meetings and 8,820 Swiss francs for costs of printing. The Financial and Economic Intelligence Section will not be in a position to meet calls involving similar expenditure during 1932."

You have seen from the second resolution submitted to you that the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has asked the European Commission to examine and, if possible, draw up a Pact of Economic Non-Aggression, and you will at once realise that the question oversteps the frontiers of the European continent. This, then, is one of the questions which should, according to the general rule, be treated by the League itself and by its technical organs. Nevertheless, for special reasons, which all the delegates have finally accepted, the Sixth Committee is of opinion that the question of the Pact of Economic Non-Aggression must be considered, examined and dealt with by a special committee which the European Commission has decided to appoint, subject to the approval of the Assembly.

It should therefore be understood, if you accept the Sixth Committee's proposals, that the Assembly will be, as it were, ratifying the institution, by way of an exception, of this special committee for this purpose.

Since, however, this subject is of a worldwide character, you should ask the Commission of Enquiry for European Union to invite some non-European States to take part in the work of the special committee, and, in accordance with the opinion of the Second Committee, reinforced by the discussions of the Sixth Committee, we propose that you should decide that the special committee of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union should be extended to include the following States: Australia, Canada, Chile, China, India, Japan and Uruguay.

I have now only to express the sincere and ardent hope that the institution of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union may prove more and more beneficial to Europe and to the other parts of the world.

Undoubtedly Europe, more than any other continent, is about to undergo profound modifications in its economic and social structure. It would be too much to speak of it as a "revolution"; I will call it a progressive, but rapid, evolution.

The fact that the Commission of Enquiry for European Union may be summoned without delay when occasion so demands and that it can thus establish useful contact between the Governments if serious and urgent circumstances arise seems to me to have a symbolic as well as a real value. It bears witness to the determination of the European Governments to co-operate as closely as possible and to hold the helm fast in the hour of grave responsibility.

I therefore submit to the Assembly the following draft resolutions :

1. *The Assembly notes with satisfaction the results of the work done by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union ;*

It approves the report of the Commission of Enquiry regarding its constitution, organisation and methods of work ;

It requests the Commission to pursue the work undertaken in conformity with the principles laid down in the resolution of September 17th, 1930 ;

It recommends it to have recourse whenever possible to the technical organs of the League of Nations and to refer to the League the settlement of any problems which it thinks capable of solution on a world scale ;

It requests the Commission to submit a report on its further work to the next session of the Assembly.

2. *The Assembly approves the proposal of the Commission for European Union that it should itself set up a special committee to study a Pact of Economic Non-Aggression.*

The Assembly decides that the following States shall be invited to take part in the work of this special committee on an equal footing with the members which the Commission of Enquiry may appoint :

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Australia,</i> | <i>India,</i> |
| <i>Canada,</i> | <i>Japan,</i> |
| <i>Chile,</i> | <i>Uruguay.</i> |
| <i>China,</i> | |

The Council is requested to invite the Government of the United States of America also to send a representative to the special committee if that Government considers it desirable.

The President :

Translation : The first speaker on the list, M. Flandin, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Flandin (France) :

Translation : I have only a few short remarks to add to M. Motta's verbal statement, to which we have all listened with great interest. I simply wish to make three observations : first, it was never the intention of those who initiated the movement that was to lead to the constitution of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union to form a rigid organisation from which the extra-European States should be systematically excluded. On the contrary, we were glad to think that this Commission, while naturally concerned primarily with European problems, would deal with their international and even inter-continental aspects as a matter of course, and that the extra-European countries would thus have an opportunity of usefully assisting in the Commission's work. There is no inconsistency from this point of view between the work of the Commission of Enquiry and the intervention of extra-European States. This I would make a point of reiterating, that there may be no *arrière-pensée* or ambiguity in the matter.

Secondly, I should like to point out that the Commission of Enquiry was never intended by its founders to pass over the eminent services which the technical organs of the League are in a position to render. Indeed, it was provided from the outset that recourse should be had to these technical organs, whenever this could usefully be done. There is thus no competition — nor can there be

any — between the work of the Commission of Enquiry and the regular work of the League technical organs, which is as a rule attended by conspicuously successful results.

There is nothing, then, in the recommendation to prevent the technical organs of the League from being utilised for the special objects of the Commission of Enquiry, and the resolution submitted to you is entirely satisfactory from that standpoint. It affords us every satisfaction, since, as M. Motta has said, recourse to the technical organs of the League, which should be as wide as possible, does not exclude the carrying out of special enquiries by the Commission of Enquiry or its committees, should this be found necessary, even without the assistance of those technical organs.

This procedure may be expedient and even necessary. The technical organs of the League generally hold their sessions at fairly long, though regular, intervals. Nevertheless, in certain cases of emergency — and no one will deny that, at the present time, urgent cases may arise — it may become necessary rapidly to summon special committees. We should, I think, congratulate ourselves that such Committees have functioned — especially during the past year — for they have very rapidly arrived at practical conclusions to which effect should be given without delay, and this might not have been the case if we had had to set in motion more cumbrous machinery for the examination of the proposals before the Commission of Enquiry.

Before concluding, I desire to emphasise once more how very opportune the establishment of the Commission of Enquiry has proved in the present circumstances of worldwide depression. Its work is directed towards one object : the finding of a common policy and the discovery of means to remedy by joint effort a situation that might become really serious.

The Commission of Enquiry is, I venture to say, an integral, living and active part of the League, and I should like to take this opportunity of associating myself with M. Motta's tribute to the Commission, and of offering it a cordial welcome and every encouragement to continue, in the future as in the past, its useful work.

The President :

Translation : Mr. Collins, first delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Collins (Australia) : The resolutions submitted by the Sixth Committee on the work of the Committee of Enquiry for European Union indicate that a special committee is to be set up to study a proposal for a Pact of Economic Non-Aggression, and that it is intended to invite Australia, among other States, to take part in this work.

While I desire to express the thanks of my Government for the invitation to Australia to be represented on this projected committee, I should like to point out that I have not had an opportunity of consulting my Government on the subject, and am therefore unable to say definitely whether Australia will be able to participate in the work contemplated — work which seems to apply primarily to Europe only.

I am glad to learn from another document not under discussion at the moment (document A.75. 1931.IIB.) that, in connection with economic *rapprochement*, the Second Committee expressed its views in the following terms :

“ The Committee is naturally bound to consider the effects such efforts might have on relations between the European countries and countries in other parts of the world. ”

The Second Committee further stated that it was glad to know that the proposals in this connection had been surrounded with guarantees for the purpose of safeguarding the interests of other countries. This, I think, is all-important. It is the predominant note in the Constitution of the League; that is, its universality, and, in deciding whether acceptance of a seat on the proposed special committee is possible, Australia will certainly be guided by the important pronouncement of the Second Committee with regard to guarantees to which I have referred.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the resolutions of the Sixth Committee adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

61. — WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION: 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 work of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation (document A.69.1931.XII).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Motta, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and M. Sato, Rapporteur, took place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Sato will address the Assembly.

M. Sato (Japan), Rapporteur :

Translation : As my report has been distributed in French and English to all the members of the Assembly, I shall simply add a few words to supplement what is said in it. What I should like to make clear — very briefly — is the significance of the discussions in the Sixth Committee on questions of intellectual co-operation. Those discussions revealed the profound and universal interest that is taken in the work of intellectual co-operation and the variety of problems it covers. Three meetings were devoted to the examination of the questions referred to the Committee, and the representatives of nineteen delegations spoke. Professor de Reynold, Rapporteur of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, and M. Bonnet, Director of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, gave the Committee useful and interesting explanations. The unanimous impression was that, in this field, the League had made progress, that it was boldly attacking living problems, and that it was now in a position to facilitate intellectual relations, the exchange of ideas and collaboration in education between our various countries, and thus help them to get to know and understand one another better.

It was long thought that, in intellectual matters, individualism held the field. Indeed, under the pressure of urgent problems, there was perhaps a tendency to think that men engaged in research and scientific work could not directly co-operate with statesmen and men of action, and it seemed as if the two categories would have to work in different directions. It seemed as though the League, which was endeavouring in the political field and in the various technical matters to establish fresh contacts, and fresh means of mutual assistance and co-opera-

tion, would be powerless to render similar services to the intellectual world.

These doubts, I hope, are now dispelled. True, the work undertaken is still in its initial stages, but we are already in a position to submit to the Assembly definite achievements and a programme of action. As you will see from the report approved by the Sixth Committee, the same methods of joint work, liaison and recourse to competent authorities which made it possible for the League's technical work to develop, are being applied by the Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation. Thus, eminent representatives of our various civilisations and cultures can now work together in the interests of common progress.

The work of intellectual co-operation becomes the nucleus of a great undertaking, in which not only the Ministries of Education and Fine Arts and the national official institutions are collaborating but also the big private organisations interested in questions of culture and education. This institution is proving its usefulness as a means of co-ordinating these activities and avoiding waste of time and useless dispersion of effort. The League is now assisting those engaged in science and research and is giving them, by its pacific efforts and its example of collaboration, an opportunity of pursuing their eminently useful activities, which are themselves an earnest of worldwide peace and happiness.

I will now read the draft resolutions submitted by the Sixth Committee :

The Assembly :

Having noted the reports of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and of the Governing Body of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation (documents A.23 and A.24.1931) ;

Noting with great satisfaction the results achieved during the year by the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation as a whole, and expressing its gratification that the reorganisation effected last year has made it possible to carry on, in the most effective way possible, the international work of liaison and co-ordination which in the intellectual sphere appears essential to the future of the League of Nations :

I.

(1) Approves the work undertaken in the different branches of intellectual activity and the programme of work drawn up for the coming year ;

(2) Recognises the existence of the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, comprising the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation which is the advisory body of the League of Nations ; the commissions and committees dependent on it ; the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, its executive organ, and the International Educational Cinematographic Institute, these two institutes having been placed at the League's disposal under the conditions laid down in their respective statutes ; and the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, whose representatives may be called upon to meet occasionally in conference on the proposal of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation ;

(3) Is glad that special importance is being attached to education and that a plan has been drawn up by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation for promoting international co-operation in this respect and for spreading still further among the young a knowledge of the League of Nations and mutual understanding among the peoples ;

(4) Expresses its satisfaction at the measures proposed to ensure regular co-operation between the official institutions dealing with the protection of intellectual rights;

(5) Has noted with satisfaction the new work undertaken to ensure an objective and disinterested study of the major international problems through the institutes engaged in the scientific study of international relations, and of the programme drawn up by the Committee of Arts and Letters for the League of Nations to assist, by arranging for regular intellectual exchanges in the international sphere, in defending the interests of culture and civilisation;

(6) Approves the steps taken by the Committee in response to the Chinese Government's request and anticipates the most happy results from this co-operation;

(7) Approves the summoning of a meeting of the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation in 1934.

II.

(1) Draws the attention of the States Members of the League of Nations to the experiments being made by a certain number of countries with regard to the use of broadcasting as a means of education;

(2) Approves the step taken by the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation in asking the Institute to undertake an enquiry, in co-operation with the other competent organisations, into the educational aspects of broadcasting and recommends that this enquiry should cover all the international questions raised by the use of broadcasting in regard to good international relations;

(3) Asks the States Members of the League to encourage the use of broadcasting to create better mutual understanding, to secure a more thorough comprehension of the international character of a large number of urgent problems, to permit of a more complete appreciation of the task of the League of Nations and of the aims which it has before it and requests the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation to get into touch for that purpose with the principal national and international broadcasting organisations.

III.

Drawing the attention of the States Members of the League of Nations to the initiative taken by the City of Berne and the invitation addressed to them by the Federal Government to participate in the Exhibition of Popular Arts in 1934;

Having regard to the Council's resolution of September 2nd, 1927, and the Assembly's resolution of the 22nd of the same month:

Urges the Members of the League of Nations to associate themselves with this great international manifestation and to take suitable steps for this purpose.

The Assembly,

Having noted the report of the Governing Body of the International Educational Cinematographic Institute:

Expresses its gratification at the results achieved;

Is happy to note the progress of the preparatory work for the Conference for the abolition of Customs barriers for educational films;

Expresses its satisfaction at the gratifying development of the International Review of Educational Cinematography.

The President:

Translation: M. Costa du Rels, delegate of Bolivia, will address the Assembly.

M. Costa du Rels (Bolivia):

Translation: The report which has just been discussed throws into relief the multiplicity of the problems which have arisen in connection with organisation; it shows also that intellectual co-operation, however imperfectly it may be appreciated to-day in the troubled times through which we are passing, is perhaps one of the League's most important functions, constituting as it does the very mainspring of its being. I have already paid my tribute to the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and to the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation which, under the guidance of its excellent pilot, is now in full sail launched on its glorious enterprise.

If then the League, in the words of the poet, is simply a company of minds, intellectual co-operation represents the active communion of those minds. The results it has achieved — the creation of ideas, the invention of forms, and (still in the words of the poet) the interpretation of facts — must have already had a most salutary influence on the relations between the peoples. For — this may be a platitude — it is in the field of intellectual co-operation that we first see the beginnings of cordial relations, and as time goes on, interpretation follows, mutual comprehension dawns, and, little by little, human passions are cooled and purified as it were in a lustral spring.

Thus there is prepared and consolidated that spiritual disarmament, without which the other oft-quoted material disarmament must be illusory and deceptive. All panaceas — security, disarmament and arbitration, in whatever order they are placed, according to the point of view — would be ineffective unless preceded by the spiritual preparation of mutual confidence.

That is the essential. Confidence — confidence between nations and between individuals — confidence, the new philosopher's stone. But, in the meantime, what are those people doing who, for twelve years, have been busy working out theories and recommending infallible remedies? Their voices have not held the masses; nor have figures made any impression. Technical — that is, artificial — means will not secure the happiness of the peoples.

When these modern day-dreamers see their theories collapsing — when, for instance, they witness that strange phenomenon, the evaporation of monetary tokens — these modern workers of miracles cry in all good faith: "We can do nothing; the cause is psychological".

Thus it is that intellectuals are called upon to help them out of their difficulty and to drown with their voices the noise of that super-machinery which claimed to rationalise the brain of man, but has simply destroyed his faith and broken his courage. Upon them devolves the task of preaching the return to the simple life and repeating the words of the Bible: "Drink ye every one the waters of his own cistern".

If that old truth is to be restated and understood anew, we must have brotherliness among the peoples. Humanity is the source to which we must look for the ideal of right — not merely the notion of right, which is quite a different thing. It is the humanist — and by humanist, I mean the complete intellectual — that is called upon to propagate this truth.

If the nations have lost the power to love one another, at least they still have sufficient curiosity to want to know one another.

That curiosity is a step towards confidence in space and time, which raises history to a higher cultural level. The intellectual is, admittedly, in some sort superior to the politician, dogged as the latter is by demagogues. Thanks to his independence, his intelligence and sensibility, he is better able to anticipate the aspirations of the nations and to make them articulate; he is better able to analyse the essential elements of happiness which the nations are pursuing.

It may be objected that the intellectual lives in a world remote from realities. This may be so, but he is a part of reality as we know it. Meridians and parallels are imaginary geographical lines, but they serve, none the less, to determine real positions in space; and, when all is said and done, is it not the intellectual's duty to trace out lines and indicate the general procedure to be applied in determining situations of fact? That is the tremendous rôle of thought which so-called men of action still persistently refuse to recognise.

Here, I may perhaps be allowed to indulge in a personal reminiscence. I still seem to see, during the unforgettable meetings of the Permanent Committee on Arts and Letters, Paul Valéry and Thomas Mann sitting opposite one another, only separated from one another by the width of a table, gazing at one another — their faces suddenly transfigured by a common thought. We all understood, and that was a wonderful moment — I appeal to my learned friend and colleague, Mlle. Vacaresco, to bear witness to the effect produced by that moving though silent meeting at Geneva between two men who exercise over the élite of their countries an influence which many statesmen would envy them. Believe me, the cause of peace made more progress during that minute than during the long technical discussions in the course of which national prejudices so often clash and offend one another.

Was I right in maintaining that intellectual co-operation is the very mainspring of the League?

The preponderating rôle played by the intellectual in the fundamental evolution of which we already see a few premonitory signs obviously entails responsibilities. But let us not lose heart: the term intellectual spells culture, and culture means creation, progress, perfection, purification, of the instincts and, above all, a refinement of the tastes. There are the guarantees!

Thus persuaded, borne onwards by that living community of minds which we call intellectual co-operation; thinkers, writers, savants and artists, bring from the four corners of the world the humble contributions of their individual genius. There is no thought in their minds of individual triumph. Men efface themselves before the beauty of an idea. The ideal alone remains. The most illustrious man is only an instrument like the rest. Famous to-day, lionised to-morrow, perhaps unknown the day after, he will, like the obscure artisan of former times, have helped to confer on the League the glorious anonymity whose imprint cathedrals bear. Believe me, that will be one of the greatest victories — the victory of the mind — ever recorded in the annals of mankind.

The President:

Translation: Mlle. Vacaresco, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Vacaresco (Roumania):

Translation: After the excellent and very full report of M. Sato and the admirable speeches made before the Sixth Committee and in the Assembly, it would almost seem that there was nothing left for me to say to you on the subject of the Committee

on Intellectual Co-operation. Yet I feel I should address you as the mouthpiece of the Permanent Committee of Arts and Letters, which held its first session last July. The finest and most eminent minds of our time take part in the work of that Committee. They bear illustrious names, and I venture to mention their work in the presence of the men who compose this Assembly, the men who have most at heart the destiny of mankind, who respond most readily to ideas and movements making for the progress of mankind's happiness.

In the choice of the subject-matter of my speech, I have been guided by a personal consideration. It is already three years since from this platform I added to your already serious problems a philosophic problem, and to your arduous and arid tasks "the destiny of man", an expression which I must ask you to believe does not conceal any reference to finance or Customs; for even granted a perfect Customs system or the abolition of Customs altogether, and the complete fulfilment of all our concrete desires, the destiny of man would none the less be in danger, would none the less present mystery to be solved. For man, even amid the happy conditions which I shall depict, might still be at a loss in the midst of his conquests, bewildered, uncertain which way to turn. It is that man, the man of the future, for whom you and I and all of us must work.

I further ventured three years ago to speak to this Assembly, which is a little uneasy but always indulgent where I am concerned, of the cinematograph and the countless crowds it attracts. Although I have a horror of dry-as-dust statistics, I venture to remind you here, before the whole world, or almost the whole world, of the 65,000 cinemas that exist, with their audiences numbering a hundred millions. Is it any wonder if we are rather appalled at the possibilities latent in this art, which draws masses of spectators and shows them on the film the beauty of doing as little as possible: A workman, a lucky adventurer, marrying the girl millionaire at the shortest notice. After seeing such a spectacle a man may well ask himself what is the use of work.

Then you have heard our eloquent colleague, the British delegate, Dame Edith Lyttelton, calling the attention of the Committee to the potentialities for good or ill of wireless broadcasting. This means that we are faced with the rule of the machine. The machine has fastened upon everything — art, poetry, civilisation. Let us then keep vigilant watch on the machine, and, when thinking of the moral duty we dream of creating, the moral unity that will serve as a basis for peace, let us remember this, that unity of mind, unity of thought, unity of heart can lead only to death, the death of art. And what a prospect! The decay of popular art, its relegation to a museum together with prehistoric relics, tradition reduced to a vague, modish mannerism!

We are engaged on founding a new society; but in doing so, must we not plead guilty to thinking too little of man, without whom no society can exist?

These are the fears that beset my heart: and, remembering me as a poet, remembering my sex, you have been indulgent with me when, though conscious of my over-persistence, I have come to lay my fears before you.

The Committee on Intellectual Co-operation has founded a Permanent Committee of Arts and Letters. At the very beginning of its first report, I find, or rather my lyric muse, hesitant and quavering, has heard, a clear answer to my fears.

The Permanent Committee on Arts and Letters has only been in existence for a few months; yet it has already made a brilliant, a magnificent beginning. The report announcing its existence

is signed by two Frenchmen, one a writer of verse and prose, a great leader of modern thought, the other a brilliant and learned professor at the Sorbonne: I refer to M. Paul Valéry and M. Henri Focillon.

This report bears witness to the delight in synthesis, the subtle taste for analysis, which characterise the French race.

Some words of the report deserve to be quoted, — indeed the same might be said of the whole report:

“The League of Nations implies an association of minds.

“It ought to form a bond of union between those who enrich the life of the mind by creating ideas, inventing forms and combinations of thought, or discovering and interpreting facts.

“Only by the spontaneous communication of mind with mind can this association find expression.”

It is this communication of mind with mind that the Permanent Committee on Arts and Letters has in view. It takes many forms. The Committee realises that the creator must have mastery over the creature, that it is time man learned to control the machine and use it for his own ends. The Committee does not reject co-operation, and has drawn up a series of questions to lay before the intelligentsia. It asks the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation to catalogue discs and films — no light task, but one which I am sure it will perform admirably under its young and able Director, M. Bonnet.

In conclusion, I will say — though you know it perhaps better than I — that to-day we are faced, not only with this financial and economic crisis, which has become a veritable nightmare, a dreadful spectre evoked by each in turn, but by a crisis of idealism. A summons to spirituality is sounding throughout the world. All of you are concerned to-day with the study of man, the desire to place him in his rightful position in the universe, to widen his realm of thought, to put him in tune with the infinite, to subdue time to eternity.

We shall be parting in a few days' time. You will each carry back to your own capital the light reflected from your thoughts. You will try to shed it abroad. Do not forget that the mask of time must be torn off and eternity revealed. If around us shadows are gathering, if confidence seems to be taking wing and faith is waning, let us remember that across the troublous seas of uncertainty, in the gathering darkness, where false gods are locked in mortal combat, the clear beams of the League of Nations are shining forth. Let us lift up our eyes to the League. Let us honour it and pass on its ideas to others.

Allow me, your poet, to address to the League that cry of unwavering hope which must find an echo in all your hearts.

The President:

Translation: M. Buero, delegate of Uruguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Buero (Uruguay):

Translation: When we consider the results obtained during the past year by the Organisation of Intellectual Co-operation and the programme it has drawn up for the coming months, we cannot but be struck by the importance of the questions with which it has dealt, both from the immediate standpoint of active and vital co-operation between the various nations and that of the future of international relations.

The first characteristic of this activity is that there now exists complete, adaptable and well-balanced machinery for intellectual co-operation, that this machinery is in motion and brings the various national cultures into contact, ensuring regular exchanges between them. All the wealth of procedure created by the League during the ten years of its existence is successfully employed in the service of intellectual co-operation. The Council has the assistance of a Committee consisting of the most representative persons in the world of art, science and letters, and this Committee is, especially since the general reorganisation carried out last year, assisted by a number of specialised Committees, which bring together highly qualified experts, and which can give the main Committee the most enlightened opinions on the various questions submitted to its competence.

Thus officially, through the central organisation for intellectual co-operation — I mean the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and its committees of experts — we can survey the various ranks in our educational hierarchy, from the universities down to the departments for primary education, the ministries of fine arts, the big libraries, and the research institutes which deal, in a detached atmosphere of disinterested investigation, with the great international economic and political problems of the day.

In addition to this interchange of ideas which the League has instituted, between our great official institutions under the aegis of its Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the various bodies working for it, there has grown up a close and extensive network of national organisations which pursue the high ideal of bringing together intellectuals irrespective of frontiers and ensuring a better mutual understanding between nations. I might mention, for example, the National Committees for intellectual co-operation, which are steadily increasing in number and activity, the big international associations which group together the various organisations engaged in this useful work, and all who take an interest in the education of young people, the progress of culture and the future of peace.

This brings us to a second essential feature of the work undertaken: it bears the definite imprint of universality. An increasing interest is being shown in intellectual co-operation, not only in Europe, but in Asia and in South America. In the latter continent, four National Committees have been created this year, and contacts with the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, the League of Nations and the various countries belonging to the League have become closer and more frequent.

The programme that has been drawn up includes another feature to which I should like to call attention, for I consider it the most important of all for the future of the League and of the world. Never has so much encouragement been given within the League to everything relating to the instruction of youth. True, in each successive Assembly since 1920 we have tried to launch and encourage a universal movement for instruction in the aims and objects of the League and its ideals in order to accustom school-children to the new international methods instituted immediately after the war as a normal means of conducting world affairs.

But to-day we have become more ambitious. The International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation will this year convene a committee of experts, consisting of directors of higher education, who will deal directly with the common problems of our universities. Again, higher officials for elementary education, constituting another committee,

will draw up a regular programme of co-operation in regard to elementary education.

Hardly had the schools begun to use wireless, that new means of instruction and admirable instrument of international *rapprochement*, than we find the Committee and the Institute taking up the question, studying it and instituting a vast enquiry. I need not point out what an asset in the future it will be for peace if there is a reasoned, judicious and properly directed control of these new resources which science has put at the disposal of educationists.

This brings me to another point. Speaking generally, all the new activities of intellectual co-operation aim at being practical, at rendering service, at fulfilling requirements. That is not the least interesting aspect of the work on foot; distant countries will be the first to appreciate it.

In the domain of art, to quote one example, the Museums Office has taken steps to encourage the creation, in our national centres of education, of pedagogical collections of engravings and casts which will enable pupils to see at a glance, under the guidance of their teachers, the evolution of art in the great epochs of civilisation. The Office also proposes, next year, to promote, especially in distant countries, the creation of new workshops for casts in which can be reproduced, under excellent conditions from an artistic standpoint and at a moderate cost, the masterpieces of sculpture in the possession of the great centres of art at Athens, Rome, Paris, London and Berlin.

I could give many other examples; they can be found in the domain of political economy, and in organised co-operation in the exact or natural sciences or in *belles-lettres*.

In this connection, I would direct your attention to the satisfactory agreement concluded in regard to the regular publication of the Ibero-American classics under the auspices of the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation. Two volumes, "*Historiens chiliens*" (selections) and "*Le Diamant au Brésil*", by Joachim Felicio dos Santos, have already appeared. Two other volumes, "*Facundo*" by Sarmiento (Argentine) and "*Morceaux choisis*", by J. Nabuco (Brazil), are being prepared. A list of the best works has been drawn up by a highly qualified Committee.

Everything then points to the same conclusion — that intellectual co-operation is forging between the Members of the League a new link which may one day be the strongest that unites us.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the report of the Sixth Committee and the accompanying draft resolutions adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

62. — WORK OF THE ECONOMIC ORGANISATION: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on the work of economic organisation (document A.75.1931.IIB).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Janson, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Rollin, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Rollin (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : I have the honour to submit to the Assembly the Second Committee's report on economic questions. The text before you was accepted unanimously by all the delegations. The report was, I can assure you, discussed carefully and at length. One newspaper, referring to our proceedings, said: "There was much discussion, even on adverbs, which, in diplomacy, are very important". It added: "The impression was of a tapestry embroidered over a volcano". That was an acknowledgment of the conscientious work accomplished in an atmosphere of calm and objectivity, despite the difficulties with which we have had to contend.

Unanimity presupposes a real effort at conciliation on both sides. I was a witness of this and take this opportunity of paying a tribute to all my colleagues and of thanking them for their sympathy and valuable collaboration. Unanimity does, unhappily, owing to the mutual concessions which it demands, militate against vigour of thought and tends to restrict the scope of resolutions; but, when all is said and done, it is something to have succeeded in agreeing on a minimum of ideas and desires in regard to particularly complex and delicate questions, which give rise to so much controversy and evoke so many conflicting though legitimate interests.

We have heard many speakers — all, in virtue of their ability, eminently qualified to speak, and all opinions have been given an impartial hearing. Some of them brought to light a calm and serene philosophy, indifferent to the tribulations of the century, and it was pointed out how relatively ineffectual our solutions were, in relation to the present happenings. Those people still pin their faith to the free play of economic laws and advise us to wait until the storm is past, to keep a hand on the rudder and to wait until the nations have learnt by their own sufferings that sacrifices are necessary. This crude and rather depressing stoicism elicited a merry conceit from the Greek delegate, who — very aptly — quoted an argument from one of *Æsop's* fables: There was once a good man who lived in a period of crisis and who, though very poor, possessed a donkey, and determined — on account of the hard times — to accustom the gentle and obstinate creature not to eat. He gradually reduced its rations to almost nothing. This plan yielded most satisfactory results, until one day the poor fellow found his donkey dead. "What a pity", he cried: "my donkey has died just as he was getting used to not eating anything!"

Æsop, we all know, was a wise man, and the fable proves it. It is, unfortunately, only too true that there are limits beyond which human privations and sacrifices cannot go. The doctrine of free trade, come at a time like the present, when many of its most sturdy partisans are wavering, has found eloquent defenders on our Committee.

We can hardly be surprised at this, unless we have forgotten the tremendous hopes and enthusiasm which free trade first aroused, in the middle of the last century. Cobden and Bastiat saw in it the dawn of an era of cheapness and hailed it as the herald of international peace. One of its protagonists went so far as to say: "Free trade is Christianity in action". I do not think, however, that the merchants of Manchester, any more than those of Paris or Berlin, have anything in common with Christmas angels. As a minimum statement, we can only say that events have not fully justified these prophecies.

What, then, are we to do? What solution are we to recommend? That terrible mark of

interrogation reveals the painful, almost tragic, character of our position in the present circumstances as representatives of our sorely tried countries.

The peoples of the world are going through a crisis without precedent in its extent, duration and intensity, and we are acutely conscious of that crisis. We can discern the causes of the evil and the perils which are already upon us or threaten us. All of us, with the same goodwill, sincerity and fervour, desire to remove them.

We have heard appeals addressed from the Assembly platform by the most qualified authorities, who have drawn attention to the gravity of present problems and the urgency of solving them, and we should like to be able to respond by deeds to these poignant appeals. We realise that salvation is only to be found in the union of peoples, which to-day are so closely dependent on one another that they may be compared to limbs of the same body, none of which can be sick or unhealthy without all the others being immediately affected. We should like to foster their economic relations with the ardent hope that this exchange of interest will pave the way for intellectual and moral *rapprochement*. But we find ourselves faced with grim barriers on which our intentions stumble, if they do not fall.

Failing a complete solution, we have to look for fragmentary and partial ones; but, when we apply them to realities, we feel they are fragile and inadequate. International solidarity calls for sacrifices, but the national communities which have to accept them are immediately filled with unrest and anxiety.

The work before us is long, but our sufferings require immediate relief, and time presses. We should like to go full speed ahead; time is a factor which it is impossible to disregard. We should like to open up ample communications between the peoples, to multiply and strengthen the bonds which unite them, and to create community of interest between them; but we are hampered at every turn by the prejudices accumulated by age-long selfishness and misunderstandings. Our great scheme of economic union requires confidence, and confidence has still to be created. Cruel is the conflict between human intentions guided by the spirit of Geneva and the brutal force of realities. We must not fear to emphasise this conflict, for the nations we represent must realise it.

Does this mean that we must give way to a gloomy fatalism and to purely negative pessimism? Can we allow it to be said that we can do nothing but bow before the storm and wait for greater sufferings to bring a useful lesson to mankind? We have no right to do so. Without illusion, but without discouragement, we must apply ourselves to bringing the national communities to an understanding of the principles laid down in the recommendations of the 1927 Economic Conference and the Conferences of 1929 and 1930, in the remarkable studies made by the economic organs of the League, and in the conclusions of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

We must call upon the Governments to examine with the greatest attention the resolutions adopted by the technical experts with regard to the solutions to be applied to the economic crisis.

Should we confine ourselves to these recommendations? The Second Committee does not think so, and it has reached an agreement of principle on several proposals. These — while they certainly do not provide a general and final solution for our present ills — suggest remedies which, although only partial, may none the less be genuinely effective if supported by the goodwill of the peoples.

With great penetration and wisdom, the Sub-Committee of Economic Experts recently, at the beginning of its admirable report, emphasised the primary importance of the part played by lack of confidence in aggravating the world situation. This report says:

“The growing international distrust is accentuating the effects of the crisis, increasing the obstacles to the normal circulation of capital and obstructing to an ever-increasing extent the whole mechanism of international trade. Lack of confidence not only entails stagnation of capital, reluctance to lend abroad and refusal to enter into long-term undertakings, but also tends to paralyse and retard all forms and phases of economic life. The result is a flagging of the spirit of enterprise, the postponement of programmes already decided upon, the abandonment of the search for new markets, the limitation of the purchase of raw materials to daily requirements, the dismissal of workers, excessive caution instead of productive activity and stagnation instead of progress.”

These wise words must be heard. Governments must learn the lesson they contain, must instruct their public opinion and silence the disturbing elements and the authors of hatred, fear and distrust in order that the peoples, instead of looking backwards with regret and revengeful feelings, may resolutely advance in a new spirit and with free hearts towards a true economic solidarity, the source of well-being and pacification.

The report now before you comprises the whole of the work accomplished with perfect consistency by the League of Nations and its research organisations and by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, in the economic field; it includes clearly defined principles, recommendations to the Governments, concrete solutions and results already achieved which can now be definitely set down to the credit of the League.

In order to give you some idea of the scope and importance of this work, I need only enumerate the problems dealt with: Concerted economic action, the Commercial Convention of 1930, economic *rapprochement*, international economic agreements, agricultural questions, the organisation of trade in cereals, a preferential tariff for the purchase of cereals from Central and Eastern European States, the co-operative association of agricultural production and consumption, veterinary conventions, the International Mortgage Credit Company, unemployment — and, among the measures best calculated to mitigate it, the execution of big public works — the most-favoured-nation clause, the treatment of foreigners, unified Customs nomenclature, indirect protectionism, marks of origin, unification of laws relating to bills of exchange and cheques, national economic councils and their co-operation in the work of the League, economic tendencies liable to influence world peace, and the Pact of Economic Non-Aggression.

At the conclusion of its deliberations on all these questions, which I have, of course, been unable to do more than mention, the Second Committee adopted various draft resolutions which should lead to action and results, and which you will find embodied in the report.

No doubt these draft resolutions which are expressed in terms that some, including your Rapporteur, consider too vague, bear witness to a divergence of views and interests such as is bound to arise in an assembly of the nations, and do not afford a solution for all the evils that afflict our several countries. Nevertheless, such as they are, they

show that, in spite of inevitable difficulties and apparent contradictions, the modern world is progressing towards unity and economic solidarity.

In truth, this is no more than the genesis of this new universe; we cannot really judge of the extent of the metamorphosis now proceeding, but we feel that some great thing is in process of creation. The important thing is not to allow sullied hands to destroy the seeds, but to create an atmosphere favourable to their development.

Nothing great or decisive — this cannot be too strongly emphasised — can be achieved in the economic domain if the essential psychological factor of confidence is lacking. It is essential that this truth should be brought home to all Governments, that they should teach it to their countries, that they should do everything in their power to propagate it.

At the present moment, M. Pierre Laval, the head of my Government, and M. Aristide Briand, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, are about to cross a frontier which has been the scene of so many painful conflicts. Deliberately, in spite of difficulties, resolute and sincere of heart, they are setting forth to accomplish a great act which, if the peoples were able to realise it, may form a new starting-point for the real, loyal and lasting *rapprochement* which is everywhere awaited as constituting one of the surest guarantees of security and peace.

I propose, therefore, on behalf of the Second Committee, the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

1. The Assembly,

Recognising that the normal exchange of commodities between the nations is seriously hampered by frequent changes in Customs tariffs and, generally, by instability in commercial policy;

Considering the statement made by the Sub-Committee of Economic Experts to the Commission of Enquiry for European Union to the effect that the increasing disparity of tariffs greatly complicates the task of maintaining stability in the monetary and credit system of the world:

Earnestly hopes that every country will try to the utmost possible extent to avoid any such change in tariff or commercial policy as would tend to suspend commercial agreements or to increase the economic disequilibrium and further disturb the general balance of payments. It also recommends that such agreements, where they do not exist, should be concluded on as liberal a basis as possible.

2. The Assembly,

Having noted the resolutions Nos. I and III to VI (document A.38.1931) adopted by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union as a consequence of the report of its Co-ordination Sub-Committee;

Being informed that the Commission of Enquiry did not feel able to put these resolutions into effect until they had been submitted to the Assembly:

Approves these resolutions and requests the Council to take the necessary action to put them into effect.

In particular, as regards the report of the Sub-Committee of Economic Experts the Assembly,

(a) Considering that closer economic co-operation is one of the essential conditions for relieving and overcoming the present economic crisis;

Considering that the report of the Sub-Committee of Economic Experts suggests methods for attaining this object;

Recognising that the seriousness of the crisis and the distress that the coming months will bring require a speedier application of all useful remedial measures:

Notes the resolution of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union inviting the European Governments to present, if possible before January 1st, 1932, their observations on the said report; it recommends the report to the attention of all the Governments;

(b) Having noted the resolution adopted by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union regarding the appointment of a special committee to study the extension of a system of special facilities to agricultural products other than cereals;

Considering that such extension would raise difficult questions of principle, in particular as regards the relations between such a system and the most-favoured-nation clause:

Deems it desirable that the findings of the special committee referred to above should be examined by the Economic Committee before being submitted to the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

3. The Assembly,

Considering that among the means likely to contribute to better organisation of production, the World Economic Conference, and more recently the Sub-Committee of Economic Experts, have expressed the opinion that, under certain conditions and guarantees, the development of international economic agreements may exercise a beneficial influence on the organisation of production and the regulation of trade;

Draws the attention of the Governments to the recommendations of the economic experts in this connection.

It requests, in particular, the Governments and the League of Nations to devote their attention to studying the means of ensuring that international economic agreements should be organised and operated in the general interest and with due regard to all interests concerned in accordance with the recommendations of the economic experts and the relevant chapter in the report of the World Economic Conference.

It draws special attention to the necessity of measures to ensure as wide publicity as possible for these agreements, making it possible to follow their activities so as to safeguard all legitimate interests, particularly those of consumers, whether countries or persons.

It further requests the Economic Committee of the League of Nations to resume and push forward its consultations concerning the most important branches of production.

4. The Assembly,

Seeing that, among the measures of international solidarity calculated to mitigate the effects of the economic depression and to assist the resumption of activity which would benefit the workers of all countries, consideration should be given to the execution of important public works jointly undertaken by public or private groups on European or extra-European territory;

Seeing, further, that the problem has already been approached by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union and has been laid before the competent organs of the League of Nations;

In order to expedite the examination of these programmes, to co-ordinate them on an international scale, to hasten their putting into effect and to follow their execution:

Invites the Council of the League of Nations to instruct the Committee of Enquiry set up by the Communications and Transit Organisation, to which should be added representatives of the International Labour Office and possibly of the economic and financial organs of the League, to undertake these various tasks.

This Committee will examine the concrete proposals of the various Governments, particularly from the point of view of the utility and productivity of the works proposed.

It will report to the Council of the League of Nations. The Commission of Enquiry for European Union will be called on to give its opinion on the proposals relating to Europe.

5. The Assembly notes with satisfaction that the draft unified Customs nomenclature prepared after an urgent request from the Assembly by the Sub-Committee of Experts appointed for the purpose has now been completed.

It considers that the adoption of an agreement to utilise a uniform Customs nomenclature would facilitate the development of international economic relations.

Considering that the great advantages resulting from the adoption of such a common instrument will generally compensate for the difficulties of adjustment which its adoption may entail, it agrees with the procedure suggested by the Economic Committee and the Sub-Committee of Experts and approved by the Council.

It therefore earnestly appeals to all Members and to the States non-Members of the League of Nations to which the draft unified Customs nomenclature will shortly be submitted to examine the draft without delay, so that they may be in a position to forward their replies to the Secretariat as soon as possible.

6. The Assembly notes with satisfaction the valuable results of the two International Conferences for the Unification of Laws on Bills of Exchange, Promissory Notes and Cheques, and strongly urges the Governments of the States concerned to take steps to ensure that the instruments of ratification of these Conventions shall be deposited as soon as possible, and in any case before the expiry of the time-limits provided.

7. The Assembly,

Considering that it would be desirable to associate with the work of the League of Nations institutions (National Economic Councils) representing the most important economic and social elements in certain States ;

Considering that institutions of this nature already exist—although with different methods and with different powers—in a number of countries, especially in Europe ;

Convinced of the desirability of utilising these institutions as much as possible in the work of improving international economic relations :

Requests the Council to seek the most appropriate means of providing for the co-operation of National Economic Councils in the work of the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : As no one else wishes to speak, I shall consider the report of the Second Committee and the accompanying draft resolutions adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

63. — DISPUTE BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : Before the Assembly proceeds to discuss the next item on its agenda, M. Lerroux, President of the Council, wishes to make a communication.

The President of the Council will address the Assembly.

M. Lerroux (Spain), President of the Council :

Translation : As President in Office of the Council, I have a communication to make to the Assembly.

The question of the dispute between China and Japan is being examined by the Council. Consultations are in progress with the representatives of the two countries on the Council and we hope that a satisfactory conclusion will be reached.

The Council hopes to be able to make a statement to the Assembly as soon as circumstances allow. Meanwhile, it has asked me to assure the Assembly that it is devoting to this question the time and attention that is fitting in view of the interest of peace and of the respect due to the two parties concerned.

The President :

Translation : I think I may make a statement which for the moment will obviate any discussion. It is clear that, as long as the dispute has not been submitted to the Assembly, it is for the Council to discuss the facts and to seek some means of appeasement. But in circumstances like the present, it is most essential that the League should be able to count on the support of public opinion in all countries. That support will certainly not be withheld if our action is in accordance with what is expected of us. It will not suffice, therefore, for the Council to remain in session continuously, and as far as possible in public, until the maintenance of peace is assured. It is necessary, further, that the Assembly should not adjourn without giving expression to the interest felt by all Members of the League in the success of measures of such paramount importance to our institution.

We hope, therefore, that the Council will make a further communication to us on this subject before the close of our session, in order that the Assembly may express its views on this dispute.

64. — OPENING OF A CONVENTION FOR THE REGULATION OF WHALING : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on the opening of a Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (document A.64.1931.IIB).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Braadland, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Braadland will address the Assembly.

M. Braadland (Norway), Rapporteur :

Translation : I have the honour to submit to you a report on the subject of a Convention for the Regulation of Whaling. The main object of the draft Convention annexed to the report is to secure

the adoption by the greatest possible number of countries of certain rules intended to prevent, in the interest of the whaling industry itself, the destruction of a source of wealth available to all.

The draft before you is the outcome of work begun in 1925 as the result of an Assembly resolution, adopted in the previous year, for the creation of a Committee of Experts.

After a preliminary examination, the Economic Committee came to the conclusion, in July 1929, that international measures might be contemplated to ensure the protection of whales and that such measures were actually urgent.

The Norwegian Government meanwhile had prepared a Bill providing that its whalers throughout the world should observe certain rules with a view to putting an end to the incomplete utilisation of the whales taken. These rules were framed with a view to obtaining valuable biological information.

The draft Convention which you have before you, and which follows the main lines of the provisions of the Norwegian law, is the outcome of a thorough study of the question by a Committee of Experts. After being recast by the Economic Committee, the draft Convention was submitted by the Council to all Members of the League and to the non-Member States for their observations.

Finally, the Committee of Experts appointed by the Governments studied the question once more, taking into account the observations and suggestions received. Thus the draft before you is the result of patient and careful work by qualified persons and has already been under consideration by the Governments.

For the provisions of the Convention, I shall refer you to the report. Article 12 provides that the information collected by whalers shall be regularly communicated by the Governments of the contracting parties to the International Bureau for Whaling Statistics at Oslo, for the purpose of comparing such information.

I take this opportunity of thanking the League for the honour thus conferred on my country, which will do everything in its power to fulfil the task entrusted to it. As I have already said, this is an urgent matter; I venture then to make an urgent appeal from this platform to all Governments, that the Convention may be signed and ratified as soon as possible.

I should like to stress the fact that the co-operation of countries which have not at present a direct interest in the question is an essential condition if the Convention is to have the full effect desired. Those countries can now, without any sacrifice on their part, guarantee by their signature that the rules of the Convention shall not be evaded, but shall be recognised as binding on everyone, and, if one of those countries later on starts a whaling industry, it will profit by the results of the Convention thus concluded with the Governments concerned.

As regards my own Government, I have pleasure in announcing that I am prepared, in virtue of the full powers conferred upon me, to sign the Convention this very day.

In conclusion, I propose the following draft resolution:

The Assembly,

Convinced of the importance and urgency of regulating whaling by means of an international agreement prohibiting the taking or killing of certain kinds of whales which have become extremely rare and of making the fullest possible use of the animals the catching of which is still permitted;

In view of the fact that the attached Convention differs from that communicated to the Members

of the League and non-Member States by Circular Letter No. 158, of July 3rd, 1930, only as regards certain minor points of drafting, and that no substantial changes have been introduced therein:

Decides to open the said Convention immediately for the signature of Members of the League and non-Member States, and expresses the hope that the largest possible number of States will accede thereto without delay.

The President:

Translation: Mr. Collins, delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Collins (Australia): It is my intention, on behalf of the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, to sign the Convention for the Regulation of Whaling. My Government, however, has instructed me to say that it may be necessary at the time of ratification, to make a reservation concerning the limitation of the powers of the Commonwealth Government with regard to fishing.

Under Article 1 of the Convention the contracting parties agree, within the limits of their respective jurisdictions, to carry out the Convention and to punish any infractions of its provisions. Therefore, any Commonwealth legislation on the subject would necessarily be limited to "Australian waters beyond territorial limits", and it is in consequence of this constitutional difficulty that the reservation to which I have referred may become necessary at the time of ratification.

The President:

Translation: If no one else wishes to speak, I shall consider the report and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The President:

Translation: As the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee has been adopted, the Convention, the text of which is appended to the report, becomes open for signature, immediately by the States Members and non-Members of the League.

I have been asked to inform those members of the Assembly who possess the necessary powers that the Convention is open for signature and that they can sign it in Room 110 at the Secretariat.

65. — WORK OF THE ORGANISATION FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit (document A.76.1931.VIII).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Costa du Rels, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: M. Costa du Rels, delegate of Bolivia, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Costa du Rels (Bolivia), Rapporteur, read his report and the following draft resolution:

The Assembly,

Takes note of the work undertaken by the Organisation for Communications and Transit since the last Assembly and in particular of the success achieved by the Conference for the Unification of Buoyage and Lighting of Coasts, the Conference for the Unification of River Law and the Conference on Road Traffic;

Expresses its confidence that the Organisation will do its utmost to secure the entire success of the co-operation established with the National Government of China for the study of questions of public works in which its assistance has been requested;

Likewise expresses its confidence that the Transit Organisation will endeavour to take suitable steps to comply with requests for advice in respect of public works which it may receive from the various Governments; such as the requests for advice referred to in the report of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

The President :

Translation : As no one has asked to speak, I shall regard the report of the Second Committee and the draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

66. — WORK OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on the Work of the Health Organisation (document A.60.1931.III).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Fierlinger, Rapporteur, took his seat on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Fierlinger (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur :

Translation : Two years ago I had the honour to report to you on the work of the Health Organisation, and on that occasion I emphasised the growing importance of that work, which is becoming more and more systematised and is being extended to an ever-growing number of countries in all continents.

While the efforts of the other organs of the League are necessarily concentrated on certain weak points in the world, the Health Organisation is at the disposal of every country which desires to consult it on any technical point or wishes for its opinion on the reorganisation of its health services. Its salient features are its universality and its entirely non-political character; and these in themselves go far to enhance the prestige of the League in both hemispheres.

The work of the Health Organisation is extremely varied, and I have been unable in my report to deal adequately with the different problems with which it has successfully dealt. I have mentioned only the most important tasks in the various branches of health, undertaken in co-operation with the different Governments — such as, for instance, the study of the different methods for the serological diagnosis of syphilis, the enquiry into the causes and prevention of infant mortality in Roumania and the work of the special Commissions, such as

the Leprosy Commission, the Malaria Commission, etc.

I should like to emphasise the social and economic importance and significance of these problems, such as the study of rural hygiene undertaken on the proposal of the Spanish Government. The problem is how to preserve intact and to increase that vast reservoir of health, the rural population, so as to be able to draw upon it for renewed vigour for our anemic civilisation, debilitated by town life. The Spanish Government's proposal redounds to its credit and clearly shows us the direction which Spain's national aspirations are taking. Her desire is unselfishly to serve humanity and to stimulate social and moral progress.

Spontaneous unanimity was displayed in the discussion regarding China, whose people have been the victims of an appalling catastrophe caused by natural forces and need effective international assistance. This catastrophe, which has already claimed so many victims, might undoubtedly have other disastrous consequences, if millions of men were left without shelter or food or the means of combating epidemics.

It is not selfishness which prompts us to take energetic measures to combat this evil; it is our common duty towards that great country, China. We hope that all the Governments, and especially those which have suitable technical organisations in the Far East, will respond to the appeal which the French delegation, supported by the Japanese delegation, very appositely added to the resolution proposed by the Committee. This appeal is a fresh proof of the international solidarity which the League is endeavouring to encourage between all nations whether Members or non-Members of our great organisation.

The few examples I have mentioned to illustrate the work of the Health Organisation lead me to hope that the lofty aims pursued by our Assembly in the matter of health will come to be more and more widely understood and that the Assembly will, as in previous years, approve the report and the accompanying draft resolutions, which read as follows :

I. The Assembly,

Having noted the reports on the work of the Health Organisation of the League of Nations since the last session :

Recognises with satisfaction the value of the methods of international co-operation employed by this Organisation ;

Notes with satisfaction that the experience acquired by the Health Organisation is being made available to the States Members of the League to an ever-increasing extent ;

Expresses the hope that steps will be taken to give the widest and most rapid distribution to the information collected by the Health Organisation concerning the practical and scientific health work, carried out in the different countries, which is of international interest ;

Views with interest the work accomplished on rural hygiene, and hopes that the task undertaken in this field will be extended so that the rural populations of all countries may benefit in the near future ;

Approves the work carried out by the Health Organisation since the last session of the Assembly ;

And congratulates that Organisation on the results obtained, which give fresh proof of the concentration of its efforts on definite tasks, and the universality of its work.

II. The Assembly,

Regarding the danger of the spread of epidemics and the loss of life as a result of the terrible disaster in the Yangtse valley, both as a humanitarian problem of the first magnitude and a matter of international concern,

Recalling the assistance rendered in similar circumstances by the Health Organisation through its Epidemic Commission in Poland and Greece in 1921 and 1923;

Convinced of the need to show clearly and concretely the sympathy of humanity for the victims of this appalling catastrophe;

Invites all the States Members and non-Members of the League of Nations, and particularly those in close contact with the Far East, to respond, so far as is in their power, to any request that may be made to take all possible measures for relief in the flooded areas of China, in co-operation with the League of Nations;

Requests the Council to take the necessary steps to render the international co-operation effective.

The President :

Translation : As no one has asked to speak, I shall consider the report and the accompanying draft resolutions adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

67. — CO-OPERATION OF WOMEN AND OF THE PRESS IN THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Third Committee on the co-operation of women and of the Press in the organisation of peace (document A.73.1931. IX).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Munch, Chairman of the Third Committee, and M. Buero, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Buero (Uruguay), Rapporteur :

Translation : I do not think it is necessary to read the report, as it has been distributed to all the delegations.

The Spanish proposal, in which the Assembly showed particular interest, included two questions, one relating to the Press and the other to the co-operation of women. In the Committee, with the Spanish delegation's approval, we framed two separate proposals, which are reproduced in the document before you:

The Spanish proposal concerning the co-operation of women reached us at a particularly opportune moment. Now, when the League is undertaking what may perhaps be decisive work in the organisation of peace, the co-operation of women may be indispensable or, at all events, of very great value in creating an atmosphere favourable to the proceedings of the forthcoming Disarmament Conference and to the pacification of those Chauvinist passions which subsist practically everywhere — a dark inheritance of the past.

As M. de Madariaga, delegate of Spain, pointed out during the discussion in the Third Committee,

the influence of women in the training of young people is decisive at the age when young minds receive their first impressions, which may perhaps play a large part in the mentality of the future citizen, and, as I mention in the report, what is suggested is not official co-operation but simply the non-official co-operation of women in the organisation of peace and the maintenance of good understanding between peoples.

If these considerations are approved by the Assembly, the Committee proposes that you should accept the draft resolution included in Part I of the report.

The other part of the report and the second draft resolution concern the co-operation of the Press in the organisation of peace. It is so explicit in itself that there is no need for me to go into details. I therefore propose the adoption of the following draft resolutions :

I. The Assembly,

Convinced of the great value of the contribution of women to the work of peace and the good understanding between the nations, which is the principal aim of the League of Nations,

Requests the Council to examine the possibility of women co-operating more fully in the work of the League.

II. The Assembly,

Considering that the organisation of peace demands an international spirit freed from all prejudices and misconceptions,

Convinced of the necessity of ensuring that Press information shall be as impartial and complete as possible,

Requests the Council to consider the possibility of studying, with the help of the Press, the difficult problem of the spread of false information which may threaten to disturb the peace or the good understanding between nations.

The President :

Translation : M. de Madariaga will address the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga (Spain) :

Translation : The Spanish delegation desires to thank M. Buero for the excellent report which he has presented on its two proposals.

As regards the first of those proposals, the Spanish Government has shown by the composition of its delegation that it is in full sympathy with the tendency which has been displayed, in connection with this motion, to suggest that women should form part of the delegations. The Spanish delegation feels, however, that that question was not really the starting-point of its motion and that it might perhaps betray a lack of tact to suggest to Governments what they ought to do when forming their delegations.

The same applies with perhaps even greater force to the other question submitted to the Committee concerning the composition — whether more or less feminine — of the big international meetings and in particular of the Disarmament Conference. The Spanish delegation deems it necessary to adhere strictly to the feeling which inspired its motion, a feeling certainly shared by the majority of the Third Committee — namely, that the co-operation of women should be restricted, for the time being at all events, to the specific functions of women in their own countries and in their own homes — namely, that they should concern themselves with creating the moral atmosphere indispensable to the League's success.

Naturally, the other questions raised by delegates who are in favour of a greater extension of feminine participation in public life are not affected. My Government and my delegation reserve full liberty with reference to any decision in the future.

As regards the Press, we wish to say quite plainly that it would be truly surprising if a Government formed as the result of a violent reaction in the country — violent, that is, in substance, for the reaction was peaceful in form — against a long period of censorship should submit to the Assembly, which owes its existence to liberty of conscience, any suggestion for limiting the freedom of the Press. The Spanish delegation desires to state categorically that such a thought has always been and always will be remote from its intentions. My delegation will never accept any restriction of liberty, even if it be necessary to bow before the evils of liberty.

There is, however, one very definite point beyond which the Spanish motion on the Press is not intended to go — that is, the moment when the news has become known and has been published. What happens prior to that moment does not concern the censorship. The latter can operate only after the Press has published its news. Then only can there be any right to criticise or perhaps to ascertain whether the news is false, to discover the source of the news and to decide with whom the responsibility rests. But we do not think this constitutes a field of research which it is legitimate or perhaps even necessary for the League to explore.

I wish to revert, however, to my first point, to the necessity of maintaining intact freedom of thought and opinion, and I have no hesitation in affirming, on behalf of my delegation and my Government, that we should even be prepared to abandon all idea of remedying the evils resulting from false news, if that meant jeopardising liberty, which we prize above all else.

The President :

Translation : As no one has asked to speak, I shall consider the report of the Third Committee and the accompanying draft resolutions adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

68. — COMMUNICATIONS OF IMPORTANCE TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Third Committee on communications of importance to the League of Nations in times of emergency (document A.74.1931.IX).

The President :

Translation : M. Buero, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Buero (Uruguay), Rapporteur :

Translation : The report before you contains information which the Committee has felt that it should place before the Assembly relating to certain measures to be adopted by the League in times of emergency. I do not think I need add anything further, since the information in question has been obtained from the Secretariat, but I am at the disposal of those who may wish for any further details.

The President :

Translation : As no one has asked to speak, I shall consider the Third Committee's report approved.

The Assembly approved the report of the Third Committee.

69. — EXTENSION OF THE TERM OF OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF FIVE FOR THE ORGANISATION OF THE SESSIONS OF THE ASSEMBLY: ADOPTION OF A DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : At its meeting this morning, I directed the attention of the General Committee to the desirability of extending the mandate of the Special Committee of Five which had been instructed to consider, in the interval between two sessions of the Assembly, what improvements might be made in the organisation of the conditions of work of the Assembly.

The Special Committee of Five has done some very useful work. Several of its suggestions have been adopted by the Assembly and have been found to be extremely valuable — for example, that of simultaneous translation. It would be expedient accordingly to enable the Committee, between the twelfth and thirteenth sessions, to ascertain once again, on the basis of the experience obtained, whether further improvements could be recommended.

The General Committee decided accordingly to propose to the Assembly that it should extend the term of office of the Special Committee, and requested me in consequence to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

Congratulates the Special Committee of Five for the organisation of sessions of the Assembly on the results of its work and thanks it for the most valuable advice which it has hitherto given the Assembly ;

Decides to extend for one year the term of office of the Special Committee of Five and requests it to submit new suggestions to the Assembly at its next plenary session.

The draft resolution was adopted.

70. — PARTICIPATION IN THE WORK OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF STATES NOT REPRESENTED IN THE ASSEMBLY: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : Following on the information which I gave the Assembly yesterday morning concerning the invitation which it addressed to various States not represented in the Assembly to take part, in an advisory capacity, in the proceedings of the Third Committee relating to the proposed armaments truce, I have the honour to state that another reply has been received from one of the Governments — Brazil — invited in these circumstances : that Government informs me that it will send an observer to represent it at the proceedings of the Third Committee.

The Assembly rose at 1.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH, 1931, AT 10 A.M.

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71. — APPOINTMENT OF A SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE EXISTING SYSTEM OF ELECTIONS TO THE COUNCIL : REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the First Committee concerning the appointment of a special committee to study the existing system of elections to the Council (document A.56.1931.V).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Scialoja, Chairman of the First Committee, and Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil (British Empire), rapporteur :

The resolution I have to put before you is extremely brief, and I hope quite uncontentious. It reads :

The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a special committee to study the existing system of elections to the Council and to report to a future session of the Assembly on any reforms which may appear desirable.

It is not proposed that the Committee should work with undue haste, but it is proposed that it

should be appointed so that the subject can be ventilated. I think this procedure is in every way preferable, rather than that suggestions should be made by individual members to the Assembly of any reform that might occur to them, which would probably be done without sufficient regard to the interests of all concerned. It is much better that, in the first instance, the matter should be impartially examined, and if any results arise out of that examination the Assembly would have to consider them.

The only other remark I wish to make is that the terms of the resolution have been purposely made as wide as possible, so that the Committee may be able to consider the question of the enlargement of the Council, if necessary, though I personally would rather regret a change in that direction.

The President :

Translation : As no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the draft resolution proposed by the First Committee adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

72. — AMENDMENT OF THE COVENANT OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS IN ORDER TO BRING IT INTO HARMONY WITH THE PACT OF PARIS : 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 amendment of the Covenant of the League of Nations in order to bring it into harmony with the Pact of Paris (document A.86.1931.V).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Rolin, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Rolin (Belgium), Rapporteur :

Translation : I am submitting to you, on behalf of the First Committee, a resolution for postponement; but if I may be allowed to make the distinction, this decision for postponement has been taken, not with resignation, but with confidence. This is the third year that this question has been before the Assembly, and when I say this is a confident postponement, it is because I have a profound conviction that we have considerably reduced our divergencies of view and are approaching a solution.

Last year, in the report which he submitted from this platform on behalf of the First Committee of the Assembly, my predecessor, M. Cassin, told you that the First Committee had been held up by political difficulties and that various delegations had expressed the opinion that, although the legal aspect had been adequately examined, the political aspect had not as yet. In our opinion, too much is made of this sort of distinction, which is so often drawn between political and legal questions. In practice, this may have a certain interest, but only if these questions are not divided into watertight compartments.

The First Committee is no doubt the Committee for legal questions, but I shall not surprise you when I say that all your various committees, especially when they draw up draft conventions, are doing legal work, perhaps not always in the

best possible way, but it is legal work. So you will not bear any ill-will to the First Committee if, in connection with the essential work of the Covenant of the League, it has been obliged to consider political problems, sometimes in a general and abstract manner and sometimes, I admit, in a concrete way. We found that some of us felt misgivings on particular points. We dealt with them as frankly as possible and, I may add, as discreetly as possible. It was in this spirit that we worked, and we arrived, I think, at bases providing greater possibilities of ultimate agreement.

Furthermore, if we have been concerned with questions of policy, it has been in the highest sense of the word, and our discussions, as one of our colleagues pointed out, have sometimes had a philosophical bias rather than any other and have bordered on the common ground where politics and law meet.

What was the question before us? The amendment of the Covenant in order to bring it into harmony with the Pact of Paris. This expression "harmony" is particularly suggestive. The aim was to avoid discord between the Pact of Paris and the Covenant: the Pact, which prohibits resort to war as an instrument of national policy, and the Covenant, which still allows recourse to war against a State refusing to have recourse to arbitration, against a State refusing to carry out an arbitral sentence, against a State refusing to carry out a unanimous recommendation of the Council and, finally, against a State which, in presence of a report of the Council adopted by a majority, refuses to wait for three months, as prescribed by Article 15 of the Covenant.

These were known as licit wars; for we are all agreed that the legal value of the Paris Pact is not the point, and that what is prohibited for signatories of the Paris Pact by that Convention is likewise prohibited in their relations as between Members of the League, since it would be impossible to allow that rules of international law exist from certain points of view and not from others.

We see that from the moral standpoint it is to the interest of public opinion or of the student, the scholar who studies the Covenant, that there should be no uncertainty, that nothing should be allowed to remain in some texts which is disallowed by other texts, that the prohibition to have recourse to war by those who are at the same time signatories of the Paris Pact and Members of the League should, as it were, be codified: but we realised that the work of bringing these instruments into harmony presented a loftier, a more complex aspect. We realised that to take this prohibition to have recourse to war embodied in the Paris Pact and to incorporate it in our social organisation was liable, in the nature of things, to have certain repercussions.

We have in the League an organisation designed for the purpose of maintaining peace, which makes provision, in the event of any threat of war or actual war, for measures of collective intervention, of joint action. We must consider what repercussions the adoption, the consecration of the rule prohibiting recourse to war would have on the functioning of our institution.

The problem has various aspects: first, the constitutional aspect, the statement of the new principle of prohibition to have recourse to war, and we thought that this very simple formula — which, encountered practically no difficulty among us — would be sufficient; there was apparently a tacit acceptance at least of the preference expressed last year by the First Committee for finding a single formula, to be substituted for the various specific prohibitions scattered through the

Covenant, which should embody the very simple principle that, so far as Members of the League are concerned, they renounce the right to have recourse to war.

Various questions, various difficulties were, however, raised by certain of our colleagues. Several of them were concerned with the question of legitimate defence, and we wondered whether it might be necessary to provide expressly in the Covenant for the right of legitimate defence. That question proved simple. The right of legitimate defence is provided for in the Covenant, though not expressly so. Why should it be expressly included in the event of revision? The right of legitimate defence is simply the application of a general principle of law — to employ an expression of the Permanent Court of International Justice — the principle that when an agreement has been entered into on a bilateral or multilateral basis and one of the parties evades its obligations, the other parties are automatically released from theirs.

That is the *non adempti contractus* clause. A State violates its undertaking not to have recourse to war; it has no right to demand that the other parties shall respect that same obligation.

The definition of legitimate defence, and especially the limitative definition of the various material aspects under which legitimate defence might occur in practice, was a problem also considered this year by the Third Committee. The latter gave up the attempt to formulate a solution and we do not feel any more competent to do so than they.

Legitimate defence is a conception which exists in municipal law, although the character and conditions of such legitimacy are not, to my knowledge, defined in any law. It is a principle of conscience, a principle of common sense, a concept which perhaps defies definition in abstract terms, but which in practice presents no difficulty.

In order, however, to indicate somewhat more precisely the various solutions or complications that might be encountered in practice, we have, like the Third Committee, indicated in a footnote to our report a very important, if not decisive, passage, by my compatriot M. de Brouckère, which occurs in a report to the Council on the application of Article 11.

We also had certain problems stated in regard to the right of spontaneous intervention. As you know, Article 16 provides that a violation of the undertakings of the Covenant places the violating State in a state of war with all the other States, and provides for the immediate application of economic sanctions and for a later application, generally on the recommendation of the Council, of military sanctions. The point to be determined was whether provision was to be made for such assistance also as an exception to the prohibition to resort to war, and we seem to have agreed that no such exception should be specified expressly, that here again it was not so much a question of an exception as the simple application of the principle of law, since the State which violates its undertakings is not entitled to demand the execution of those undertakings by the other parties to the Convention.

We considered the question whether one factor in the problem, the appreciation of legitimate defence, could be affected by special conditions, and on that point also we did not feel obliged to recommend, for our future work, any specific solution, since it seemed to us that sufficient indications were already to be found in the general body of the League principles.

These Conventions are of several types. Some are reciprocal and are recognised and approved by

the League, being included among the special Conventions which Article 21 defines as engagements for securing the maintenance of peace.

And when the League organs, whether the Convention has been concluded under their auspices or merely referred to them, have found that it is actually of such a character, the question is already settled in advance and the Council of the League can take account of these Conventions as a matter of course, their character having been thus unanimously recognised. We have one example of this which seems likely to take effect this very year: the Third Committee is drawing up a Convention to reinforce the means of action at the disposal of the Council; the Convention does not confer on the Council the power to prescribe provisional measures, but it gives to this power, which the Council already has, a legal effect which those measures have not hitherto possessed.

It is understood that anyone who violates such provisional measures after having signed the Convention will find himself *de jure* and not only *de facto*, according to the Council's view, presumed to be an aggressor, if there is no other means of determining the aggression.

No one, I think, raised any objection in the Third Committee to the possibility, for Members of the League, of framing certain rules of this nature which will beyond all doubt have certain effects beyond the scope of the actual relations between the Members, since the Council of the League and the Members which have not signed the Convention in question will have the right to invoke it, if necessary, when establishing the aggression.

Lastly, the question arose whether later on, when the moment comes to draw up definitive texts, it would be necessary to catalogue the measures of constraint that might be employed either as reprisals or in execution of arbitral awards, and which measures should be prohibited, since resort to war was strictly prohibited in the wording contemplated. On that point also we considered that the definition of these concepts should be left to experience, to the concrete development of international law, to international jurisprudence, or that, at all events, it was not in the Covenant, which forms the body of constitutional rules, that provision should be made for the solution of this particular difficulty.

We affirmed one essential point — and this is certainly a big revolution even in regard to the execution of arbitral awards — namely, that resort to war in the strict sense of the term was comprised in the general prohibition, but that, as a consequence of this, the task which devolved upon the Council of considering the measures necessary to ensure execution took on a fresh importance and significance, that that task became a particularly imperative one for the Council, that the Council could even, in the last resort, in the face of States which persisted in their attitude, authorise measures of military execution by way of exception in serious cases, but that, in such cases, the measures prescribed by the Council would take on an entirely different character, that they would not, any more than in the case of legitimate defence, constitute a resort to war, but would represent concerted action in perfect conformity with the principles of the Covenant.

Having thus examined the fundamental principle of the prohibition of resort to war, its principal repercussions were next considered with a view to ensuring the desired harmony.

The most familiar aspect, and the one which is very generally placed already on a plane with the principle of prohibiting recourse to war, is the problem of the pacific settlement of disputes. As things stand, the Covenant allows States the choice

between arbitration or judicial settlement, on the one hand, and recourse to the Council on the other. Arbitration or judicial settlement implies findings which are binding upon the parties and to which effect must be given. Recourse to the Council, even when the Council is unanimous, produces only a limited effect, since, in the Covenant as it stands, war is prohibited against a State which fails to comply with the unanimous recommendations of the Council; but the Covenant does not provide for any obligation to carry out its recommendations and the Council has no means of guaranteeing such execution, even when its recommendations are unanimous.

Many delegates therefore held quite logically that, if war is prohibited in every case, a final settlement of the dispute must also be assured in every case.

Two methods seemed feasible. The first and simpler was to extend arbitration or judicial settlement by means of contractual undertakings. This we are trying to do, and considerable progress has been made through the Optional Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court and the General Act of Arbitration. Tempting as it may be to carry things to their logical conclusion, it is better in this matter not to attempt to hurry States, not to try to break down such resistance as is still manifested in somewhat rare cases, not to impose on all, by means of amendments which would doubtless not be ratified, so big a step as general arbitration. This solution was therefore abandoned, at all events, in the form of an amendment.

The second solution contemplated was to confer upon the recommendations of the Council — at any rate, its unanimous recommendations — a binding effect, to entrust the Council with the task of ensuring their execution and, even, in cases in which the Council might be divided, to provide that it would then be under the obligation to refer the parties to arbitration or judicial settlement. This amounted, indirectly, to much the same result — namely, the exercise of constraint on Members. The problem, however, was further complicated by the fact that a certain number of States in favour of compulsory arbitration were not prepared to grant to the Council arbitral or judicial powers or to give its decisions executory and compulsory force, even with the guarantee that the Council could, by a majority, apply for an advisory opinion to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

It seemed that, provisionally, account should be taken in the report of the fact that it would doubtless not be possible to go beyond the point indicated last year in the First Committee's report and that it must suffice to ensure for the unanimous recommendations of the Council a moral effect, in the sense that it would be provided that the Council shall ask States to conform to its unanimous recommendations and that Members of the League which are third parties shall not be able to give assistance to a State refusing to do so.

Thus there is to be no legal obligation laid down in the Covenant, but a certain moral pressure, and provision is made for certain sanctions in the event of violations of that moral obligation.

From a logical standpoint, this may not perhaps be very satisfactory; from a political standpoint — which is dear even to jurists — it is perfectly viable. The States have set this great example by accepting, in the Pact of Paris, the prohibition of resort to war, although the obligation in regard to a pacific settlement is actually far less stressed than in the Covenant.

We consider that this is an example by which we might profit and that, psychologically, it is not astonishing that States should be unanimously

prepared to renounce recourse to violence as a means of settling their disputes, even if they are not quite clear in their own minds what pacific methods should be chosen to arrive at a solution.

I now come to the last and perhaps the most important aspect of the problem, in regard to which it seemed as though it might be least possible to reconcile the divergent points of view. I do not say that we reached unanimity, but I have no fear of being contradicted when I say that we understood each other better, that each of us appreciated the force of his opponent's argument and perhaps the points in the argument which we had been defending with equal conviction; thus, as you may see, it is already possible dimly to discern what will probably be the solution of to-morrow.

What was the main argument last year, the one which has still, I think, the greatest number of supporters? Although as Rapporteur I cannot give you any details, that argument was that, on this essential point, it is impossible, among all the kinds of war prohibited by the Covenant, all the possibilities of illicit resort to war, to point to certain categories to which sanctions would be applied and others which would escape. Conscience demanded, we may say, that no distinction should be allowed, because we considered that to say that in certain cases Members of the League, after taking note of the violation of an undertaking, could simply wash their hands of the whole matter would be to undermine at the outset the moral and legal force of this radical prohibition to resort to war.

We have been accused, to begin with, of attaching too much importance to the problem of sanctions; it was averred that the function of the League, its *raison d'être*, was not to be a repressive judge, whose duty it would be to take cognisance, with a view to penalties, of acts committed by States or to ensure immediate punishment. Such a function would in reality often be very alarming and difficult of accomplishment and would involve delay. It was pointed out that the direct, immediate and essential function of the League is to bring about peace, to reassure minds and hearts, and that the problem of assigning responsibility was one to be solved later, a problem of reparation, if need be.

On that point we very quickly reached agreement. The experience of the Council is there to help us. In the various cases in which the peace of Europe has appeared to be endangered, the Council has been anxious above all to try and restore peace, before attempting to determine the causes of the dispute which had for a space embittered world feeling.

Those in favour of not extending sanctions declared that we were attaching too much importance to providing in the texts for the extension of obligations, whereas the real problem was a question of procedure, of machinery. What was required was to determine whether Members of the League were or were not under an obligation, rather than to determine under what conditions and subject to what guarantees they should recognise that, in a particular case, they must take concerted action against an aggressor State. In this connection, attention was directed to the importance of what was being done in the Third Committee, where legal force was being conferred on the power which the Council already possesses to prescribe provisional measures.

We were told: "It is an organic matter; the Council takes provisional measures; it places itself in a position to establish execution or violation, as the case may be. Having thus made its arrangements with regard to machinery under its own

control, it is then possible for it to take a unanimous decision as to the aggressor." And we are prepared, by way of compromise, to consider the extension of sanctions to all cases in which the Council may have been unanimous in establishing the aggressor.

On this point we agreed — or rather, I agreed — with certain delegations that it was perhaps at the outset a formal mistake to describe as a limitation of sanctions what was in fact only the regulation of sanctions, that the point was not whether actually the obligations to lend assistance in virtue of the Covenant would extend to all cases of aggression, but whether the execution of such obligations ought not to be subject to certain formal conditions concerning proof.

We then took precautions to repudiate the charge that we were increasing the number of cases of sanctions. We considered that the idea of extending sanctions might lead to ambiguity and that, if the principle of unity as regards the pacificatory action of the Council and the prohibition to resort to war were accepted, there might perhaps in theory be an extension of intervention to cases which were not at present liable to sanctions under the Covenant, but that, from a practical standpoint, the likelihood of intervention by the League, far from being increased, would be reduced.

In this connection, we brought out the point that Article 11 of the Covenant enjoins upon the Council to concern itself with any war or threat of war, even licit, under the original Covenant; we considered that that would be the duty of the Council *a fortiori* when all wars had been prohibited, and we thought that it would be anomalous if, in certain cases, it should be the duty of the Council to intervene, while Members of the League of Nations were at liberty to stand aloof, and that the Council would find itself without any concrete means of action.

We then considered whether, in the apprehensions expressed by those in favour of this restrictive amendment, there might not be a modicum of truth. We were told: "If the Council has been divided on the settlement of disputes, it is possible that it may be divided when establishing the aggressor. If there is serious division in the Council, if the Members of the League are required, as under the existing Covenant, to form an opinion in the light of their own conscience, is it fair to place them in such a dilemma that they will either have to violate their individual undertaking, entered into in good faith, to take action against the aggressor whom they may have recognised as such, or perhaps to rush into an unthinkable war of each against all, to be the Don Quixotes of collective assistance, to set out alone to apply sanctions when, in the meantime, the collective instrument has proved unable to function?"

It is surprising, perhaps, that such possibilities should have been considered; let me hasten to say that we regard them all the more calmly, inasmuch as we consider them quite improbable. In point of fact, we think that, although the Council may at times, in perfect good faith, be divided in regard to concrete events, it has means for achieving unanimity in future by adopting provisional measures; we consider that such means will become the more readily available, as it realises the necessity for obtaining the support of public opinion, and keeping it informed, while following as far as possible the practice advocated by the President of the Assembly, in his reply to the speech of the President of the Council, of holding public meetings and avoiding in public defections which, obviously, are more liable to occur at secret meetings..

Unreal though this hypothesis may seem, we can assure those to whom it is causing anxiety

that we recognise that the obligation under Article 16 is an individual one within the framework of a social organisation — that is to say, we recognise it as an individual obligation to co-operate in common action and, in all good faith, we can say that, in the hypothetical case of the League of Nations failing in its mission so completely that there is no common action and that defections outweigh allegiance, the whole social edifice would naturally collapse and individual undertakings would undergo the same fate.

I hasten to add that, in our opinion, such a hypothesis of despair finds no place in any legal system which presupposes the functioning of the League and, just as no constitution in the world provides for revolution, so the Covenant cannot be expected to provide for the contingency of a large number of Members failing in their international obligations. On the contrary, we have a right to say that the only hypothesis we have to consider in connection with our legal texts is that of the good faith and goodwill of the majority.

Thus we arrive at the conclusion that a reasonable interpretation of the Covenant does already largely meet the apprehensions to which expression has been given. If, however, we cannot — or certain of us cannot — accept, as it stands, the amendment proposed — namely, to restrict to cases where unanimity had been established by the Council the obligations under Article 16, which are not at present subject to any conditions of the kind — that is because such a condition of unanimity is in itself too formal and too rigid. It might be possible with a much smaller Council, working under conditions of greater publicity and offering less danger of division, but such a further condition for the application of Article 16 would be inadmissible, as we cannot allow that the essential guarantee of the Covenant — the individual obligation — would be entirely destroyed merely because there might be on the Council, besides the aggressor State, another State secretly allied with it or not sufficiently alive to its own obligations as a Member of the League to carry out its undertakings. For this reason, we have not up to the present seen our way to considering any formulae such as those which were proposed to us.

What will be the solution? I do not wish to constitute myself a prophet, but I think that, in the light of what I have told you, you will feel that, although the arguments put forward on one side must carry some weight — and I think I have brought that out — the objections of the other side are also worthy of consideration and we may quite possibly arrive at a less rigid settlement of the question of the application of sanctions than had been contemplated.

That is the point we have reached. I do not think that any one of us has changed his opinion to the extent of going over to the opposite side, but I believe we shall all agree, as I said just now, that we have understood one another's point of view and that a solution appears less difficult and more probable than last year when M. Cassin submitted a report on the same subject.

We have summed up in our report, as conscientiously as possible, the legal and political aspects of the problem and enumerated the points of agreement and of difference, and we do not ask you to approve the report in the sense of inviting you to accept, here officially, as States, the opinions expressed in it. We realise that on such an important subject the delegations desire, before committing themselves officially, to be able to discuss the question and refer it to their Governments. We have drawn up a report which has been approved by the First Committee, and therefore carries a certain amount of moral authority. We think it

may serve as a basis for subsequent discussions, and that must be our excuse for making it so long.

We also considered the question of procedure and realised that the problem of bringing the Covenant into harmony with the Pact was bound up with a different problem — the reduction of armaments.

Some of us are of opinion that if the Covenant is thus completed, simplified and brought into harmony with present-day international law, which prohibits recourse to war, its effective operation will be facilitated and the authority of our constitutional position will be considerably strengthened and that, in the circumstances, certain States will perhaps come to the Conference for the Reduction of Armaments with more confidence.

We also realised that the fears expressed by other States on the score of the repercussions of what they call the extension of sanctions — which is the theoretical extension of their obligations to give assistance — will be greatly mitigated if the Disarmament Conference leads to the conclusion of a sound, permanent and satisfactory Convention such as to satisfy the requirements of Article 8 of the Covenant both in letter and spirit, and world peace is consequently consolidated and the chances of conflict reduced to a minimum.

We thought that, in the circumstances, agreement would be considerably facilitated, even as regards those points on which there were still divergencies of view, if we postponed the establishment of a final text until the Disarmament Conference or after that Conference.

We have therefore suggested that the question of completing the texts and seeking a final agreement should be postponed, the work being referred to a temporary Committee, which would meet between the two Assemblies and prepare texts for next year.

The Council will decide the date on which this Committee is to meet, but we have suggested that it should be during the Conference, both on account of the logical connection between the two questions in the minds of certain States — though other States do not concur in their view — and also for reasons of economy. We shall have at Geneva, for months at a time, jurists of every nation represented on the League, and it is only natural that we should desire to take advantage of their presence and ask them to do this additional work in their spare time.

There is no question of course in our minds of including in the agenda of the Conference the problem of amending the Covenant in order to bring it into harmony with the Pact of Paris. That work would proceed side by side with that of the Conference. Indeed, it could not be otherwise, as certain States participating in the Conference are not Members of the League. It will be carried on at the same time as the work of the Conference and, we hope, will be harmonious with it. For my part, I am confident that both the Conference for the Reduction of Armaments and the Committee to settle the amendments to the Covenant will achieve entirely satisfactory results and solve this problem which, as you must realise, strikes at the very heart of the League.

In conclusion, I submit, on behalf of the First Committee, the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

Taking note of the report approved by the First Committee :

Reaffirms its intention of continuing the task of inserting in the Covenant of the League of Nations a general prohibition of recourse to war and the principle that the settlement of international disputes may only be sought by pacific methods ;

Decides to create a committee consisting of representatives of all the Members of the League of Nations, which may meet during the Conference for the Reduction of Armaments for the purpose of seeking unanimous agreement on the bases indicated in the report and of drawing up a final text which may be voted by the Assembly at its next session ;

Requests the Council to convene the Committee for the date which it considers appropriate ;

Requests the Secretary-General to transmit the present resolution and the report to the Members of the League of Nations, in order that, if they consider it necessary, they may send to the Council their views as to the lines on which they think agreement could be attained.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider that the Assembly has duly noted the report of the First Committee and adopted the accompanying draft resolution.

The draft resolution was adopted.

73. — SLAVERY : 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 slavery (document A.83.1931.VI).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Costa du Rels, Vice-Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and M. Loudon, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Loudon (Netherlands), Rapporteur :

Translation : It is an admitted fact that, despite the campaign instituted more than a century ago, to her lasting honour, by Great Britain, slavery — that blot on modern civilisation — is still found in many places.

It is rife in certain countries not represented on the League, and unfortunately there are also countries which do belong to the League where it still exists in various forms. The Governments of those latter countries, however, are by no means inactive and, far from condemning them, we ought — considering the tremendous difficulties with which they have to contend — to acknowledge their efforts to extirpate this evil.

Indeed, this homage was paid to them in the Sixth Committee. Count Apponyi and several other delegates, including myself, expressed their sincere admiration of the way in which that enlightened ruler, the Emperor of Abyssinia, has demonstrated his determination to abolish slavery, despite the difficulties he is encountering in eradicating throughout his vast empire a custom which is so deeply rooted there.

A tribute was also paid to the Liberian Government for its efforts to eliminate the evil, and the Sixth Committee intimated that the same feelings inspired it as regards all the Governments concerned which were resolutely adopting a similar course.

Those Governments need the League's support. That is why the British Government, protagonist in the fight against slavery — as shown by the work of the Anti-Slavery Society, now nearly a century old, and by the recent extremely important debate

in the House of Lords — is constantly emphasising its keen interest in this problem.

Last year, the British delegation, regarding as inadequate the communications concerning slavery forwarded by Governments under the 1926 Slavery Convention, proposed the setting up first of a permanent Commission and then of a permanent advisory office. It was decided, however, before modifying the procedure which had been in existence for barely two years to wait another year.

This year, the British delegation, in view of budget difficulties, has dropped its original proposal for the time being and proposed, through Lord Lytton, that the former Temporary Commission set up in 1923, which had never concluded its work, should be reappointed for a year, on the understanding that the expenditure involved should be reduced to a minimum.

This Commission, if re-established, would be instructed to examine the material on slavery collected since the publication of the last report of the Temporary Commission and to recommend to the next Assembly the measures of assistance which the League of Nations could render to those countries that have agreed to abolish slavery. It might also study the possibility of setting up a permanent office.

In the Sub-Committee appointed to examine this proposal, which was opposed in particular by the delegate of Portugal, I put forward, in the form of an amendment to the British text, a suggestion, which I had already made in the plenary Committee that, instead of the Temporary Commission, a Committee of three experts should be appointed, to be chosen exclusively on the grounds of their personal qualifications and competence.

The British proposal, which was supported by several delegates, won the day, and unanimity was achieved, but only after an amendment providing that a small committee of experts should be set up to examine the material and submit to the Council suggestions with a view to recommending to the next Assembly the measures of assistance which the League could render to countries that had agreed to abolish slavery and might request such assistance.

Count de Penha Garcia, delegate of Portugal, explained that his Government could not agree to the setting up of a Committee which was outside the framework of the Covenant and did not take into account the legal position created by the Anti-Slavery Convention. Subject to this reservation, he accepted the resolution adopted by the Sixth Committee.

M. Louwers, the Belgian delegate, also made a very pertinent legal observation, which is deserving of special mention.

He was, he said, in favour of the formula adopted, inasmuch as it did not imply control or interference in the internal affairs of States. If, on the other hand, it had done so, he could not, he said, have subscribed to it, as the Assembly had no authority to take such a decision either under the Covenant or under the 1926 Convention.

The draft resolution, which was duly submitted to the Fourth Committee in view of the expenditure involved by even a small committee of experts — whose number would be fixed by the Council — formed the subject, in the Fourth Committee, of a discussion which reflected the necessity of restricting expenditure during the present crisis.

The British delegation having given an assurance that the League expenditure on the committee of experts need not exceed 10,000 gold francs, as the British Government could, if necessary, furnish for this object a sum derived from a private source, the Fourth Committee offered no objection to

the inclusion of this comparatively small item in the League budget for 1932.

I have the honour, therefore, on behalf of the Sixth Committee to submit to the Assembly for approval the report which you have before you and which I have only amended in a few unessential particulars in accordance with the Committee's wishes, together with the accompanying draft resolution, which reads as follows:

The Assembly,

Requests the Council to appoint for one year a small committee of experts to examine the material upon slavery which has been supplied or transmitted by Governments since the signature of the Convention of 1926. This committee will submit to the Council suggestions with a view to recommending to the next Assembly the measures of assistance which the League of Nations could render to those countries which have agreed to abolish slavery and which request such assistance.

The President :

Translation : Lord Lytton, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Lord Lytton (British Empire) : I desire in two or three words to support the draft resolution which has been presented to you by the Sixth Committee and also to associate my delegation with the remarks made by the Rapporteur regarding the efforts recently made by the Governments of certain countries to abolish slavery within their borders.

As it is not mentioned in the report of the Sixth Committee, I think the Assembly should know that the action recently taken by the Emperor of Abyssinia was brought to the notice of the Sixth Committee by Count Apponyi, and that Committee expressed its great satisfaction at this action and desired that its approval of the steps which he had taken should be conveyed to the Emperor.

It is a cause of great satisfaction to the British delegation that this year at last some step is to be taken in the direction which we, for two or three years, have advocated hitherto unsuccessfully. There are two reasons why the British delegation believes that this small temporary committee of experts will be of value. The first is that, since the framing of the Slavery Convention, it has become known that a considerable amount of material is available and in the possession of various Governments. That information, however, is of such a character that the Governments in whose hands it is are reluctant either to publish it or to take any action upon it until it has been submitted confidentially to the examination of experts qualified to test its value.

We hope, therefore, that this small committee, which it is proposed to set up for one year, may be able in the course of one session to go through this material, sift it, express an opinion upon it and advise the Council as to what action, if any, might be taken by the League to deal with the conditions revealed in those documents. We hope by this means to save the countries where conditions of slavery still exist from being prejudiced by the expression of public opinion insufficiently informed.

The second reason why we think this Committee may be valuable is that we hope the experience gained from its work may remove the anxieties which still exist in the minds of some delegations regarding our proposal for the creation of a Permanent Expert Bureau to examine documents relating to slavery.

I wish to emphasise that the Committee now to be set up is only a preparatory and advisory

committee. It will take no action itself, it will merely report to the Council upon the documents submitted to it, but I feel confident that, as the result of its work, the Assembly next year will be better able to decide whether any action, and, if so, what action, is still needed to hasten the emancipation of the slaves that still exist in the world and to remove permanently this evil from society.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the report of the Sixth Committee and the accompanying resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

74. — GIFT BY THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The President :

Translation : Before proceeding to the agenda, I have an agreeable duty to perform. I ought to have performed it before, but I have been waiting for a suitable opportunity, and I will therefore take advantage of the present occasion.

The Canadian delegation has, on behalf of its Government, presented the League of Nations with a very fine portrait of Senator Dandurand, former President of the Assembly and Member of the Council, who has always been a friend of the League and who is, too, the personal friend of us all.

All of us who know Senator Dandurand and feel a warm affection for him must be glad to see him portrayed on this remarkably fine and expressive canvas, which is on view at the Secretariat. We are extremely grateful to the Canadian Government for the pleasure it has afforded us. We must congratulate the artist who has thus restored to us the presence of this distinguished man, who is beloved of all and has rendered such signal services to the League.

When making this magnificent gift to the League, the Canadian delegation expressed the hope that its example would be followed and that other portraits of Presidents of the Assembly would be offered to the League. This wish proves the deep interest which Canada takes in the men who are called by the League to direct its work.

I can assure the Canadian delegation on behalf of the Assembly that its wish has been interpreted in the spirit in which it was meant and that it will not be forgotten.

75. — PREPARATORY PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE CASE OF GENERAL CONVENTIONS TO BE NEGOTIATED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee on the question of the preparatory procedure to be followed in the case of general conventions to be negotiated under the auspices of the League of Nations (document A.80.1931.V).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Scialoja, Chairman of the First Committee, and Professor Giannini, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President:

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Giannini (Italy), Rapporteur :

Translation : The eleventh Assembly adopted a resolution relating to the drafting of international conventions concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations. Part IV of that resolution provided for the procedure to be followed in all cases in which the League might desire to conclude a convention, and was designed to facilitate, after conclusion, the ratification of the convention, which, according to the last part of that section of the resolution, was to be transmitted to the Governments for their observations and also to the technical organs of the League.

After the receipt of the replies of the Governments and of the observations of the technical organisations of the League the problem of the preparatory procedure to be followed in the case of general conventions to be negotiated under the auspices of the League was submitted to the First Committee.

The First Committee has amended certain paragraphs of the resolution, and I shall merely indicate the changes adopted. I may say that the Persian delegation made proposals with regard to other paragraphs of the resolution adopted by the eleventh Assembly, but the Committee considered that the subject of the Persian proposal could not be dealt with at our discussions.

The preamble to Part IV adopted by the Assembly last year and paragraphs 1 and 2 are unchanged. The essential amendment is that made in paragraph 3. It was thought that the Assembly should be the deciding factor in the matter of a draft convention, and it was also thought that not only a convention to be prepared during a conference, but also the possibility of a protocol being drawn up by the Assembly itself, should be considered.

For this reason paragraph 3 was amended to read as follows :

"The draft convention and the observations of Governments (together with the answers to the questionnaire, if any) shall be communicated to the Assembly, and the Assembly shall then decide whether the subject appears *prima facie* suitable for the conclusion of a convention."

This amendment also involved an amendment to paragraph 4, which now reads :

"If the Assembly considers the subject *prima facie* suitable for the conclusion of a convention, the Council shall arrange for the preparation. . . ."

Paragraph 5 has also been slightly amended, and now reads as follows :

"In the light of the results of this second consultation of the Governments, the Assembly shall decide whether a convention should be concluded and, if so, whether the draft should be submitted to a conference, the date of which it will request the Council to fix."

The amendments to this paragraph are the following : As regards the second consultation, the Assembly is to be the deciding factor instead of the Council, and provision is also made for the possibility of a draft convention being approved by the Assembly and being opened for signature by the States.

Finally, paragraph 7 has been slightly amended.

I should like to draw the attention of the Assembly to the fact that the first six paragraphs provide for the preparation of a convention by the organs of the League, while the last paragraph provides for the procedure to be followed in the case of a convention initiated either by the Assembly itself or by a Government. Consequently, in accordance with the suggestion made by the Swedish delegation, the scope of the provisions of paragraph 7 has been somewhat extended and the paragraph now reads as follows:

"The procedure set out in the preceding paragraphs will be followed, as far as possible, in the case of draft conventions, the desirability of which is recognised by a decision of the Assembly either on its own initiative or as the result of a proposal by a Government. In these cases, the Council will instruct either the Secretariat or some other organ of the League or specially selected experts to prepare the abovementioned report, which shall subsequently be submitted to the Council."

This means that, if discussions by a conference are to be instituted on the initiative of a Government or of the Assembly, there will be a choice of three systems.

In the last paragraph it is indicated that this procedure is not absolute. It is stated that it will be followed "as far as possible" and, at the beginning of the resolution, the formula adopted by the preceding Assembly is retained: "The preparatory procedure should, in principle, be followed, except in the cases where . . . the Assembly or the Council consider other methods to be more appropriate".

The two proposals — that contained in the preamble and that inserted in paragraph 7 — tend to make the procedure proposed rather more flexible, for the following reasons: First, there are certain technical organisations of the League which have rules or a particular statute, and it is obviously not desired to change the procedure with regard to them; secondly, certain procedures are already provided for in particular conventions; and, finally, there is the general rule.

The procedure contemplated in the resolution, which is rather a long one, may be followed, but the obligation is not absolute: in other words, precautionary measures are indicated, designed to secure sound preparatory work, and it must always be borne in mind that this paragraph was contemplated in the resolutions of the last Assembly as likely to facilitate the conclusion of sound conventions, as regards both their ratification and their execution. The wording of the preamble and of paragraph 7 removes the doubts entertained by the technical organisations.

The following is the procedure intended: first the attention of the Assembly is drawn to the fact that the adoption of a good preparatory procedure in the case of a convention does not mean that the convention will be good, just as good preparatory procedure in preparing a national law is calculated to produce a good law but does not necessarily do so.

There remains the question of substance, which we discussed at the last Assembly — that is to say, that, while counselling precautionary measures with regard to the technical organisation of useful conferences, there still remains one factor to be considered — namely, the spirit of understanding among the nations, which alone can render possible agreement regarding the conclusion of conventions concerning international relations.

The amended text of Part IV of the resolution adopted by the last Assembly therefore reads as follows:

That, in the case of all general conventions to be negotiated under the auspices of the League of Nations, the following preparatory procedure should, in principle, be followed, except in the cases where previous conventions or arrangements have established a special procedure or where, owing to the nature of the questions to be treated or to special circumstances, the Assembly or the Council consider other methods to be more appropriate:

1. *Where an organ of the League of Nations recommends the conclusion of a general convention on any matter, it shall prepare a memorandum explaining the objects which it is desired to achieve by the conclusion of the convention and the benefits which result therefrom. Such memorandum shall be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations.*

2. *If the Council approves the proposal in principle, a first draft convention shall be prepared and communicated, together with the explanatory memorandum, to Governments, with the request that, if they feel that the draft should be taken into consideration, they shall inform the Secretary-General of their views, both with regard to the main objects or the suggested means of attaining them, and also with regard to the draft convention. In some cases, it may be desirable to annex a specific questionnaire.*

3. *The draft convention and the observations of Governments (together with the answers to the questionnaire, if any) shall be communicated to the Assembly, and the Assembly shall then decide whether the subject appears prima facie suitable for the conclusion of a convention.*

4. *If the Assembly considers the subject prima facie suitable for the conclusion of a convention, the Council shall arrange for the preparation of a draft convention in the light of the replies received from Governments, and the new draft convention (together with the replies of other Governments) shall be transmitted to each Government with a request for their opinion on the provisions of the draft and any observations on the abovementioned replies of the other Governments.*

5. *In the light of the results of this second consultation of the Governments, the Assembly shall decide whether a convention should be concluded and, if so, whether the draft should be submitted to a conference, the date of which it will request the Council to fix.*

6. *The Council, in fixing the date for the convocation of a conference, shall endeavour, as far as possible, to avoid two League of Nations conferences being held simultaneously, and to ensure the lapse of a reasonable interval between two conferences.*

7. *The procedure set out in the preceding paragraphs will be followed, as far as possible, in the case of draft conventions the desirability of which is recognised by a decision of the Assembly either on its own initiative or as the result of a proposal by a Government. In these cases, the Council will instruct either the Secretariat or some other organ of the League or specially selected experts to prepare the abovementioned report, which shall subsequently be submitted to the Council.*

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the resolution submitted by the First Committee adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

76. — PROGRESSIVE CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee to the Assembly on the progressive codification of international law (document A.79.1931.V).

M. Giannini, delegate of Italy and Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Giannini (Italy), Rapporteur :

Translation : The last few days of the first Conference for the Codification of International Law were characterised by what might be termed a neurological spirit as far as the future action to be taken in the matter of codification was concerned ; but the Drafting Committee, of which I had the honour to be Chairman, retained its optimism and put forward two recommendations in connection with the continuance of the work of codification.

The eleventh Assembly too was somewhat affected by this pessimistic spirit, but in the end optimism triumphed, and we adopted a resolution to the effect that the work of codification should be continued, in view of the fact that practical suggestions had been submitted by the Conference itself with regard to the continuance of the work.

Certain recommendations were communicated to the Governments for their observations, and a great many observations were received. The First Committee has considered these ; and this time, without re-discussing the preliminary question of the desirability or otherwise of resuming the work of codification, it merely prepared the rules of procedure to be followed for the continuation of this work.

What method does it recommend ?

The first question that arose was whether special rules of procedure should be laid down for the work of codification. A tendency in favour of independent provisions was manifested by the eleventh Assembly itself. During the present Assembly, it has been strongly urged that, while due consideration should be given to the general provisions included in the resolution I mentioned just now, special provisions should be adopted, the two resolutions being brought into harmony as far as possible. That is the spirit in which the resolution submitted to the present Assembly was conceived.

The first paragraph of this resolution deals with the methods to be followed in submitting proposals. Any State or group of States, whether Members of the League or not, may propose to the Assembly a subject or subjects with respect to which codification should be undertaken. Such proposals, together with a memorandum containing the necessary explanatory matter, should be sent before March 1st to the Secretary-General, in order that he may communicate them to Governments and insert them in the agenda of the Assembly. The fixing of this date ensures a minimum period of six months for the preliminary study of any proposals submitted to the League.

Paragraph 2 deals with the consideration of such proposals by the Assembly and states that they will be considered by the Assembly, which will decide whether the subjects proposed appear *prima facie* suitable for codification.

Paragraph 3, on the other hand, concerns the preparations for the work and provides that, if the investigation of a proposed subject is approved by the Assembly and if no existing organ of the League is competent to deal with it, the Assembly will request the Council to set up a committee of experts, which will be asked with the assistance of the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to make the necessary enquiries and to prepare a draft convention on the subject, to be reported to the Council with an explanatory statement.

Thus, apart from certain exceptional cases, a committee of experts will be asked to prepare a draft, which will be accompanied by an explanatory report. The report prepared by the committee of experts will be transmitted by the Council to the Assembly, which will then decide whether the subject is provisionally to be retained as a subject for codification. The second phase, the consideration not of the question but of the draft, is also reserved for the Assembly. If this is decided affirmatively, the Assembly will ask the Secretary-General to transmit the report to the Governments of the Members of the League and to non-Member States for their comments. The comments of the Governments will be submitted to the committee of experts, which may decide to retain the draft already prepared, as it stands, or to revise it. These two contingencies are provided for in subparagraphs 2 and 3 of paragraph 5 ; if the committee of experts revises the draft, the revised draft will be submitted to the Governments for their comments and, together with the comments received, will be transmitted to the Assembly, which will then decide finally whether any further action should be taken in the matter.

Thus, according to the procedure contemplated, and in view of the fact that the contingency provided for in paragraph 5 will certainly arise, the Assembly will have to decide three times as to the calling of a conference. This procedure may seem, at first sight, rather long. Indeed, I am afraid I thought so myself, but I have come to agree entirely with the Committee in thinking that we cannot be too cautious. It is desired, therefore, that, before calling a conference, the States should take three decisions at the Assembly, as to whether the question should be embodied in a convention, in order to prevent hastily decisions being taken in the matter and to avoid any difficulties which might arise out of the examination of such a question by a conference.

I should like, however, to point out that the preamble contains a clause to the effect that, to this end, the Assembly decides to establish the following procedure for the future, except in so far as, in particular cases, special resolutions provide to the contrary. This clause, which is designed to meet certain apprehensions, and which was suggested by the Chairman of the First Committee, M. Scialoja, is intended to make it clear that it is not desired to establish an absolute code of procedure. A normal procedure is to be adopted in cases where no special procedure is adopted — that is to say, there is no reason to suppose that this provision regarding procedure is liable to render abortive resolutions not in accordance with the procedure established.

Finally, I should like to draw the Assembly's attention to the fact that the preamble, which is connected with the resolution adopted by the eleventh Assembly, emphasises once more our desire to continue the work of codification, but it

adds: "with the object of drawing up conventions which will place the relations of States on a legal and secure basis without jeopardising the customary international law which should result progressively from the practice of States and the development of international jurisprudence".

Without defining the limits of codification, therefore, it is desired to make it clear, in the preamble, that we do not wish to arrest the course of history and that the development of customary law and inter-State law should continue.

Finally, the Assembly adopted two recommendations, which are to some extent a restatement of Nos. II and III adopted by the codification conference.

The first recommendation is designed to ensure that, in relation with the further work in connection with the codification of international law, the international and national scientific institutes should collaborate in the work undertaken by the League. During the Codification Conference, very remarkable work was done by certain national and international institutes, and it was therefore thought that such collaboration should not be disregarded, but should, on the contrary, be intensified.

This recommendation mentions national and international organisations, for two reasons: There are international organisations which work in a spirit of international co-operation; but there are also important national organisations which are imbued with the same spirit and have carried out enquiries and studies and furnished assistance, services which deserve not to be forgotten. Our colleague of the German delegation has already emphasised the co-operation which certain German institutes have decided to afford, and we should all be prepared to say as much with regard to certain parts of the work of codification. Thus, in connection with the codification of legislation regulating sales now being dealt with by the Rome Institute, the Berlin Institute has done admirable preparatory work.

The recommendation to which I am now referring is in effect the result of the work done at The Hague, and reproduces almost word for word the text of the recommendation adopted there. Our colleague, Baron Descamps, had contemplated the setting up of a research committee for the advancement of international law within the framework of the League. The Committee, though it appreciated this proposal, did not see its way to accepting it, for two reasons — expediency and the imperative need for economy.

The second recommendation to which I would draw your attention also reproduces a Hague proposal and provides that the work of codification undertaken by the League should be carried on in concert with that of the international conferences of American States.

The Pan-American preparatory work for codification will begin next month, and our recommendation has come just in time to have a practical effect. We were of opinion that the work done in America should be carried on in concert with that of the League. That it should be in concert is necessary, as there can be no question in matters of justice and law of discriminating between nations in different continents. There cannot be different bases of justice and law in different nations.

The First Committee therefore submits for your adoption the following draft resolution:

The Assembly recalls that the resolution of September 22nd, 1924, emphasised the progressive character of the codification of international law which should be undertaken, and, in view of the recommendations of the First Conference for the

Codification of International Law held at The Hague in 1930, it decides to continue the work of codification with the object of drawing up conventions which will place the relations of States on a legal and secure basis without jeopardising the customary international law which should result progressively from the practice of States and the development of international jurisprudence. To this end, the Assembly decides to establish the following procedure for the future, except in so far as, in particular cases, special resolutions provide to the contrary.

1. Any State or group of States, whether Members of the League or not, may propose to the Assembly a subject or subjects with respect to which codification by international conventions should be undertaken. Such proposals, together with a memorandum containing the necessary explanatory matter, should be sent, before March 1st, to the Secretary-General, in order that he may communicate them to Governments and insert them in the agenda of the Assembly.

2. Any such proposals will be considered by the Assembly, which will decide whether the subjects proposed appear *prima facie* suitable for codification.

3. If the investigation of a proposed subject is approved by the Assembly and if no existing organ of the League is competent to deal with it, the Assembly will request the Council to set up a committee of experts, which will be asked with the assistance of the Secretary-General of the League of Nations to make the necessary enquiries and to prepare a draft convention on the subject, to be reported to the Council with an explanatory statement.

4. The Council will transmit such report to the Assembly, which will then decide whether the subject is provisionally to be retained as a subject for codification. If this is decided affirmatively, the Assembly will ask the Secretary-General to transmit the said report to the Governments of the Members of the League and non-Member States for their comments.

5. The committee of experts, if it considers it desirable to do so, will revise the draft in the light of the comments made by the Governments.

If the committee of experts revises the draft, the revised draft will be submitted to the Governments for their comments and, together with the comments received, will be transmitted to the Assembly, which will then decide finally whether any further action should be taken in the matter and, if so, if the draft should be submitted to a codification conference.

If the committee does not see any reason to revise the draft, it will be transmitted, together with the comments of the Governments, to the Assembly, which will then decide finally whether any further action should be taken and, if so, if the draft should be submitted to a codification conference.

The Assembly recommends:

(1) That, in relation with the further work in connection with the codification of international law, the international and national scientific institute should collaborate in the work undertaken by the League of Nations;

(2) That the work of codification undertaken by the League of Nations should be carried on in concert with the conferences of the American States.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the First Committee's draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

77. — PROPOSAL OF THE GOVERNMENT OF FINLAND TO CONFER ON THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE JURISDICTION AS A TRIBUNAL OF APPEAL IN RESPECT OF ARBITRAL TRIBUNALS ESTABLISHED BY STATES : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the resolution (document A.82.1931.V) submitted by the First Committee in connection with the proposal of the Government of Finland to confer on the Permanent Court of International Justice jurisdiction as a tribunal of appeal in respect of arbitral tribunals established by States.

(On the invitation of the President, M. Raestad, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Raestad (Norway), Rapporteur :

Translation : The First Committee requested a Sub-Committee to study the Finnish proposal to confer on the Permanent Court of International Justice jurisdiction as a tribunal of appeal in respect of arbitral tribunals established by States. That Sub-Committee framed a draft recommendation and a draft Protocol, which formed the subject of an important discussion in the First Committee.

The discussion showed that the Committee as a whole was of opinion that appropriate measures should be taken, as far as possible, to obviate the disadvantages to which disputes with regard to the validity of arbitral awards might give rise. Nevertheless, it appeared that there was still some uncertainty as to the means to be employed in attaining this object. The nature of the difficulties encountered will be seen from the report dated May 29th, 1930, of the Committee of Five Jurists appointed by the Council, and from the report and proposals of the Sub-Committee and the Minutes of the First Committee.

I have the honour, therefore, to propose to the Assembly that it should adopt the following draft resolution submitted by the First Committee :

The Assembly,

Noting the report of the Committee set up by the Council to study the Finnish proposal to confer on the Permanent Court of International Justice jurisdiction as a tribunal of appeal in respect of arbitral tribunals established by States ;

Noting also the report of the Sub-Committee of the First Committee, and

Thanking both Committees for their valuable work :

Notes that thorough discussion of the question in the First Committee has shown that it presents many aspects on which sufficient light has not yet been thrown, and

Decides to adjourn the question for examination at a later session.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

78. — SITUATION AS REGARDS THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PROTOCOL OF SEPTEMBER 14th, 1929, CONCERNING THE REVISION OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE : 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 entry into force of the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, concerning the revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice (document A.81.1931.V).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Pilotti, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Pilotti (Italy), Rapporteur :

Translation : Although the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, did not enter into force on the date originally contemplated (paragraph 4), the Assembly last year accepted the view that it could subsequently come into force, if the necessary ratifications were received.

One of the resolutions regarding the Permanent Court which were adopted by the Assembly on September 25th, 1930, asked the Court to take certain action as regards its sessions and the attendance of judges " pending the entry into force of the Protocol ". The Court acceded to this request and, at the beginning of this year, made certain slight amendments to its rules.

Another of these resolutions invited the States which had not yet done so to ratify the Protocol. In his oral statement to the Assembly, the Rapporteur of the First Committee indicated that the ratifications necessary would be those of all the States which had ratified the Protocol of Signature of the Court's Statute of December 16th, 1920. It should be noted, further, that paragraph 7 of the Protocol provides :

" For the purposes of the present Protocol the United States of America shall be in the same position as a State which has ratified the Protocol of December 16th, 1920 ".

What is the present position with regard to the ratifications ? Thirty-eight Members of the League have so far ratified both Protocols ; the ratification of Cuba is, however, subject to reservations as stated below.

The Members of the League and non-Member States which have ratified the Protocol of 1920 but have not yet ratified that of 1929, are the following : Abyssinia, Brazil, Chile, Lithuania, Panama, Uruguay and Venezuela.

It should be pointed out that all these States have signed the Protocol of 1929, with the exception of Abyssinia.

The following Members of the League have not ratified either Protocol, but, with the exception of the Argentine and Honduras, they have signed the Protocol of 1929 : Argentine, Bolivia, Colombia,

Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Paraguay and Peru.

The United States of America have signed, but not yet ratified, the Protocol of 1920 and that of 1929.

The Cuban ratification of the Protocol of 1929 was subject to reservations (a) regarding paragraph 4 of the Protocol, relating to its entry into force on September 1st, 1930, if the States whose ratification was necessary, but which had not ratified, gave their consent, and (b) regarding the new text of Article 23 of the Court's Statute.

The new text of Article 23 of the Court's Statute deals, as the Assembly will remember, with the abolition of the former sessions of the Court — that is to say, the Court will sit practically all the year round, except during the annual vacation.

In the letter forwarding the instrument of ratification to the Secretary-General, the Cuban Government made the following declaration :

" I have, at the same time, the honour to inform you that the Cuban Government consider that the Protocol will not affect the position of judges already elected, and to request you to take note thereof ".

I would remind the Assembly that the question referred to in this declaration had already been raised by other States, and that it had been agreed that it could only be decided by the Court. Consequently, the declaration does not really embody a reservation.

In execution of the instructions given to him by the Council's resolution of June 17th, 1927, in regard to reservations attached to a ratification of a Convention and not provided for by the terms of the Convention, the Secretary-General, by a letter of January 22nd, 1931, invited the other Governments concerned to inform him whether they were able to accept the reservations made by Cuba. He at the same time informed them of the declaration made by the Cuban Government. In view of the nature of the Protocol, and the provisions of its seventh paragraph, the letter was addressed to all the Members of the League, Brazil and the United States of America.

The replies to this letter which had been received up to the date of the present report may be summarised as follows :

(1) No objection has been raised to the reservation of paragraph 4 of the Protocol ;

(2) The declaration of the Cuban Government is regarded as referring to a matter which the Assembly last year considered to lie within the competence of the Court itself ;

(3) As regards the reservation of the new text of Article 23 of the Court's Statute, the replies which had been received at the date of the present report show that a large number of Members of the League of Nations which have ratified the Protocol do not feel able to accept the reservation, and that, accordingly, its maintenance would endanger the coming into force of the Protocol.

It is, therefore, with particular satisfaction that the First Committee welcomed the following statement which was submitted to it by M. Ferrara, first delegate of Cuba, quoting a communication from the Cuban Government to himself :

" If, as seems likely from the information which you have, Cuba is asked to withdraw its reservation upon the Convention dealing with the new Statute of the Permanent Court, we request you to state that the Government, having regard to the situation which you

anticipate, would be disposed to ask the Senate to withdraw the reservations, and that this attitude does not arise from a change of view, but is due to its desire to contribute whole-heartedly to the development of the League of Nations and of its organs. The Chairman of the Committee of the Senate on Foreign Affairs, who has been consulted, has given a favourable reply ".

In this connection, the first delegate of Cuba pointed out that all that really remained of his Government's reservations was the non-admission of the principle adopted in 1929 with regard to the putting into force of the Convention by presumed ratifications on September 1st, 1930.

Further, the delegate of Chile informed the Committee that his Government had felt that it should await the discussion at the Assembly of the reservations made by the Government of Cuba before pronouncing upon the ratification of the Protocol. He added that the Chilean delegation had felt particular satisfaction in noting the declaration made in the name of the Government of Cuba, which made it possible to hope that the latter Government would withdraw its reservation at a very early date, which would facilitate the decision to be taken by the Government of Chile.

In view of these considerations, the First Committee proposes that the Assembly should adopt the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

Notes with satisfaction that the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, concerning the Revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice has now obtained almost all the ratifications necessary to bring it into force ;

Notes, however, that the ratification of Cuba is subject to a reservation which other States that have ratified the Protocol have not felt able to accept ;

Considers that a reservation can only be made at the moment of ratification if all the other signatory States agree or if such a reservation has been provided for in the text of the Convention ;

Takes note that the Cuban Government has, through its first delegate, declared that it contemplates the withdrawal of the said reservation, and expresses its thanks to the Cuban Government for the spirit of conciliation which it has shown in the matter ;

Reaffirms the hope which it expressed at its last session that the States which have not so far ratified the Protocol will proceed to do so as soon as possible ; and

Instructs the Secretary-General to present to the Assembly, for consideration at its next session, a statement showing the ratifications received by the Protocol of September 14th, 1929.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the report and the draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

79. — RUSSIAN, ARMENIAN, ASSYRIAN, ASSYRO-CHALDEAN AND TURKISH REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : We now come to the last item of the agenda, the discussion of the report of the

Sixth Committee on questions relating to refugees (document A.85.1931).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Fotitch, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Fotitch (Yugoslavia), Rapporteur :

Translation : I will not comment in detail upon the report on the work of the Refugees Office, but I should like to mention a few points which seem to me to be worthy of note.

I should like first of all, on behalf of the Sixth Committee to express once more our sincere gratitude to Dr. Max Huber, former President of the Permanent Court of International Justice and President of the International Red Cross, for having agreed to act as President of the Governing Body of the Office and for his devotion in carrying on the humanitarian work initiated by the late Dr. Nansen.

Although the days of the Office are now numbered and the scheme for its liquidation has already been approved, it still has important work to do, and we may be sure that thousands of unfortunate people still look to it for assistance.

Thus, the question of the transfer of Armenian refugees from Bulgaria and Greece to Armenia has again arisen. Dr. Nansen had already taken up the question, but, in view of the material and financial difficulties, which seemed to him to be insuperable, he was obliged in 1927 to give up his scheme. Now the responsible Armenian refugees organisations have informed the Office that the preliminary work necessary for the settlement of these refugees has already been done by the Government of the Erivan Republic, so that 6,000 refugees can be transferred immediately and 4,000 others at the end of this year.

This is a question which will occupy the attention of the Governing Body of the Office, and we may be certain that it will be solved in the best interests of the refugees.

As regards the Armenian refugees in Syria, we have learnt with great satisfaction that 25,000 have already been settled and that the remaining 15,000 will be settled between now and the end of 1933.

In order to pursue its work, the Office needs other funds besides those derived from the League contribution, which covers the administrative expenditure. The Office draws its revenue from two sources—the proceeds from the sale of Nansen stamps and the response to appeals to public charity by means of collections.

The proceeds from the sale of the Nansen stamp have this year yielded 100,000 Swiss francs, which has been derived from about 30 per cent of the total number of refugees. If all the Governments would enforce the Nansen stamp issue, the revenue from that source could easily be trebled, which would greatly assist the Office in its work.

In May last, a moving appeal was signed by the most eminent politicians with a view to obtaining contributions with a view to the establishment of a Nansen Memorial Fund in order to continue the philanthropic work commenced by Dr. Nansen. This appeal revealed the misery of thousands of refugees to whom no help had been rendered despite Dr. Nansen's efforts, and urged all nations, in the name of solidarity and humanity, to supply fresh funds to enable the Office to complete Dr. Nansen's work.

The appeal was not in vain. The Office has received from each of the national societies of Denmark and Great Britain a sum of 100,000 Swiss francs, and the Norwegian delegation has just informed the Office that Norway will contribute a sum of approximately 350,000 Swiss francs—an act of generosity worthy of the memory of Dr. Nansen.

We venture to repeat from this platform the appeal in favour of this work, and we are convinced that, in spite of the difficult times through which almost all countries are now passing, the spirit of solidarity will not allow any to forget those whose fate has been particularly hard.

In conclusion, I propose the adoption of the following draft resolutions :

The Assembly,

Recognises the endeavours made by the Governing Body of the Office to comply with the request of the eleventh Assembly to prepare a plan for the liquidation of the Office before the end of 1939, and notes that it has prepared a scheme which gives effect to the suggestion made by the Supervisory Commission that the budget of the Office should be reduced by approximately 10 per cent per annum ;

Recommends the adoption of the plan of liquidation proposed by the Governing Body and of the Rules of Procedure and Financial and Staff Regulations of the Office ;

With a view to facilitate the liquidation by the Office of its staff :

Invites the Secretary-General of the League and the Director of the International Labour Office to accord, as far as possible, a preference to that staff when vacancies occur in their respective organisations ;

Requests the Governing Body of the Office, in its future reports to the Assembly, to give full information concerning the various aspects of the refugee problems and the measures taken and contemplated by the Office for their solution ;

Having noted proposals made for the transfer to the Armenian (Erivan) Republic of some thousands of Armenian refugees, and bearing in mind the resolution on this subject adopted by the tenth Assembly :

Invites the Office to examine carefully the possibility of facilitating the transfer of such of those refugees who desire to proceed to the Armenian (Erivan) Republic, if it is satisfied that such transfer is in the best interests of the refugees ;

Requests the Office to devote particular attention to the precarious situation of more than 100,000 Russian refugees in China, with a view to their settlement in employment in other countries ;

Urges the interested Governments which have not already done so to put into full application the Nansen stamp system ;

Invites the Governments to encourage and facilitate the creation in their territories of National Committees for the Nansen Memorial Fund ;

Requests the Governing Body of the Office, in consultation with the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees, to consider the advisability of preparing a Convention to ensure the protection of the refugees on the liquidation of the office ;

Recommends that the Belgian Government be invited to nominate a delegate to the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees ;

Requests the Council to communicate to the Governments the recommendations adopted by the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees at its fourth session concerning certain facilities for the refugees.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the report of the Sixth Committee and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 12.45 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH, 1931, AT 10.30 A.M.

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80. — NATIONALITY OF WOMEN : REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the First Committee on the question of the nationality of women (document A.84.1931.V).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Scialoja, Chairman of the First Committee, and Mr. Beckett, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

Mr. Beckett (British Empire), Rapporteur :

I beg to present the report of the First Committee on the subject of the nationality of women. The report and the resolution which is annexed thereto have been printed in English and French, and there is nothing which I need add to what is said in the written document.

The President :

Translation : Dame Edith Lyttelton, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Dame Edith Lyttelton (British Empire) :

I only want to say a very few words this morning, not on the legal aspects of the resolution before you, but to make one or two points on the human aspect. You will, I know, all consent to the women's views being put before your Governments, for all that is asked of you is a reconsideration of those views, and your reports will, of course, influence your Governments very greatly. I therefore want to give you one or two of the reasons why women like myself feel strongly on this matter.

We women see no reason why we should not be the equals of men in this matter of nationality. Providence makes no distinction of sex here. Neither men nor women have control over what country they shall be born in. Whatever our sex may happen to be, we are born German, French, English, as the case may be, and it is just as easy to tell to what nationality a woman belongs as to what nationality a man belongs. Sometimes I think it is even easier, especially in the case of French women, because they have that marvellous talent for dress. But I must not be frivolous about this, because I do not feel frivolous at all.

We want to know why men abrogate to themselves the power to determine the nationality that has been given us by Providence ; we do not understand their right to do it. We do not want our nationality to be treated as a coat or garment.

which a man can cut or alter or dye or throw away just as he likes. We do not think that this is fair or that it is giving us a proper place.

Two arguments are always brought against us. In the first place, and this I have heard many times this week, we are asked why, at this moment in the world's crisis, we should bother about such a small thing. I do not think this is a fair argument. You might just as well ask why men should be bothering this week about the codification of international law, or why are they bothering about an exhibition at Berne or about the protection of whales. It seems to me that this question of women's nationality is as important as the well-being of a large fish in the sea. This matter, it may be added, will not cost the League one penny.

Another argument which has always been brought against us is this: by granting married women the control of their nationality, you are helping to destroy the unity of the family. To men the unity of the family means a very different thing from what it means to us. To men's minds unity in the family means autocracy in the family. This argument about unity is a bugbear, and I should like to examine it for a moment. Take the case of women who for various reasons, sometimes perfectly practical and material reasons, adopt the nationality of their husbands. In such cases this argument does not apply, because there is no trouble.

Take, however, the other case of a woman who, for the same kind of reasons, and also for sentimental reasons, does not wish to lose her nationality. There are many hard cases. There are the cases of statelessness, and there are the cases where the husband changes his nationality after marriage. It is not only war that makes women love their country, it is something intimate, their inner being, their soul. When this yearning is present, and there is added to it soreness, bitterness, a grievance, what becomes of the unity of the family? It is only a unity which is imposed by a legal document, a unity kept intact by force. I do not think there is very much to idealise about in that.

Real fundamental unity is founded on respect. All these ideas now in the minds of women are, I think, a little new to even the most kindly, advanced and, from our point of view, progressive men. Men have for so long treated us as inferior beings — I do not mean this in a disagreeable way — but their habit of mind has been to look upon us as not having the same rights as themselves, and it is very difficult for them to realise the change that has come over the scene. It is quite a short time ago since, in my own country, every penny a woman made by her work belonged legally to her husband. It is only sixty years ago that, in our House of Commons, a member spoke of a well-known woman — many of you will know her name, Mrs. Fawcett; a very remarkable woman, a good wife and mother — as having disgraced herself because she did exactly what I am doing now, she stood on a public platform and spoke.

Fortunately, men's minds have changed, and I think this argument about the unity of the family is a remnant of the old days when woman was looked upon as the property of man. Such obsolete inequalities in customs and laws are things that have been left behind in the evolution of the State, and I think that, like other things of the sort, they should be cut out. The situation is exactly the same as that of the appendix in our bodies. We are told that this is a remnant of an old evolution. If it begins to show trouble, wise people cut it out before it festers, and I think the same thing applies to this question of the nationality of women. Cut

it out before it festers and becomes septic, and the body politic will be all the stronger and saner for it.

Before I close, I want to tell you an old story of an Irish Catholic saint in the ninth century. There was a hermit called St. Senan and he lived on an island; the one thing he prayed for every day was that no woman should ever set foot on that island. But there was another saint called St. Canair, and she came across the sea in a boat, and when St. Senan saw her arrive he hurried down to the shore and said: "God will not allow you to put a foot upon this island". Then St. Canair made what I think must have been the first feminist speech recorded in history. She exclaimed: "What right have you to say that I am not to set foot on this island? Did not a woman bear the Lord? Did not a woman wash His feet?" She also mentioned a whole lot of other things — in fact, she made a most remarkable speech. In the end, St. Senan was so moved by her words that he let her come on the island and she lived there until she died. What we are asking you to do is to give us a place on your island. If you will do it, it will be given to us, as it was to St. Canair a thousand years ago, to dwell beside you in equal partnership, equal in liberty and equal in nationality.

The President:

Translation: Mme Vergara, delegate of Chile, will address the Assembly.

Mme Vergara (Chile):

Translation: The Chilean delegation has listened with great pleasure to the speech of the British delegate and approves the report on the nationality of women which Mr. Beckett has just submitted to the Assembly.

On behalf of my delegation, I should, however, like to make one observation on the report. The delegation of Chile submitted an amendment to the British proposal — namely, that the Women's Advisory Committee should be asked to continue its work.

The last paragraph of the draft resolution makes it quite clear that the amendment was taken into consideration, since it assigns to the women's Committee the right to continue to present any observations which it thinks fit. But the report states: "It is hoped that this Committee will be able to make the necessary arrangements to continue itself in being and to serve as a medium for voicing the important current of opinion which it represents."

As the wording of this observation might lead to a misunderstanding regarding the Committee's future existence, it was explained that the reservation related only to economic difficulties which might jeopardise the Committee's existence.

I should like to take this opportunity of stressing the point that the speeches in the First Committee make it clear that the existence of the Women's Advisory Committee will not necessitate any expenditure by the League.

The Chilean delegation desires, further, to express its satisfaction that this question — a fundamental one for women — is finally being examined by the League. Our pleasure is derived from the fact that, in my own country, the laws governing the nationality of men and women have long been established on a basis of absolute equality and that the road now being traversed by the majority of civilised countries was taken by my country at the commencement of its history.

Now that the question is before the various Governments, I trust they will bear in mind that the problem contains an element which cannot and will not be removed; that element is woman.

Only by taking that fact into consideration can a genuine solution be reached, for the problem does not admit of a sham solution. Whatever the means devised for remedying the present position, if they do not attack the evil at its root they will only serve to postpone the solution and intensify the struggle. On the other hand, when women find that men are honestly examining their grievances—that is, when women no longer distrust man-made methods—then, and then only, will men feel that their peace of mind is assured.

The problem is a vital one, and we must not be afraid to face it squarely. Above all, we must not treat it sentimentally, nor must we forget that, nowadays, obligations and burdens are borne equally, and it is only fair that rights should be allocated on the same equitable principle. We must not become distracted by imagining that we are heading straight for anarchy and confusion. Just as a human being adapts himself to the various stages of life, and does not suffer in old age from the same causes as in youth, so society adapts itself to the various conditions that mould it.

That is why a national of a country such as Chile, Uruguay or the Argentine can only smile when he observes the difference between the lurid picture of society some delegates have drawn if women's emancipation continues and the picture he finds in his own country.

Chile, whose political constitution from the outset provided for absolute equality as regards nationality rights for both sexes, is a country in which equality has in no way jeopardised the unity of the family. My Government, therefore, is in full accord with the measures taken by countries desirous of bringing about a situation which, morally and materially, has yielded such satisfactory results. Those results it was that determined the action of the Chilean Government's representative at the Hague Conference for the Codification of International Law, when he submitted the following resolution:

"The contracting parties agree that, from the coming into effect of this Convention, there shall be no distinction based on sex in their law and practice relating to nationality."

That has been, and still is, my Government's attitude.

The President:

Translation: Mlle Campoamor, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

Mlle Campoamor (Spain):

Translation: The discussion of the report on the nationality of married women was terminated somewhat hurriedly owing to shortage of time, and my delegation has not been able to voice its opinion. I shall therefore venture to ask your attention for a few minutes in order to state our views, which are identical with the principles on which the laws of the new Spanish nation, now being framed, are based. They are true democratic principles: respect for the explicitly expressed judicial will as opposed to the implied expression of will, the principle maintained by jurists, when they upheld the doctrine that the nationality of a married woman must be determined without reference to her own desires.

My country has adopted this democratic principle, which it respects and which is the very essence of its proposals for a draft Legal Code, and it has adopted it more particularly with regard to those rights which, in the happy phrase of a great jurist, "follow the person as a shadow follows the body".

That was not my only reason for wishing to proclaim our views; a further reason was that my delegation would have liked to have embodied in the report certain considerations which it feels to be important. It asks that these considerations may be included in the Minutes to be transmitted to Governments, as has been done in the case of other opinions expressed in the First Committee which form the subject of suggestions in the report. This is the case as regards the request made by the Catholic Women's Organisations, which view the question from the standpoint of the unity of the family. This, they think, is not impugned by the various conflicting laws at present in force relating to the nationality of married women. This request the Committee was asked to include in its report.

The Catholic Women's Organisations in question are: the St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance; the "Organisations chrétiennes de Belgique"; the "Ligue catholique pour le Suffrage des Femmes de Belgique"; the Lithuanian Catholic Women's Alliance, and many other organisations consisting mainly of Catholic women, such as the "Union française pour le Suffrage des Femmes", the Irish National Council of Women, and the Ukrainian Committee for Women's Rights.

I therefore ask that the Minutes sent to the various countries shall include the letter from Catholic Women's Organisations, dealing precisely with the most delicate aspect of the discussion, the so-called unity of the family, which was alleged to be impugned by a resolution favourable to women's rights. As the Assembly will have just realised, that is not the view of all Catholics.

It remains for me, on behalf of my delegation, to express our satisfaction at the report of the women's organisations, which was so praiseworthy from the point of view of law and so fair and frank, examining as it did all the questions that arose at the Hague Conference and during the Committee's discussions and investigations. The Committee will, I trust, also recommend that the work of these women's organisations should be continued.

We are dealing with the eternal dispute regarding rights; but, in my view and in that of my delegation, the dispute ceases to be a dispute when it is examined calmly and dispassionately as a social problem. The whole aspect of the dispute alters, and one thinks rather of the possibility of legal and social peace brought about by justice.

Never since this eternal dispute regarding rights began has there been such a prospect of peace. In the beginning, before these pacific law meetings were instituted, legislators had the whip hand and put up a stout resistance to the claims of women; jealously guarding the approaches to the miraculous well of law, they refused to admit women who, eager for their rights and for justice, laid siege. But since the question has been approached from another angle, as in the Fifth Committee and the Assembly, and since the voices from without, the voices of women speaking through their organisations, have been given a hearing, the besieged have been readier to open the door, and all are now imbibing the waters of the miraculous well of law and drawing from its depths, amidst a perfect feeling of peace and justice, the principles of equity and law in all their purity.

That is how the League has envisaged this delicate and thorny problem; that is how it has hit on what seems to it the best formula, that our rights may be better recognised.

In conclusion, I desire to extend my delegation's congratulations to the Fifth Committee and to the Committee of Women's Organisations, which has given it such valuable assistance by carrying out

the recommendation of Ihering — that is, by fighting for the rights of women. I trust also that the Committee will assist in the preparatory work for the next Assembly.

I desire to voice my delegation's approval of the report and request that the claims of the Catholic associations I have mentioned may be included in the records. I have just handed them to the President.

I may add that the Spanish delegation is of opinion that this subject should be examined at the next Assembly and that it should be solved objectively in accordance with principles of equality and justice.

The President :

Translation : M. Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

M. Loudon (Netherlands) :

Translation : After the speeches of the three distinguished ladies, I must offer a slight apology for being a mere male.

In the First Committee, the Netherlands delegation set forth its views on the merits of the question now before us. I do not need, therefore, to repeat what our delegate said in that Committee. Nevertheless, in view of what the preceding speakers have said, my delegation desires to draw the Assembly's attention to one important aspect of the question.

In the draft resolution before us, it is proposed to ask the various Governments to submit their observations on the question of the nationality of married women, including their views regarding the Hague Nationality Convention. If the result were that the States signatories to the Convention did not ratify it, that would be most regrettable; for in the Netherlands delegation's view, the Convention contains provisions on the nationality of married women which, for the time being, represent the most that can be achieved as regards an international settlement of the question. So soon after the 1930 Conference, another consultation between the various Governments could not lead to practical results.

For these reasons, and in order particularly to avoid compromising one of the first results achieved by the League in the codification of international law, the Netherlands delegation hopes that the adoption of the draft resolution will not involve any delay in the coming into force of the Nationality Convention.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Ethel Osborne, delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Ethel Osborne (Australia) :

The resolution before this Assembly does not involve the merits or the demerits of this problem, and, after the very eloquent appeal made by the British delegate, anything I might have had to say on this problem I shall not venture to put forward. I wish, however, to speak definitely on the resolution.

In the debates in the Committee on this problem, it was perfectly obvious that there was great diversity of opinion and information, and I feel that the situation has been perfectly met by throwing back upon the Governments of all State Members the responsibility for dealing with this problem and supplying further information to the next Assembly.

During the debates, the problem of the unity of the family was discussed, and also the question of the nationality of children; but on neither of those points had information been definitely sought,

and those problems require fresh investigation. I take it that the resolution in the form in which it is now presented to the Assembly is a very definite challenge to women's organisations. The International Consultative Committee, consisting of sixteen members, is in existence, and there is now a great opportunity for the members of that Committee to take this matter back to their national organisations, in which case the national organisations have an opportunity, such as has not existed for a very long time, of carrying on an educational campaign in regard to these problems, and of bringing before their respective countries the close connection between, and the necessity for an investigation into, the two questions — the unity of the family and the nationality of children.

As the representative of one of the newest countries in the world — Australia — a country which for its pioneering and development has depended equally upon women and upon men, and where, from the beginning, their equality and co-partnership have been definitely recognised, I have pleasure in directing your attention to the recommendation that my Government gave me on this matter :

"The Commonwealth Government of Australia favours the principle of equality of the sexes in matters of nationality, provided that such principle finds a general acceptance by other countries."

I trust that the women's organisations will take the opportunity which this resolution gives them of carrying on the work in their own countries.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has before it the following draft resolution proposed by the First Committee :

The Assembly,

Having examined with the greatest interest the report of the Secretary-General on the question of the nationality of women, presented in accordance with the resolution of the Council of January 24th, 1931, and the report and proposals of the Committee of Representatives of Women's International Organisations which are annexed thereto :

Notes the desire of the said Committee that steps should be taken to bring about the reconsideration of the Hague Nationality Convention, bearing in mind the principle of equality between men and women ;

Thanks the Committee of Representatives of Women's International Organisations for its report ; and

Requests the Council, in harmony with Recommendation No. VI of the Conference for the Codification of International Law held at The Hague, March and April 1930, to transmit to all Governments the report of the Secretary-General on the question of the nationality of women, including the report of the Committee of Representatives of Women's International Organisations, and the letter of the International Union of Leagues of Catholic Women of August 19th, 1931, together with the Minutes of the First Committee of the Assembly on this subject, and to request Governments to submit their observations on this subject (including their views regarding the Hague Nationality Convention) for reconsideration of the matter by the thirteenth Assembly, to which any observations which the above-mentioned Committee thinks fit to present will be communicated.

As no one else has asked to speak, I shall regard the First Committee's report and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

81. — FINANCIAL WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on the financial work of the League (document A.88.1931.II.A).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Bernis Carrasco, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Janson, Chairman of the Second Committee, has apologised for not being present, having been obliged to leave Geneva the day before yesterday.

The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Bernis Carrasco (Spain), Rapporteur :

Translation : The work of the Second Committee this year was devoted chiefly to the examination of financial questions. This was dictated by the necessities of the moment, by the economic crisis and the financial crisis.

I may say, however, that the time at the Committee's disposal was limited and it had to work hurriedly. In order not to take up the assembly's time, I shall confine myself to making a few brief observations on the three parts of the report which I now have the honour to submit.

In the first part of the report, under the heading "General", attention is drawn to the statements made in the Second Committee by several delegates. It was observed, *inter alia*, that a fresh stage in our evolution has been reached which renders the assistance of the League and its Financial Organisation both urgent and indispensable. During the discussions, reference was made to the part that must be played, not only by individual initiative, but by Governments.

Further, the Committee examined the suggestions contained in M. Francqui's scheme for medium-term loans. It was suggested that, in the matter of short-term international debts, creditors and debtors should take steps to avoid any further shock to public confidence.

The general discussion in the Second Committee revealed the importance of the League's being adequately prepared and equipped with a view to affording prompt and effectual assistance to those who may need it.

This part of the report is important in that it reflects the suggestions, the recommendations and the sometimes urgent appeals, the anxiety and suffering and the optimistic or pessimistic statements of several delegates, all moved by a realisation of their responsibilities and duties.

The Assembly should know how privileged the Committee was in being able to count among its members M. Flandin, the distinguished French Minister of Finance, who, in the present grave crisis, which affects every one of us, lent the Committee the benefit of his experience and vast financial knowledge.

I may add that the importance of the general part of the report consists, firstly, in the fact that no special vote was taken nor was any material reservation made in connection with this part of

the report, certain delegates' explanations, statements and interpellations having been incorporated in the Minutes, to which reference may be made for the interpretation of various passages; and, secondly, in the great authority of the delegates who took part in the discussion.

I now come to the second part, the account of the work of the League's Financial Organisation and at the same time essentially an acknowledgment of the great value of that work and an expression of the hope that it will contribute in an increasing degree towards solving the problems that now beset the world, as well as numerous special problems.

The work of the Financial Organisation during the past year covered a very wide field, and the second part of the report mentions the main problems with which it was concerned — agricultural credits, long-term credits, certain work of the Financial Committee, Bulgarian budget, budgets of Greece and Estonia, counterfeiting currency, work of the Gold Delegation, work of the Fiscal Committee, work of the Committee of Statistical Experts, Economic Intelligence Service.

As regards the last question, the Second Committee laid special emphasis last year, in a striking passage of its report, on the importance of this work.

The passage in question reads as follows :

"When we consider the magnitude of the losses from which the world suffers during a period of economic stagnation similar to that through which the world is now passing, it is impossible not to be impressed by the almost absolute failure of society, up to the present, to devise any means by which such disasters may be averted. The Committee felt that this problem was one which imperatively demanded co-ordinated and concerted study."

Proceeding to the third part of the report, I wonder whether its scope can be regarded as a sort of diagonal line joining two points of view which occasionally are diametrically opposed to one another, or whether it would be better, repeating the thought of the Greek philosopher, to say that sometimes the part is greater than the whole. I for my part believe that the Assembly cannot fail to recognise the value of the concrete proposal contained in the third part of the report.

As a conclusion to these observations, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

(1) *At this grave moment of financial and economic anxiety, urges on all Governments to do everything that lies in their power to promote international understanding and make possible the revival on a normal basis of national and international investment.*

(2) *It welcomes the decision of the Council laying down the conditions on which the Financial Committee should be prepared to consider applications from States which are desirous to obtain the assistance of the League, and requests the Council to follow closely the evolution of events and to take all measures necessary to assure that, at any moment, the decisions demanded by the situation may be taken without delay, and that the League of Nations may be in a position to render such service as may be demanded of it; and, in particular, to provide that the Financial Organisation of the League of Nations obtains the funds and the technical assistance necessary to permit it to afford to all States Members prompt and effective assistance whenever such assistance be sought, whether*

by means of delegations or advice or by any other means.

(3) *In view of the fact that the Commission of Enquiry for European Union and its Sub-Committee of Economic Experts have given favourable consideration to M. Francqui's proposal to establish an institution for long- and medium-term credits, it requests the Council of the League of Nations to instruct the competent organs of the League to examine, as soon as possible, with the assistance especially of M. Francqui, the proposal submitted by the latter to the Sub-Committee of Economic Experts, and, in the event of any practical scheme being recommended under the auspices of the League, to ensure that it will be open for all countries to participate on an equal footing.*

(4) *It expresses its appreciation of the valuable work carried out during the past year by the Financial Committee and its special Delegations on Gold and Agricultural Credits and by the Fiscal Committee and by the Financial Organisation as a whole, and notes with special satisfaction the Convention for setting up an International Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company, the recent response to the request submitted by the Austrian and the Hungarian Governments for enquiries into their financial situation, the second interim report of the Gold Delegation and the study which has been published on the course and phases of the economic depression.*

It urges all Governments of signatory States to accelerate their ratification of the Convention of the International Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company, and hopes that those others who, under the terms of the Convention, are enabled to deposit their signatures before September 30th will do so.

(5) *It approves the proposal that, in order to co-ordinate the work now being conducted on the problem of the recurrence of periods of economic depression, the League should convene meetings of experts and representatives of those economic councils, research institutes and other organisations that are actively engaged on this question, and should appoint a qualified economist and adequate staff for this purpose, and decides that this work shall be begun either before or in the year 1933.*

There is one last observation I should like to make, one more sentiment I should like to express.

I should like to recall to the Assembly the words, both elegant and eloquent, in which the French Minister of Finance voiced, in the Second Committee, what we all feel when he endorsed the high opinion we all have of the work of the Financial Organisation, and singled out for special praise the Director of that Organisation, Mr. Loveday.

The President :

Translation : Mr. Watt, delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Watt (Australia) : I want to refer to a few particular points in this report, because those who followed the discussions in the Second Committee are aware that certain tendencies have been revealed that need to be understood quite clearly.

When addressing this Assembly at its opening meetings, the delegate for India protested against the establishment of the Agricultural Mortgage Credit Company without non-European countries having been given the opportunity to express their views at this Assembly. It so happens that, since that project was brought forward, new schemes along

somewhat similar lines have also been mooted, and a study of the records of the proceedings of the Second Committee will show that there is also a tendency, I think, in the minds of some people to hold the view that such schemes ought to be confined for at least a few years mainly to European countries.

I think it is quite in order as the representative of Australia — not because I represent one particular country, but because I represent an extra-European country — to emphasise the fact that, if any such plans are developed under the auspices of the League, special efforts must be made to identify with them the interests, not merely of European countries, but also of extra-European countries.

I am therefore particularly pleased to see in Section (3) of the resolution which the Assembly is asked to adopt, the following words, referring to the proposal mooted by M. Francqui: "... in the event of any practical scheme being recommended under the auspices of the League, to ensure that it will be open for all countries to participate on an equal footing".

We may be quite sure that it is imperative for this Assembly, for its Committees and for delegates to preserve the integrity of the League as a universal organisation.

One other point seems worth emphasising. In the discussions in the Committee, the fact was revealed that some people hoped that these proposals would help primarily to develop manufacturing industries. I am not at all sure that it would be wise for the support of such credit organisations to be used first of all in order to cartelise industries. Most of us are aware that one factor in the present crisis, quite a grave factor, is the very serious discrepancy between the value of agricultural products and of manufactured products. Until such time as the values of agricultural products are brought more into line with those of manufactured products, we may be quite sure that worldwide financial disequilibrium will continue. It is therefore to be hoped that those who have the responsibility of formulating this scheme will pay particular attention to the need for bringing about better equilibrium between agricultural and manufacturing industries.

There is only one other matter to which I wish to refer. At the end of the section concerning "Other Long-Term Credit Problems", the report states that the Second Committee desires to emphasise the need for the Financial Organisation of the League to be ready to meet all calls that may be made upon it. No one could have been present at the meetings of the Second Committee without realising that, in the minds of the economic representatives, perhaps the focal point of the present world crisis is to be found in the matters which came before that Committee, particularly financial matters.

There seemed to be some doubt in the minds of some of the members as to how far the League could or could not take action. I think the one thing which has caused me to come to this Tribune is the conviction that it should be emphasised as much as possible that, during the next twelve months, many battles will be won or lost for the forces of law and order. We may be certain that the League will divide or multiply its reputation during the next few months in so far as it can come to grips with the world financial crisis.

It therefore seems worth while to suggest that we delegates representing Governments should go back to our countries seized with that fact, and urge that whatever action is possible through the League must be taken, and taken as quickly as possible.

The President :

Translation : As no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall regard the report and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

82. — CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS — REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Fourth Committee on contributions in arrears (document A.87.1931.X).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Politis, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, and M. Rappard, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Rappard (Switzerland), Rapporteur :

Translation : The report you have before you is extremely concise, and my verbal comments on it will be equally discreet.

In the first place, I am anxious not to waste your time. You will, moreover, understand that, in this matter, the greatest discretion is the best policy. Nevertheless, it is important that Members of the League should all be aware of the actual position, which may be summed up as follows : whereas at the same period in 1930 only ten States had been unable to fulfil all their financial obligations to the League, the present number is fourteen.

Last year the position was slightly better, but to-day six of these fourteen States still owe their contribution for 1930 and eight other States owe two or more contributions. The total sum due to the League under this heading is 14 millions, though, if we leave out of account a great country whose financial position has been particularly difficult throughout recent years, this total is reduced from 14 to 5 millions.

I should like to submit to you three observations of a general nature on the subject of contributions in arrears. Firstly, there are no European States amongst those which have not yet been able to fulfil their obligations. The obvious lesson to be drawn from this fact is that, though the League is to-day recognised as indispensable to the collective life of European States, it is no yet equally so overseas. From this the further lesson may be drawn that the League should so enlarge its activities that every State in the world may realise the necessity of its co-operation.

Secondly, I must in your name emphasise the common bond of solidarity which is involved in membership of the League. It is regrettable, it would in the long run be intolerable, that some of the Member States should shirk a very definite duty. This common debt of solidarity is clear. It is a duty to all the other Member States, whose burdens are increased to the exact extent of the temporary default of their colleagues ; it is a duty towards the administrative organs of the League. Only last night one of the heads of the international administration told us that the officials, who did their duty, felt they had a right to expect the same from all the States.

Thirdly — and I am sure you will agree with the Fourth Committee and its Rapporteur in this —

it is the duty of the whole Assembly to do all in its power to hasten the payment in full of all contributions in arrears, and to use all appropriate methods to that end, provided they do not cross the line that divides persuasion from pressure. Nothing could be more deplorable, at a time when a State is suffering from a temporary difficulty in fulfilling its financial obligations towards the League, than a word or gesture that might possibly lead to a loosening of the moral bonds that should unite all Members of the League.

While, therefore, avoiding saying anything that might wound national susceptibilities, I will conclude these brief comments on my report by expressing the earnest hope that my successor on this platform next year may be in a position to give you better tidings.

I submit for your adoption the following resolution :

The Assembly,

Observes with regret that this year a greater number of States than before have not fulfilled their financial obligations towards the League ;

Earnestly calls upon States which have received certain facilities for the liquidation of their arrears to fulfil the conditions of the respective arrangements ;

Invites the other States which, for various reasons, still owe in respect of 1929 and 1930 to remit their contributions as soon as political or economic conditions permit ;

Requests the Secretary-General to undertake or pursue negotiations for the liquidation of arrears by all the States in question, to submit a report to the Council on the action taken by him before the next Assembly, and to communicate the results to the latter.

The President :

Translation : I hope our Rapporteur's eloquent appeal will be borne in mind.

As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the report of the Fourth Committee and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

83. — FINANCIAL SITUATION OF THE LEAGUE DURING THE REMAINDER OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR 1931 : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FOURTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the draft resolution submitted by the Fourth Committee on the financial situation of the League during the present year (document A.62.1931.X).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Boheman, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Boheman, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Boheman (Sweden), Rapporteur :

Translation : It is quite natural that the economic and financial crisis through which the world is now passing should have affected the finances of the League during the present year. The position is not now so favourable as it has been during the last five years. There has been a certain increase in the contributions in arrears and a certain slowness in the payment of the contributions

due for this year. In view of this and in order to avoid any deficit in 1931, the Fourth Committee has, on the proposal of the Supervisory Commission, adopted the following resolution, which I beg to submit to the Assembly on behalf of the Fourth Committee :

The Assembly,

Impressed by the difficult situation through which most of the States Members of the League are passing, and by the possible effects of that situation on the finances of the League ;

And convinced that, in the present circumstances, it is important that the whole of the appropriations provided in the budget for the present financial year should not be expended :

Requests the competent officials of the three organisations of the League to limit to the utmost possible extent the expenditure incurred between now and the end of the year ;

And makes a strong appeal to the Council and the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to endeavour to postpone or cancel the sessions of conferences and committees convened or contemplated for the last quarter of this year, provided always that such postponements or cancellations do not interfere with the essential work of the League.

The President :

Translation : As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the draft resolution submitted by the Fourth Committee adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

84. — GENERAL CONVENTION TO IMPROVE THE MEANS OF PREVENTING WAR : REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report submitted by the Third Committee on the General Convention to improve the Means of preventing War document A.77.1931.IX).

I am told that M. Munch, Chairman of the Third Committee, and his Excellency M. de Madariaga, Rapporteur, are at present occupied on the Drafting Committee. I have been asked to adjourn this discussion to another meeting and the suggestion has also been made that this meeting should be suspended for ten minutes. I shall take the latter course so that I may be able to clear up the difficulty.

(The Assembly adjourned at 11.45 a.m. and resumed at 11.55 a.m.)

The President :

Translation : I declare the meeting open.

(On the invitation of the President, M. Munch, Chairman of the Third Committee, and M. de Madariaga, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. de Madariaga, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga (Spain), Rapporteur :

Translation : I must begin by apologising to the Assembly. The Drafting Committee of the Third

Committee was sitting just now to discuss a question affecting the Rapporteur and I had considered that, as soon as I received the invitation from the President of the Assembly to speak, all the members of the Drafting Committee should be given an opportunity of attending the meeting, as they had collaborated with me in drafting this report ; but some slight delay in the proceedings of the Assembly was inevitable, as I had to obtain the Committee's consent.

I will not go into the report or the Convention document A.78.1931.IX) communicated to you, but will merely point out a number of amendments to the texts which served as a basis for the work of the Third Committee.

The most important of these amendments is the separation into Articles 2 and 3 of one article in the old draft — namely, Article 2. This has been done because certain delegations desired that a distinction should be made between what clearly constituted a threat of war and what constituted an incident the nature of which it would be delicate *a priori* to define. It was felt to be necessary to separate the idea of acts of war and the idea of threats of war and not to regard as acts of war, or even as threats of war, acts which might from some points of view, and especially in the invaded countries, be regarded as acts of war. This need made it imperative to change the wording of Article 2 and led the Committee to separate Articles 2 and 3.

Another amendment I should like to mention is the re-introduction of the idea of air forces in Articles 2 and 3. When mention is made of an aeroplane and of the passing of territorial frontiers or the limits of territorial waters, air forces are clearly distinguished from other forces, inasmuch as, technically, they can be subjected to different conditions. The Committee succeeded in expressing itself clearly on this point, and avoided the pitfalls involved by the technical differences between these various forces.

I do not think I need expatiate on the nature of these conventions, but I should like to touch upon the prehistory and the history of this question.

The prehistory goes back to June 6th, 1923, when, during the discussions on the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee, two of my compatriots on the Temporary Mixed Commission for the Reduction of Armaments submitted a draft for a new article, a draft Article 10, and a draft Article 11.

As regards Article 10, they said :

“ At the request of any Member of the League of Nations, the Council of the League which, on receipt of that request, must be immediately convened by the Secretary-General, may declare that the political situation between the two States Members is such that precautions with a view to preserving peace are indispensable. The following precautionary measures may be applied :

“ (a) Both parties may be asked to withdraw their troops to a certain distance, to be determined by the Council, on both sides of the frontier ; to abstain from flying over a certain neutral zone between the two countries ; to abstain from allowing their navies to enter the territorial waters of the other State.

“ (b) The Council may invite the High Contracting Parties to apply to the State which is endangering peace penalties similar to those provided in Article 16 of the Covenant against a Covenant-breaking State, etc.”

The other provisions do not affect Article 16 of the Covenant.

My two compatriots then proposed the following Article 11 :

" In the event of any of the High Contracting Parties becoming engaged in hostilities with any other State, whether a party to this Treaty or not,

" (a) It shall so inform the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, who shall summon a meeting of the Council of the League without delay";

and further on : .

" (c) Shall be presumed to be the aggressor: any State which has refused to submit to the Permanent Court of International Justice or to the Council of the League of Nations the dispute which is the cause of the threat of war; or any State which has refused to take the precautionary measures indicated in Article 10 when the Council has recommended their application."

This is the origin of the conservatory measures which have now been happily incorporated in a definite Convention.

The second stage is constituted by the discussions on the 1924 Protocol, where we can trace the conservatory measures in the whole structure of Articles 7, 8, 9 and 10. Sanctions are provided for in Article 10, paragraph 2, which reads as follows :

" In the event of hostilities having broken out any State shall be presumed to be an aggressor, unless a decision of the Council, which must be taken unanimously, shall otherwise declare :

"

" 2. If it has violated provisional measures enjoined by the Council for the period while the proceedings are in progress as contemplated by Article 7 of the present Protocol."

These measures were much more vague than in the Spanish text of 1923, but, notwithstanding their elasticity, were prompted by the same spirit.

So much for the prehistory of the question. I call it the prehistory, because these efforts did not lead to an immediate result, but remained, as it were, the preliminary elements of an idea, before the idea was presented anew and carried into effect. The final success which attended the efforts made was due entirely to the German delegation, which restated the idea at a meeting of the Committee on Arbitration and Security, in the really final form in which it appears in the Convention now before us.

At the session of the Committee on Arbitration and Security held in March 1928, the German delegation submitted the following suggestions :

" With a view to preventing war, the Committee on Arbitration and Security might examine the following possibilities :

" In case of a dispute being submitted to the Council, the States might undertake in advance to accept and execute provisional recommendations of the Council for the purpose of preventing any aggravation or extension of the dispute and impeding any measures to be taken by the parties which might exercise an unfavourable reaction on the execution of the settlement to be proposed by the Council.

" In case of threat of war, the States might undertake in advance to accept and to execute the recommendations of the Council to the effect of maintaining or re-establishing the military status quo normally existing in time of peace ;

" In the case of hostilities of any kind breaking out without, in the Council's opinion, all possibilities of a pacific settlement having been exhausted, the States might undertake in advance to accept, on the Council's proposal, an armistice on land and sea and in the air, including especially the obligation of the two parties in dispute to withdraw the forces which might have penetrated into foreign territory and to secure the respect of the sovereignty of the other State.

" The question should be considered whether the above-mentioned obligations should be undertaken only in case of a unanimous vote of the Council (the votes of the parties to the dispute not being counted), or whether the majority, simple or qualified, might suffice in the matter. Furthermore, it should be considered in what form the obligations would have to be drawn up in order to bring them into conformity with the Covenant.

" These obligations might constitute the object of an agreement or of a protocol which would be open for signature by all States Members and non-Members of the League of Nations, and which might come into force separately for the several continents, in a way similar to that provided for in the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance of 1923."

These form the basis and origin of the Convention which we have before us and which finds its place in the series of Conventions we have prepared here in connection with the questions of arbitration and security. Together with the General Act, the Convention on Financial Assistance and the work to strengthen Article 11 of the Covenant, it voices the need for the political preparation for direct disarmament which has accompanied all the efforts made for the last ten years — efforts which, we hope, will bear fruit in February 1932.

In order to show clearly the relations between the Conference and the Convention, the Convention provides that the Protocol shall remain open for signature until February 2nd, 1932.

On the subject of signatures, allow me to conclude by stating that the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs, who is present here, will sign the Convention as soon as the Protocol has been opened for signature.

The Third Committee submits for your adoption the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

(1) *Taking note of the report submitted to it on behalf of the Third Committee ;*

(2) *Thanking the Special Committee for the admirable work it has done towards the framing of the draft general Convention to improve the Means of preventing War ;*

(3) *Approves the text of the said Convention which has been drawn up by the Third Committee ;*

(4) *Decides to open the Convention for signature by the States Members of the League and by those non-Member States to which the Council of the League shall have communicated a copy of the Convention for that purpose ;*

(5) *Earnestly trusts that a large number of States will sign the Convention before the opening of the forthcoming General Disarmament Conference ; and*

(6) *Requests the Council to make the necessary arrangements in good time for the preparation of the rules referred to in the last paragraph of Article 4, in order that, should circumstances so*

dictate, the Convention may be put into effect immediately upon its entry into force.

The President :

Translation : I should like to apologise to all the members of the Drafting Committee who have had to interrupt their discussions, but I held that, when the Assembly was convened to consider a particular point, its work must take precedence over everything else.

As no one else has asked to speak, I shall consider the report of the Third Committee and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The President :

Translation : The adoption of the resolution by the Assembly means that the General Convention to improve the Means of preventing War is now open for signature by the States.

The delegates of the States who desire to sign the Convention immediately may do so either in the President's room, or, after the meetings, in Room 110 at the Secretariat (Legal Section).

The Assembly rose at 12.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH, 1931, AT 10 A.M.

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85. — ORGANISATION OF THE SECRETARIAT, OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE AND OF THE REGISTRY OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda in the discussion of the report of the Fourth Committee on the Organisation of the Secretariat, of the International Labour Office and of the Registry of the Permanent Court of International Justice (document A.91.1931.X).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Politis, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, and M. de Vasconcellos, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. de Vasconcellos (Portugal), Rapporteur :

Translation : Last year, when we were discussing the organisation of the Secretariat, of the International Labour Office and of the Registry of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the Assembly, on the proposal of the Fourth Committee, reserved for future study the questions of the Under-Secretaries-General, the salaries and conditions of engagement, etc., of the Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General, Under-Secretaries-General, Directors and Treasurer, and also the question of the salaries of Chiefs of Sections and of the Secretary-General's Chef de Cabinet.

In accordance with the decision of the Assembly, all these questions were referred to a special Committee known as the Committee of Thirteen, which, after discussion, submitted a very able report

recommending that the decision as to the Under-Secretaries-General should be adjourned for a time, and that the question of salaries should be left as it stood for reasons of economy.

The question of Under-Secretaries-General has therefore been adjourned for three years, until the expiry of the present contracts, unless — and we sincerely hope this will not be the case — the Secretary-General should notify his intention of resigning. In such case, the contracts may be denounced within one year.

The Fourth Committee has endorsed these proposals after examining the reasons for and against, which were so admirably set forth in the report of the Committee of Thirteen.

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

The Assembly,

Having examined the report and the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee appointed by the Assembly at its eleventh session to consider (1) the retention or elimination, the increase or reduction of the posts of Under-Secretary-General, as well as the consequences resulting therefrom, (2) all cognate questions on the organisation of the Secretariat, the International Labour Office and the Registry of the Permanent Court of International Justice which the Assembly had decided to adjourn in 1930 :

(1) *Adopts the present report ;*

(2) *Decides that the framework of the higher ranks of the Secretariat should be provisionally maintained as it stands ;*

(3) *Requests the Secretary-General to see that all new or renewed contracts concluded with the Deputy Secretary-General or the Under-Secretaries-General :*

(a) *Should have a maximum duration of three years ;*

(b) *Should contain a clause under which they may be denounced within a period of one year from the date on which the Secretary-General officially notifies the Council of his intention of resigning, this denunciation only to take effect as from the date on which the new Secretary-General assumes his duties or in the year following ;*

(4) *Is of opinion that, in regard to the appointment or promotion of officials to one of the higher posts in the Secretariat, the first and foremost consideration must be the knowledge and capacity of the candidate, which must be in keeping with the duties he will be called upon to fulfil, account being taken, however, in such choice of the different forms of national civilisation ;*

(5) *Approves the conclusions of the present report in regard to the salaries and conditions of engagement of the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General, the Under-Secretaries-General, the Registrar of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the Directors, the Treasurer, the Secretary-General's Chef de Cabinet, the Chiefs of Section and the Deputy Registrar of the Court.*

The President :

Translation : As no delegate has asked to speak on this question, I shall regard the report and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

86. — BUDGET AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fourth Committee's report on the budget and financial questions (document A.90.1931.X).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Boheman, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Boheman (Sweden), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Fourth Committee, when examining the budget for 1932, found itself in a singularly difficult position. In the first place, the budget estimates provided for an aggregate sum greatly exceeding last year's estimates, and, in the second place, States Members of the League, owing to the prevailing economic and financial crisis, were in more or less serious financial difficulties. It was thus quite natural that, in the general discussion in the Fourth Committee, nearly all the speakers should have urged economy. A strong feeling prevailed that, at the present moment, when every Member of the League is endeavouring to reduce its public expenditure, the League should take similar action.

At the same time, the Fourth Committee unanimously recognised — and I desire to emphasise this point — that nothing must be done which might prejudice the essential work of the League or restrict its powers of action in dealing with a crisis which had rendered international co-operation more than ever necessary.

The Fourth Committee is satisfied that it has acted on these lines. Thanks to the efforts of the Supervisory Commission, it is now able to submit a budget in which the estimates and supplementary estimates have been reduced by 2,350,000 Swiss francs. This reduction does, it is true, entail considerable sacrifices on the part of the three administrations. Thus, an appreciable number of Conferences, sessions of committees and meetings of experts which were not of urgent importance have been postponed for a year, or until such time as the position improves. These measures appeared particularly opportune, as the Disarmament Conference in 1932 will doubtless necessitate some concentration of the League's efforts next year. May I add that the measures thus advocated have been taken with the full assent of the Secretary-General and the Director of the International Labour Office, who fully realise the situation?

Further, a big cut has been effected in the matter of League printing, all publications which are not absolutely necessary being held over. It was pointed out, for the benefit of those working for the League, that reports need not necessarily be long to be of value.

Finally, equally large cuts were effected in various items of the budget, all of which were very carefully examined ; the relevant figures will be found in the annexes to the printed report.

Though appreciable reductions have thus been made, I have no hesitation in assuring you that, with the credits you are about to vote, the League will be able, in 1932, to pursue its normal activities within reasonable limits, to organise the Disarmament Conference in a perfectly adequate manner, and to render such services as may be required of it in coping with the financial and economic crisis.

The total budget submitted to you represents an aggregate expenditure of 33,687,994 Swiss francs. Deducting from that amount the estimates for the Disarmament Conference, exceptional allocation for 1932 amounting to 3,500,000 francs, we reach the figure of approximately 30,200,000 francs, which is a saving of about 1,500,000 francs on the budget for the present year. That saving is, in my view, very considerable, particularly if we take into account the fact that it has not been thought advisable, and would, in fact, to a large extent have been legally impossible, to touch the salaries of the staff and the particular advantages the staff enjoys.

As regards the administrative and other questions dealt with by the Fourth Committee, I would refer you to the printed report. I would merely point out that the Fourth Committee asks you to appoint as members of the Supervisory Commission for the period terminating December 31st, 1934, Lord Meston of Agra, who has already rendered such valuable services on that Commission, and M. C. J. Hambro, whose zeal and energy in the Fourth Committee are well known.

Lastly, I venture to direct the Assembly's attention to a communication addressed to our Chairman by the permanent delegate of Nicaragua concerning the payment of Nicaragua's contribution to the League. The Committee, profoundly distressed by the terrible catastrophe which has overtaken Nicaragua and completely destroyed its capital, recommends that the Assembly should exempt that country from the payment of half its contribution to the budget for the financial year 1932 and should defer the payment of the balance.

On behalf of the Fourth Committee, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly for approval the following resolutions:

1. *The Assembly, in virtue of Article 38 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League of Nations, finally passes the audited accounts of the League of Nations for the twelfth financial period ending on December 31st, 1930.*

2. *The Assembly,*

In virtue of Article 17 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League of Nations,

Passes, for the financial period 1932, the general budget of the League of Nations — of the Secretariat and Special Organisations of the League, of the International Labour Organisation and of the Permanent Court of International Justice — amounting, including supplementary credits, to the total sum of 33,687,994 gold francs, including 3,500,000 francs for the International Disarmament Conference,

And decides that the aforesaid budget shall be published in the Official Journal.

3. *The Assembly,*

Profoundly distressed by the catastrophe which has occurred in Nicaragua and has totally destroyed its capital,

Decides to exempt that country from the payment of half its contribution to the budget for the financial year 1932 and to defer the payment of the balance.

4. *The Assembly adopts the conclusions of the various reports of the Supervisory Commission submitted for its consideration, except in regard to the request for credits put forward by the Sixth Committee for the establishment of a committee to examine the material relating to slavery, and in regard to the alteration in the definition of 'locally recruited staff'.*

5. *The Assembly appoints as members of the Supervisory Commission for the period ending on December 31st, 1934, Lord Meston of Agra and M. C. J. Hambro.*

6. *The Assembly,*

Takes note of the first annual report of the Administrative Board of the Staff Pensions Fund; and

Adopts the following amendments to the Staff Pensions Regulations:

Article 3, paragraph 1, to read as follows:

"The execution of the present regulations and the management of the Pensions Fund shall be effected by an Administrative Board consisting of three members elected by the Assembly, a representative of the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, a representative of the Director of the International Labour Office, the Treasurer of the League of Nations, and three members elected by secret ballot by the officials who are subject to the present regulations. Where questions directly affecting the officials of the Registry of the Permanent Court of International Justice are under consideration, a representative of the Registrar shall be added to the Board."

Article 12, paragraph 4, to read as follows:

"The Administrative Board shall decide in each particular case whether the benefits of the present article shall extend to adopted children, step-children or children not born in wedlock."

Decides that the contribution of the League of Nations to the Pensions Fund for 1932 shall be 9 per cent of the salaries subject to deduction as defined in the Staff Pensions Regulations.

7. *The Assembly,*

Notes the resolution of the Governing Body of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation requesting the admission of the staff of this Institute to the Staff Pensions Fund;

Further notes a similar request from the Governing Body of the Nansen International Office for Refugees; and

Decides to submit these two resolutions to the Administrative Board of the Staff Pensions Fund for examination and report to the Assembly at the latter's next session.

8. *When proposals involving publications not immediately required for work already undertaken by the League are made by a League body, no final decision shall be taken until the Secretary-General has been consulted regarding the financial and administrative consequences of these proposals.*

The Assembly adopts the conclusions of the report of the Fourth Committee.

The President:

Translation: M. Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

M. Loudon (Netherlands):

Translation: The budget, as it has been submitted to you, represents a considerable reduction on the original figures. This reduction has largely been the work of the Fourth Committee, which realised that, in the present crisis, the League must make economies. We should be grateful to the Committee; it has had a thankless task, since what it had to do was not to check any tendency to prodigality, but to cut down undoubtedly useful expenditure. We must not, therefore, under-estimate the usefulness of the expenditure.

which has been suppressed, or the work it would have involved for the Secretariat. The position is the same as in the case of National budgets — Governments are bound to economise even though it be to the temporary detriment of the country.

As a member of a delegation which strongly supports reduction of expenditure, I desire to say that, in my opinion, we must appreciate the attitude of the Secretariat and the International Labour Office, and also that of the Registry of the Permanent Court of International Justice. These officials, who place their high abilities and their energies unreservedly at the service of the League, might have felt a certain bitterness in seeing the Committee show such eagerness to cut down expenditure, thereby narrowing the scope of their work. Yet they helped the Fourth Committee in every way to reduce expenditure, whenever such reduction did not involve permanent harm to the essential work of the League. I am sure they will do the same in the future.

I am one of the veterans of the League, and on many occasions during Assembly sessions, and especially during the long sittings of the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament, of which I had the honour to be President, I had an opportunity of realising at first hand how the Secretariat works, although I have not had an opportunity of following so closely the work of the International Labour Office. Only yesterday, when visiting some of the League's offices, I was struck by the fact that the work has sometimes to be carried out under conditions which only strengthen our hope that the new building will soon be completed. I venture to say that the work of the staff is beyond all praise. Just recently, a large number of the officials, realising the exigencies of the times, were, as I know, ready to sacrifice part of their salaries. For various reasons that gesture could not be made for the time being; nevertheless, we appreciate the generous intention of those officials.

It is a universal spirit of co-operation and solidarity that will enable us to overcome our present difficulties. The difficulties will last for months yet, for years perhaps, but — and this is my final word — not for one moment can those difficulties make us doubt the future or relax our efforts.

The President :

Translation : M. Palacios, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. Palacios (Spain) :

Translation : I desire to draw special attention to the attitude adopted by the Spanish delegation in the Fourth Committee in regard to budgetary questions. I was, unfortunately, the only — or almost the only — delegate in the Fourth Committee to plead a cause different from that which the other delegations supported. The majority of the Committee asked for a reduction in the budget of the League, whereas the Spanish delegation, whose views were expressed first in the speech of M. Lerroux, the President of the Council, and then in that of M. de Madariaga, urged consistently that the expenditure of the League ought not to be reduced, although we are at present, as everyone says — and it is unfortunately only too true — in the throes of a world economic crisis. I may add that our opinion has been strengthened precisely on account of that phenomenon. I shall not repeat now what those speakers said in the Assembly or what I myself maintained in the Fourth Committee.

Nevertheless, one sentence in the report which M. Boheman, the Swedish delegate, has just been explaining to you prompts me to intervene in the hope of perhaps introducing a small change. The

report states that all the speakers except the delegates of Spain and Lithuania pleaded in favour of economy. Instead of the word "economy" I should myself prefer the phrase "a reduction of expenditure". My colleagues on the Fourth Committee will remember that I was careful to say that, in the matter of economy, Spain would fall in with the opinion of the other speakers — that is, that she would agree to the idea of adapting means to ends as far as possible, in order to create a suitable and efficient instrument such as would enable the League to fulfil its mission. But Spain did not intend to accept an aggregate and somewhat arbitrary reduction of the means and resources of the League without taking into account its requirements, its objects and its noble purpose. We think that economy in the cause of peace means increased expenditure in the preparations for war. .

During the present Assembly I sat for the first time on the Fourth Committee. I learned a great deal, especially through being in contact with the Supervisory Commission, which is so formidable from the standpoint of the other Committees. I desire, however, to pay a tribute to the Commission and, in particular, to its Chairman, M. Osuský, who frankly explained the necessity for severity in regard to League economy. To my mind, his deliberate, sometimes trenchant, form of eloquence is a fitting medium for what he has to say.

I was, however, struck by a problem of competence which at times was settled in what I thought rather a curious manner. The Fourth Committee and the Supervisory Commission have to deal with purely budgetary questions, with regard to which the powers both of the Fourth Committee and of the Supervisory Commission are absolute. But certain questions are budgetary only in part. Thus, when they are settled in the Fourth Committee, the latter may become a sort of committee for the settlement of political and other questions, without perhaps being so well qualified as the representatives of States sitting on the other Committees from which the pre-budgetary proposal or agreement emanated.

I should like to refer, in connection with mandates, to M. Rappard's speech. Despite the arguments he invoked before the Supervisory Commission and the Fourth Committee, the latter decided the question entirely from the standpoint of expenditure without taking into account the functions and mission of the Mandates Commission. The same thing happened in connection with slavery. That is a difficult question. Last year we opposed the proposal to reduce the Committee to three members. Nevertheless, despite the Sixth Committee's decision, the Fourth Committee, sitting almost like a court of appeal, decided that it would be desirable to constitute a smaller Committee and reduced the estimate framed by the section of the Secretariat concerned. The same thing occurred again in connection with the suppression of publications on the enquiry into economic crises, and in other matters.

For these reasons I think the Assembly ought to consider the problem of the Fourth Committee's powers.

I thank you for the attention with which you have listened to my remarks. To be or not to be — the Spanish delegation emphatically reaffirms its conviction that, at the present time, during this world economic crisis so essentially international in character, it is incumbent on us to give proof of our confidence in the League — which is the body best qualified to find a remedy — and to accord it the resources it requires for the proper accomplishment of its task.

The President :

Translation : M. Max Huber, delegate of Switzerland, will address the Assembly.

M. Max Huber (Switzerland) :

Translation : May I, as delegate of Switzerland, make a few observations on the present report with reference to the Nansen International Office for Refugees.

The Office has realised that it will have to bear its share in the budgetary cuts imposed on the League as a result of the present crisis. I could, therefore, only bow before the decisions of the Committees at which I had to explain the special situation of the Office and the reasons which make it difficult for it to bear any reduction of its budget, already very low.

From the report of the Fourth Committee we find, however, that the budget of the Office has been more ruthlessly cut down than that of any one of the other organisations belonging to or affiliated to the League. The budget of the Office has been decreased by 10 per cent, whereas the percentage for the total of the revised budget as compared with the original budget (including the supplementary budget) is only 6½ per cent. That is a very big difference.

The diminution of our budget by 10 per cent — 33,000 francs — which is only one per thousand of the total budget of the League, is very appreciable to us, and will undoubtedly cripple our activities, especially in view of the additional work to which the Assembly has directed our special attention. But we shall do our very utmost to avoid diminishing the activity and utility of the Office, despite the decrease in the means at our disposal.

It should, however, be clearly understood that the reduction in the 1932 budget, which is occasioned by very exceptional circumstances, will be entirely without effect on future budgets or the whole plan for winding up the Office — a plan which you adopted a few days ago, which was prepared in conformity with the suggestions embodied in your previous resolutions, and which, as regards the total contribution of the League, is itself based on an annual budgetary reduction of 10 per cent.

If the necessary means were refused the Office in future, it would find it quite impossible to fulfil the mission you have assigned to it during the period when it is being wound up, and I should be obliged myself to ask you to release me from the mandate I accepted a year ago at your request.

I do not wish to leave this platform without expressing my deep gratitude to the statesmen who launched the Nansen appeal and to all those — in particular the British, the Danish and the Norwegian Committees — who by their generous gifts have helped to constitute the memorial fund. I should also like to emphasise the importance of your recommendations concerning the extended use of the Nansen stamp, for it is only by obtaining considerable funds that the Office will be able to meet the very numerous requests for co-operation and help addressed to it.

The President :

Translation : I think we can meet the wishes of the Spanish delegate by inserting the observations he has just made in the records. I may add that the Assembly is only called upon to adopt the conclusions of the report of the Fourth Committee, so that we need have no anxiety on that score.

If no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall regard the report of the Fourth Committee and the draft resolutions which accompany it adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

87. — ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES: REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Fourth Committee on the allocation of expenses (document A.92.1931.X).

The Rapporteur, M. Boheman, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Boheman (Sweden), Rapporteur :

Translation : The entry into the League of Nations of a new Member is an agreeable event, not only because it represents a step towards that universality to which the League has always aspired, but also because the new Member will pay an annual contribution to the League and thus lighten the burden of other States.

The Committee on Allocation of Expenses, under the chairmanship of M. Réveillaud, has recommended that the number of units to be allocated this year to Mexico, the newcomer to the League, should be fourteen. I therefore have the honour to propose that the Assembly should ratify the recommendation of the Committee for the Allocation of Expenses.

The Assembly will remember that, in 1928, it asked the Council to instruct the Allocation Committee to submit to the 1932 Assembly a final scale for the allocation of expenses, based on scientific data. The provisional scale at present in force, which was established with so much difficulty, has admittedly given rise to serious criticisms from various quarters, criticisms which are certainly justified in more than one case.

It was therefore to be hoped that, from the year 1932, it would have been possible to establish a more equitable arrangement; but unfortunately in this, as in so many other fields, the economic crisis has intervened and upset our most careful calculations. Thus, the Allocation Committee informed the Fourth Committee, through its Chairman, that it considered it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to draw up at the height of a crisis a just and stable scale.

Several delegates on the Fourth Committee put forward arguments which were considered very weighty, regarding the difficulty which their countries would have in accepting an adjournment of the question.

In a spirit of mutual conciliation which the Assembly will certainly appreciate, it was unanimously decided to accept the proposal made by the Chairman of the Allocation Committee to postpone the question until the 1934 Assembly.

I therefore have the honour to propose the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

I. Approving the recommendation of the Allocation Committee :

Fixes at fourteen the number of units allocated to Mexico in the scale of apportionment of the League's expenditure ;

II. Amending the decision taken on September 26th, 1928 :

Requests the Council to ask the Allocation Committee not to submit its draft revised scale until the 1934 Assembly.

The President :

Translation : As no other delegate has asked to speak, I shall consider the report of the Fourth Committee and the draft resolution contained therein adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

88. — CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW BUILDINGS: REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Fourth Committee on the construction of the new buildings (document A.89.1931).

The Rapporteur, M. Boheman, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Boheman (Sweden), Rapporteur :

Translation : It was with a feeling approaching stupefaction that the Fourth Committee took note of a special report of the Supervisory Commission informing it that the Building Committee had notified the Secretary-General that the estimates for the new buildings of the League — approved by the Assembly in 1930 — would probably be exceeded by 7 to 8 million gold francs.

The Fourth Committee at once felt that this was a very serious question and that prompt and energetic measures must be taken. The question is a grave one, not only on account of the serious consequences it might involve for the League's finances, but also because it would afford the League's enemies a ready handle for criticism in their campaign against our institution.

As one speaker on the Fourth Committee aptly expressed it, how could confidence be placed in the League's capacity to construct an edifice of peace if it could not even construct its own buildings?

The Fourth Committee therefore asserted its firm intention to put the matter in order.

I will not go into the history of the question. All the essential facts are given in the printed report before you. I merely wish to remind you that, in 1927, the Assembly agreed, in principle, that the sum to be expended on the construction of the new buildings should be 19½ million francs.

Difficulties having arisen concerning the ground originally chosen at the edge of the lake, and the Ariana Park having been fixed upon as the site of the new buildings, the 1930 Assembly, after a very detailed examination by the Committee of Five, approved an estimate amounting to 23,633,150 francs for the Assembly Hall, the Secretariat building and the outside work, and 4,250,000 francs for the Library.

In February 1931, the Secretary-General notified the Supervisory Commission that the estimates had been exceeded by 178,000 francs on the work of levelling, and by 50,000 francs for drainage. Subsequently, during the excavations, further difficulties due to the nature of the subsoil necessitated the enlargement and reinforcement of the foundations to an appreciable degree, which resulted in further unforeseen expenditure.

As a result of this considerable excess over the estimates, the Building Committee, which, as the Assembly is aware, consists of high officials of the Secretariat and distinguished specialists, instructed the architects during the summer of 1931 to revise completely the estimates presented to the Assembly in 1930. This revised estimate, which the architects were unable to submit to the Building Committee until September 9th, 1931, showed an increase of roughly 2,750,000 francs over the 1930 estimates for the Assembly Hall and Secretariat, the estimate for the Library remaining unchanged.

The Building Committee noted that the revised estimates included no margin for unforeseen expenditure, and that the architects were contemplating certain economies which were scarcely acceptable, such as the use of artificial stone instead of natural stone in some part of the façade; it

therefore requested the architects to revise their calculations.

An estimate — approximate, naturally — made by the technical members of the Building Committee concerning the final cost of the buildings led to the conclusion that there was reason to fear that the 1930 estimates would ultimately be exceeded by about 7 or 8 million francs for the Assembly Hall and Secretariat, and that the estimates for the Library would exceed the original figure by about 1,750,000 francs.

Following upon discussions that took place on this subject between the technical members of the Building Committee and the architects, the latter addressed to the Building Committee two letters, both of which modify the figures of the revised estimates.

I shall not endeavour to fix here the responsibility for these deplorable occurrences. I will simply emphasise the fact that, in my opinion, part, and no small part, of the responsibility falls on the League itself. For reasons which I will not go into now, it entrusted the construction of its buildings to an association of five architects of different nationalities. That arrangement, which from the outset raised stringent criticism, has certainly been largely answerable for the present state of affairs.

The Fourth Committee came to the conclusion that it had neither the technical and legal competence, nor, at this late stage, the time necessary to go fully into the matter. The Committee therefore proposes, in this difficult situation as in so many others, to have recourse to the Supervisory Commission — a Commission which is fully qualified, both by its composition and by its experience, to put the matter in proper order.

The Supervisory Commission should act as a committee of enquiry; it should be granted the fullest liberty, while bearing in mind the necessity of remaining within the credits already voted. It must obtain the necessary technical and legal advice and, after examining *inter alia* the possibilities of establishing unity of direction in the work, report as soon as possible to the Council of the League.

I think that, by the adoption of these methods proposed by the Fourth Committee, the Assembly may separate in the knowledge that it has done all it can to place the construction of the League buildings on a sound basis.

I have the honour to propose the adoption of the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

Having noted the report of the Fourth Committee on the question of the new buildings ;

Painfully surprised at the information furnished to the Fourth Committee by the Supervisory Commission, to the effect that it is feared that the estimate approved by the Assembly at its eleventh ordinary session may be exceeded by from seven to eight million Swiss francs unless the situation is taken in hand ;

Declares that it is resolved in principle to keep within the estimate adopted last year ; and

Instructs the Supervisory Commission, after having obtained the necessary technical and legal advice and without excluding the possibility of reconsidering the contract concluded with the architects, to submit to the Council for approval, as soon as possible, a programme which will comply, under the best possible conditions, with the above decision.

The President :

Translation : Mr. Pienaar, delegate of the Union of South Africa, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Pienaar (Union of South Africa):

I merely wish to ask the Assembly, in considering the somewhat depressing document with which it is now dealing, to bear in mind that similar difficulties have no doubt arisen in the past in the case of other famous buildings. I have no doubt that when Christopher Wren built St. Paul's Cathedral, when the Alhambra in Spain — and even when the Pyramids were being built — the Fourth Committees of those days had difficulty with the architects. Therefore, while we should certainly take this question with all due seriousness, I do not think we should take it tragically. The Assembly, the Supervisory Commission and the Council might consider that care should be taken not to go to any extremes in dealing with this matter.

What is required is a building worthy of this great Assembly and of the task which is before us. I do not think that a mere matter of money is of so much importance. I look forward myself to the day when the League of Nations shall have accomplished its task of ensuring the peace of the world. Some may think that at that time the reason for its existence will exist no longer and that the League might then be disbanded.

I, however, have another vision of the future. I should like to imagine the day when, peace being assured, all the nations of the world, all the Governments of the world, will concentrate the activities of their Foreign Offices at Geneva; when we shall have all the Ministers for Foreign Affairs at Geneva for a great part of the year, when they will be able to discuss their foreign affairs and settle them face to face, by word of mouth, without delay and without any danger of misunderstandings. In those days, we shall certainly need buildings worthy of that purpose, and I therefore hope that, when this matter is dealt with by the Supervisory Commission and by the Council, this will be borne in mind and given due consideration.

The President:

Translation: As no other delegate has asked to speak, I shall consider the report of the Fourth Committee and the draft resolution contained therein adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

89. — TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF COUNT SKRZYNSKI.

The President:

Translation: I have a communication to make to the Assembly. A former delegate to the Assembly has just died in particularly painful and tragic circumstances.

(The Assembly stood in token of mourning.)

Count Alexander Skrzynski, who was former President of the Council, and former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland, a signatory of the Locarno Treaties and delegate to the Assembly of the League of Nations, was recently killed in a motor accident.

This news cannot leave us unmoved. The name of Count Skrzynski recalls, to all of us who have been present at previous sessions of the Assembly, the memory of a statesman as remarkable for his talents as for his sympathy and charm. He placed these qualities at the service of his country, which he represented here with conspicuous ability.

It is only just that he should not be forgotten and that we should pay a special tribute to his memory. I feel sure I am interpreting the

unanimous feeling of the Assembly in asking the Polish delegation to transmit to his Government our very sincere sympathy.

M. Sokal has asked to address the Assembly.

M. Sokal (Poland):

Translation: On behalf of the Polish delegation, I beg very sincerely to thank our President for the moving terms in which he spoke of Count Skrzynski. His tragic and premature end is a very great loss, not only to Poland, but to the League itself, of whose ideals he was a staunch champion. I shall duly communicate to my Government the touching tribute which, on the suggestion of our President, the Assembly has paid to the memory of Count Skrzynski.

90. — ERECTION OF A MONUMENT IN THE CITY OF SANTO DOMINGO TO THE MEMORY OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS: TELEGRAM OF THANKS FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.

The President:

Translation: I have just received a telegram from the Government of the Dominican Republic expressing its gratitude to the Assembly for the message it conveyed in adopting its resolution regarding the erection of a lighthouse as a monument to the memory of Christopher Columbus. I am sure this communication will give pleasure to the Assembly, because it emanates from one of its most distinguished members.

91. — ARMAMENTS TRUCE: INFORMATION ON THE POSITION OF ARMAMENTS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES. REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Third Committee on the armaments truce (document A.93.1931.IX).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Munch, Chairman of the Third Committee, and M. de Madariaga, Rapporteur of the Third Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: M. de Madariaga, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga (Spain), Rapporteur:

Translation: The report I have the honour to submit to you on behalf of the Third Committee comprises two clearly separate parts, each concluding with a resolution.

The second resolution reads as follows:

“The Assembly,

“Noting that, of the sixty-three Governments invited to participate in the Disarmament Conference, twenty-five have up to the present communicated information on the position of their armaments in conformity with the recommendation made by the Council at its January and May sessions:

“Requests the Council to invite the Governments which have not yet transmitted their replies to the circular letters from the Secretary-

General dated February 17th and June 13th, 1931, on the position of their armaments, to do so as soon as possible and in any case before November 1st, 1931, in order to enable the Secretariat to provide the Disarmament Conference with adequate documentation."

This resolution is self-explanatory. As you are all aware, the Disarmament Conference must be prepared by means of adequate documentation, collected and co-ordinated by the Secretariat. For this purpose the Council authorised the Secretary-General to ask the Governments to supply the necessary material. At present, only twenty-five of the sixty-three Governments invited have replied. The need for documentation is obviously urgent, and the Assembly clearly owes it to itself to confirm the decision supported here by all present to see that the Conference meets on February 2nd next.

I now come to the first question, the armaments truce.

This idea originated in the eloquent speech pronounced here at the beginning of the general discussion by the distinguished Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs. In that speech it was announced that the Italian delegation would submit a proposal not to increase beyond their present level the armaments of all countries invited to the Conference, in order to prepare the way, by a moral gesture, for the Conference itself.

At the same time, the Assembly received a proposal from the Danish, Netherlands, Norwegian, Swedish and Swiss delegations, the main thesis of which was that the Assembly should request the Council to urge the Governments convened to the Conference to show their firm determination to support the efforts to ensure peace and re-establish mutual confidence by abstaining, pending the result of the Conference, from any measure leading to an increase of the present level of their armaments.

At the meeting of the Third Committee, the proposal announced by M. Grandi was submitted in concrete form by General de Marinis, the Italian delegate on the Third Committee. This proposal contained a more precise idea, although it was fundamentally the same as that of the five Powers mentioned above. The greater precision introduced by the Italian delegation consisted in transforming the recommendation referred to in the proposal of the five Powers into a definite declaration by the Governments. Moreover, there was a suggestion to give definite form to the limitation to be carried out in regard to armaments.

The Italian proposal was that each Government should undertake for a period of one year dating from November 1st, 1931:

(1) Not to increase its expenditure on land forces already authorised for the current financial year, and not to exceed the total of such expenditure during the next financial year until the expiry of the truce;

(2) Not to place any warship on the stocks, provided always that vessels under construction might be continued and completed;

(3) To suspend the construction of additional military aircraft, except to replace machines which are placed out of commission during the truce.

This proposal was strongly supported by the British delegation. We had, then, still on the basis of the moral gesture proposed by the five delegations, two new ideas: the transformation of the recommendation into a declaration by

Governments — a declaration which would involve a moral engagement — and a definition of a specific and technical character, this definition even giving indications as regards the various kinds of armaments — air, land and sea.

Two general tendencies were revealed in the Third Committee; some preferred the recommendation, while others preferred the declaration. Some desired a general form of obligation and others a precise and technical form of limitation.

It will be easily understood that these two tendencies overlapped and shifted their ground. It is obviously easier to define a recommendation, than a moral obligation; and, conversely, it was more advantageous that the declaration should have a general and elastic character.

I would emphasise the point that none of the delegations had any difficulty in making the moral gesture which everyone considered necessary — indeed, indispensable — to create an atmosphere favourable to the Conference. That was not the difficulty. The difficulty was caused by a real and objective obstacle. It was hard for countries suddenly to transform the measures taken by their departments of national defence. Any person with experience of departmental life knows that there is a kind of anticipation in programmes, a sort of normal development in the life of a State, and that programmes laid down in advance are gradually carried out. There are certain facts in current public life — work begun, contracts concluded with labour unions or associations of producers for the supply of raw materials, and so on — that cannot be altered. All these points make a sudden decision without previous consideration rather difficult.

I think we ought to interpret the difficulties we have encountered in the Third Committee as a desire to honour an obligation taken beforehand, and consequently as evidence of the necessity of not entering into engagements lightly. There is no need to labour the point; the report is, I trust, sufficiently clear.

I merely wished to note that at no time was there any difficulty in regard to fundamental matters. The only difficulty has been that of adjusting the special problems of the various States so that by some harmonious formula the conclusions of our discussions might be brought out with sufficient clarity to enable the various nations to realise that the Committee was not content merely to put words on paper. At the same time a fairly elastic formula had to be discovered in order that the difficulties of the various States might be solved.

We therefore decided on a form of resolution incorporating the idea we owe to the Italian delegation — namely, a truce. There is to be a truce in armaments for a period of one year, subject to any decisions which may be taken by the Assembly. The resolution submitted includes the idea of the moral gesture preparatory to the Conference, which represents the contribution of the five Powers. It also includes the moral undertaking, to which all States will subscribe, not to increase their armaments; that is the contribution of the Italian delegation, to which other delegations, and in particular the British delegation, attach particular importance. Lastly, the ultimate formula is sufficiently elastic to allow States to adapt all these ideas to their own individual practice.

There remains, however, one factor which is to be found neither in the resolution nor in the report, and which it is perhaps necessary to explain, since all States will be called upon to express, between now and November 1st, 1931, their opinion on the subject and to state whether they adopt the truce or not.

The Council must take such decisions as may be necessary to enable States, within a period to be

fixed subsequently, to know how matters stand as regards the intentions of other States. Obviously, the undertaking cannot be final until all the States that affect the State entering into the undertaking have also similarly bound themselves. The Council must, then, make arrangements for a period during which the undertakings received from certain States will be temporary. Those undertakings will not become final until the other States which affect them have followed suit.

After these preliminary explanations, I will read the text of the resolution which the Third Committee has the honour to submit to you :

" Convinced that the crisis which at the present time is creating such profound disturbance among the nations of the world is due to a number of economic and political causes originating principally in the lack of mutual confidence between the nations ; and,

" Convinced that a renewal of the competition in armaments would necessarily lead to an international and social catastrophe :

" The Assembly addresses a solemn appeal to all those who are desirous that practical effect should be given to the principles of peace and justice upon which the Covenant is based and urges them to devote all their efforts towards creating a world opinion strong enough to enable the General Disarmament Conference to achieve positive results, including, in particular, a gradual reduction of armaments to be continued until such time as the object laid down in Article 8 of the Covenant is attained.

" In view of the fact that an undertaking on the part of all States not to increase their armaments would help to create an atmosphere of confidence, to prevent competition in armaments and to prepare the ground for the success of the forthcoming Conference :

" The Assembly,

" Requests the Governments invited to the Disarmament Conference to prepare for this event by means of an armaments truce, and, accordingly,

" Requests the Council to urge the Governments convened to the said Conference to give proof of their earnest desire for the successful issue of the efforts to ensure and organise peace and, without prejudging the decisions of the Conference or the programmes or proposals submitted to it by each Government, to refrain from any measure involving an increase in their armaments ;

" Likewise requests the Council to ask the Governments to state, before November 1st, 1931, whether they are prepared for a period of one year as from that date to accept this truce in armaments."

Before I conclude, I must point out that this resolution has been prepared by a Committee comprising representatives or observers of all the countries non-members of the League which were invited and were able to arrive in time to be present at our meetings. I should like to refer as a very important fact to the presence, amongst those representatives, of a duly authorised representative of the United States of America, whose profound interest in the question of disarmament is universally known. The collaboration of Mr. Wilson, the United States Minister at Berne, in the work of the Third Committee has therefore been of the very highest importance, and I feel bound to refer to it in this Assembly.

I should add that, although unable to send a representative on account of the short time available, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics nevertheless stated that it was in agreement with the principle of the truce, under the conditions which you will find set out in the report.

We thus have before us a unanimous resolution approved by the States which will be present at the Conference in February 1932 ; and we are therefore entitled to hope that that Conference will open under all happy auspices conducing to make it a conspicuous success.

The President :

Translation : Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, first delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) :

It would be quite improper for me to attempt to review the achievements of the Assembly, which will no doubt be done in a masterful fashion in a short time by our President ; but perhaps I may be permitted just to say that the Assembly, which opened under the impression that this was going to be a somewhat barren and uninteresting session, has found it to be one of the most fruitful and important in the history of the League.

I observe that our clock has stopped, but the League advances. It is merely sufficient to recall to you that we have admitted Mexico, thus taking an important step towards the universality of the League. We have made real progress in the attempt to extirpate slavery as an institution in the world ; we have taken a step forward in the complicated questions involved in the nationality of women ; we have had very important debates on the economic question, both in this Assembly and in the Second Committee ; and, above all, we have had to deal with the difficult question of a dispute between two of our Members in which — in spite of certain criticism from outside — I persist in thinking that the League has shown itself at its best.

Coming nearer to the subject of the few observations I am going to make, I would remind you that the Third Committee has succeeded in establishing the text of a treaty for strengthening the means against war, which is open for signature and which will, I hope, be signed by as many States as possible in the very near future, so as to make an important contribution to the development of that favourable atmosphere in which we hope the Disarmament Conference will meet.

It was with the same object that the matter now before you was inaugurated. The object was to proclaim in the civilised world a truce in the preparations for war — a pause, at any rate, in that senseless waste of money involved in the piling up of armaments which, if civilisation means anything, ought to be unnecessary.

I am glad that our Rapporteur has pointed out to you that the conclusions we reached are not only the conclusions of the Members of the League of Nations, but conclusions in which all the countries that have been summoned to the Disarmament Conference have taken their part. That, I think, is a fact of more importance even than appears on the surface ; it inaugurates a system by which it is to be hoped that it may be possible for those States which are not Members of the League of Nations to give their collaboration, assistance and advice to the League when it is dealing with matters of first-rate importance.

What is the result of our efforts ? We have not achieved everything. I could have wished, and my Government could have wished, to have gone

further even than we have gone ; to have made, as the Italian delegation proposed, a more specific and definite statement of the policy of the suspension of armaments. But, though the result does not give us everything we may have desired, and in this world we seldom get everything we want, it is, in my judgment, a very considerable achievement.

Under the terms of our resolution, if the Assembly adopts it — as I hope it will — the Governments of the world will be asked to say clearly and definitely before a given date whether they accept the principle of a truce in armaments. The words are quite specific, quite definite. The Governments are asked to say whether they will refrain from any measure involving an increase in armaments. It is quite true that those are general words, and, in my judgment, however far we had proceeded in the direction in which the Italian delegation asked us to proceed, we should still have had to couch our resolution in general terms ; but, if the resolution is carried out honestly and honourably by those Governments who assent to it, the result will be a real suspension, a real truce in armaments, which cannot but have an immensely valuable effect on the public opinion of the world.

As we have repeated in the Third Committee, and as was stated in the remarkable pronouncement made by M. Grandi, the whole conception depends upon an appeal to the honour of the States. We do not seek to bind them by rigid and definite rules ; we ask them to accept an honourable engagement — what is sometimes called “a gentleman's agreement” — that they will refrain from all increase of armaments for one year from November 1st.

It will be open to the Governments, when they consider this request, to agree to it or reject it, or to agree to it with comments and explanations as to what their agreement means. To my mind, it will be a great test as to which Governments are so earnestly in favour of a reduction and limitation of armaments that they are not going to be deterred from taking a definite step in that direction by the exaggerated apprehensions which some of their advisers will always feel when the subject is mentioned. It will be, as it seems to me, a great exposition of where the Governments of the world stand, and those Governments which are most in favour of disarmament will have an opportunity of showing their faith by a public act which public opinion will note throughout the world. Similarly, it is a great opportunity, not only for Governments, but for public opinion in each country. All Governments must depend sooner or later on the public opinion of their countries. History emphasises that fact, political events make it clear to everyone who has ever taken part in public life. Now is the opportunity for those who really care for this great cause. Let them exert themselves to show to their Governments that, however far they advance in the direction of disarmament, they are sure of the support of their people.

I am not sure that I do not attach as much importance to the first effective paragraph of the resolution before us as I attach to its conclusions. I refer to the paragraph that urges all those who are desirous that practical effect should be given to the principles of peace and justice upon which the Covenant is based to devote their efforts towards creating a world opinion strong enough to enable the General Disarmament Conference to achieve positive results, including, in particular, a gradual reduction of armaments. That is a call to the peoples, just as the actual request for a declaration is a call to the Governments, and it is upon public opinion that we must always rely in the work which we are trying to do at Geneva. I cannot help feeling that the course of events, even in this

matter, has shown how strong and alert a power public opinion is.

Let us review the course of events which produced this final resolution. We all remember the very remarkable speech of the Italian Foreign Minister from this tribune ; it was the first speech delivered in this Assembly. It was not only admirable and courageous in itself, it instantly produced a response all over the world ; it gave new hope, new confidence, to those who were striving for disarmament throughout the world, and I venture to say to the Governments that they must observe and reckon with that great response. It will show to them how powerful the opinion of the people really is in favour of disarmament, and they will disregard that opinion at their peril.

I know that there are individuals — perhaps there are Governments — who are timid in this matter, but I would venture to say to them that, though they may be timid, the peoples of the world are in earnest.

I will conclude my observations by quoting a phrase from my countryman, Lord Grey, and I will say to all the Governments of the world and to the peoples that, if at this Disarmament Conference they do not take measures to make it a real and definite success, the consequences will be incalculable for the world. In his words, “The Governments and peoples of the world must either learn or perish”.

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur, M. de Madariaga, wishes to point out an error in the text of the report.

M. de Madariaga (Spain), Rapporteur :

Translation : I beg to point out that a sentence has been left in the printed document which should have been corrected.

The text of the last sentence of the paragraph beginning, “The Committee's aim has been to prepare the moral atmosphere of the Conference . . .” should be altered to read as follows : “Nevertheless, the Italian delegation, supported by other delegations, pointed out that this latter procedure would not enable the truce to be utilised as an element in preparing for the Conference, and it accordingly pressed its proposal”.

The proposed amendment was adopted.

The President :

Translation : General de Marinis, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

General de Marinis (Italy) :

Translation : It was the first delegate of Italy who mooted the idea of an armaments truce at the beginning of the Assembly. Several delegates have since expressed their sympathy with the idea and have put forward weighty arguments in its favour.

The Italian delegation then made a concrete suggestion that time should be allowed to enable all delegations to reflect on the possibility of subscribing to this truce and the methods which might be followed to give effect to the idea.

A suggestion was submitted by the Italian delegation to the Third Committee and received considerable support. On the other hand, it was definitely opposed by certain delegations. The Italian delegation, animated by a sincere spirit of conciliation, agreed to the amendments to its proposal in order to facilitate unanimous acceptance.

After a long discussion, the Third Committee brought its work to a conclusion by proposing that the Assembly should adopt a resolution involving

the declaration of a truce and its extension for a year—that is to say, an undertaking given by Governments in this present year not to increase their armaments. The resolution in question includes a request to the Governments to state whether they are ready to accept the truce. These were the principles on which our suggestion was based. Moreover, the resolution proposed to us shows that the truce will not prejudice the decision of the Conference or the programmes or proposals which each Government will submit. That is the interpretation we considered should be given to the suggestion.

We had, of course, asked for more, because we had in mind definite engagements for each category of armaments, whereas the resolution we are called upon to adopt refers to armaments as a whole, indicating that, during the truce, those armaments must not be increased above the existing level.

Nevertheless, even in this form the resolution of the twelfth Assembly will, I am sure, have a most beneficial effect in limiting the competition in armaments and will undoubtedly help to arrest the increase in armaments which we have witnessed during the last few years. All will depend upon the good faith and goodwill with which the truce is applied.

There is no doubt on that point, however. All Governments will respond to the powerful appeal of this Assembly and will realise in applying the truce the responsibility they are assuming before the whole world. Confident of this, the Italian delegation fully accedes to the resolution submitted to the Assembly, in the preparation of which it has co-operated with the utmost cordiality.

The President :

Translation : M. Massigli, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Massigli (France) :

Translation : When the idea of concluding an armaments truce before the forthcoming Conference was proposed in this Assembly, and again in the Third Committee, certain delegations, among which was the French delegation, did not hide the misgivings they felt regarding a step the full moral value of which they recognised, but which seemed to them to be, not only a very ambitious anticipation of the work of the forthcoming Conference, but also a task which must inevitably encounter serious difficulties.

I would not say that events have borne out these misgivings; but no one, I think, will deny that they were to a certain extent justified. How could it be otherwise, since some of us seem to have conceived the bold and ambitious scheme of concluding in eight days a convention which the French delegation was advocating as far back as 1928?

Why not say it frankly: the Third Committee's discussions were very animated. Behind theories and principles there loomed at times the shadows of very definite and concrete problems, and we know by experience that such concrete problems cannot be adjusted as easily as principles. On the conclusion of one of the debates in which the various standpoints were freely, and sharply, contrasted, many must have realised that no member of the Committee felt himself quite free to associate himself with the Rapporteur when he came to this platform to secure approval for the Convention on the means of preventing war, which was the happy result of the discussion of three successive Assemblies. Following the example of Viscount Cecil, I avail myself of this occasion to repair the omission so far as I myself am concerned, and to express

satisfaction, in the name of the French delegation, that at last there is open for the signature of States a convention which, if a large number of States ratify and adhere to it—as I hope they will—can give to the action of the Council, in certain cases connected with the application of Article 11 of the Covenant, more speed and consequently more efficacy.

And what are the results? The first, and perhaps the most important, is that, on the occasion of this discussion, we have been able not to create but to define, to “organise”, if I may say so, a precedent enabling us henceforth, in our discussions, to have more frequently associated with us the representatives of the great American Republic who have been sitting with us for the last week. That is a fact of capital importance.

I now pass to the resolution before us and the report accompanying it, which is admittedly inseparable from it. Quite possibly, this resolution does not fully satisfy any of us. Some would have liked it to be more precise and some would have preferred it to avoid definitely binding their Governments. Misunderstandings may arise—though I hope they will not—and perhaps even disputes; but this is no time for recrimination. Let us note the moral value, which Viscount Cecil emphasised so forcibly, of the act which has just been accomplished. Let us also remember the duty which lies upon us so to act that the truce that is to come into force shall be observed under the conditions defined in the report, and that it evinces a spirit of good understanding, goodwill and loyalty on the part of Governments and of nations.

Nothing could be more disappointing or destructive of the value of the truce than quarrelling or quibbling in regard to its application. Nothing could be more disappointing on the eve of so big an event as the Conference of February next. In his remarkable report, our colleague, M. de Madariaga, who has taken—I am sure he will allow me to say—a part in our discussions that will surprise no one who has seen him at work—M. de Madariaga, I say, writes that the Committee notes with satisfaction that the Conference for the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments is fixed for February 2nd next. I should have preferred it if he had added that this fact had been noted with all seriousness.

As this is the last occasion on which we shall have a chance in the Assembly of referring to the forthcoming Conference, may I express the hope that all Governments represented at that Conference will fully realise the importance of the event and that their delegates will come to Geneva armed with instructions and imbued with the spirit of success. I say “all Governments”. As M. Briand emphasised from this platform, Governments have the formidable task of balancing, on the one hand, what they hold to be vital necessities in the interests of their countries and, on the other, the necessities and interests of the community of nations. If they come to Geneva hoping to achieve purely individualistic aims under the guise of great principles, whatever such aims might be, I should be very fearful for the result of the Conference. But if they hold it their task to harmonise those individual needs with general aspirations—if, in other words, they can organise their efforts and endeavour to achieve what is reasonable and possible, we may count upon success.

I hope that one year hence we shall meet here once again to register the conclusion of a general convention conceived in the spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant—a convention that will be the crown of a sincere effort to secure the organisation of peace on a solid foundation.

The President :

Translation : Mlle. Forchhammer, delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. H. Forchhammer (Denmark) :

In a remarkable speech made by M. Briand in the Assembly two years ago, he appealed to the women to help in the work for peace. This year, again, a request has been made for the co-operation of women.

I want to assure you that women are taking an active part in the work for peace and goodwill among the nations, in collaboration with men, as well as in their own associations. How could this be otherwise? Women, like the small nations, have nothing to gain and everything to fear from war.

Now, on the eve of the Disarmament Conference, the women's organisations are doubling their efforts to help bring about the moral disarmament which is so essential for the success of the Conference.

A few days ago a number of important women's organisations joined together to form a disarmament committee here at Geneva. They have pledged themselves "by every means in their power to help in organising the vast and growing public opinion in favour of the Conference and the realisation of the worldwide cry for disarmament and security".

Behind them are millions of women all over the world, who now appeal to the men who have the power to act and therefore the chief responsibility, appeal to them in the words of Bertha von Suttner : "Die Waffen nieder" (lay down your arms).

The President :

Translation : As no other delegate has asked to speak, I shall put to the vote the resolutions of the Third Committee which read as follows :

I. Convinced that the crisis which at the present time is creating such profound disturbance among the nations of the world is due to a number of economic and political causes originating principally in the lack of mutual confidence between the nations ; and

Convinced that a renewal of the competition in armaments would necessarily lead to an international and social catastrophe :

The Assembly addresses a solemn appeal to all those who are desirous that practical effect should be given to the principles of peace and justice upon which the Covenant is based and urges them to devote all their efforts towards creating a world opinion strong enough to enable the General Disarmament Conference to achieve positive results, including, in particular, a gradual reduction of armaments to be continued until such time as the object laid down in Article 8 of the Covenant is attained.

In view of the fact that an undertaking on the part of all States not to increase their armaments would help to create an atmosphere of confidence, to prevent competition in armaments and to prepare the ground for the success of the forthcoming Conference :

The Assembly,

Requests the Governments invited to the Disarmament Conference to prepare for this event by means of an armaments truce, and, accordingly,

Requests the Council to urge the Governments convened to the said Conference to give proof of their earnest desire for the successful issue of the efforts to ensure and organise peace and, without

prejudging the decisions of the Conference or the programmes or proposals submitted to it by each Government, to refrain from any measure involving an increase in their armaments ;

Likewise requests the Council to ask the Governments to state, before November 1st, 1931, whether they are prepared for a period of one year as from that date to accept this truce in armaments.

II. The Assembly,

Noting that, of the sixty-three Governments invited to participate in the Disarmament Conference, twenty-five have up to the present communicated information on the position of their armaments in conformity with the recommendation made by the Council at its January and May sessions :

Requests the Council to invite the Governments which have not yet transmitted their replies to the circular letters from the Secretary-General dated February 17th and June 13th, 1931, on the position of their armaments, to do so as soon as possible, and, in any case, before November 1st, 1931, in order to enable the Secretariat to provide the Disarmament Conference with adequate documentation.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

92. — DISPUTE BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN : STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : The President of the Council has asked to make a communication to the Assembly.

(On the invitation of the President, M. Lerroux (Spain) came to the platform.)

M. Lerroux (Spain), President of the Council :

Translation : In the statement which I had the honour to make to the Assembly on September 24th, 1931, I said I hoped that I should be in a position to make another statement before the end of the Assembly on the question submitted to the Council by the Chinese Government under Article 11 of the Covenant.

The Chinese Government's appeal was submitted on Monday, September 21st. The Council first examined it on September 22nd.

I shall now recapitulate the main facts regarding the origin and history of the affair, according to the statements of the representatives of the two Governments.

On the evening of September 18th, the first incident occurred near Mukden in the South Manchurian Railway zone, which was guarded by Japanese troops.

The Japanese officer in command, acting on the grounds of military precautions, sent troops outside the South Manchurian Railway zone — in particular, to the Mukden line on the Chinese Railway. The Chinese Government, on receiving the news of the first incident, had contemplated the possibility of settling the matter by direct negotiation, but decided then, in view of the aggravation of the situation, to lay the question before the Council.

The Council's first act, after its meeting on the Tuesday morning, which was devoted to hearing the first statement of the representatives of the two parties, was to authorise its President : (1) to address an urgent appeal to the Governments of China and Japan to abstain from any act which might aggravate the situation or prejudice the peaceful settlement of the problem ; (2) to seek,

in consultation with the representatives of China and Japan, adequate means whereby the two countries may proceed immediately to the withdrawal of their respective troops without compromising the security of life of their nationals or the protection of the property belonging to them.

The Council decided, further, to forward, for information, the Minutes of all its meetings, together with the documents relating to this question, to the Government of the United States of America.

On the evening of September 22nd, I telegraphed to the two Governments informing them of the duty entrusted to me by the Council and addressing to them the urgent appeal which the Council had authorised me to transmit.

Simultaneously with these consultations, I convened the Council, when I judged this useful, in order that the latter might be informed of the progress of the affair.

The two Governments replied promptly to the telegrams which I had sent them on September 22nd on behalf of the Council. The Chinese Government's reply was received on Thursday, September 24th, and that of the Japanese Government on Friday the 25th.

The Chinese Government urged that measures should be taken as rapidly as possible to ensure the immediate withdrawal of the Japanese troops. It added that it would assume entire responsibility for the protection of the lives and property of Japanese nationals directly its authority was re-established in the territories evacuated by the Japanese troops.

The Japanese Government, in its reply, stated that it was sincerely desirous of settling the matter peacefully and as soon as possible by negotiations between the two countries. It had withdrawn the greater part of its troops within the railway zone, where they were concentrated. Outside that zone only a few troops remained posted as a measure of precaution in the city of Mukden and in Kirin, while a few soldiers had been stationed at certain points. The withdrawal of the Japanese forces was being effected in so far as the security of Japanese nationals and the protection of the railway then allowed. The Japanese Government proposed to withdraw its troops into the railway zone as the situation improved and felt confident that the Council would, in this matter, trust the sincerity of its attitude.

The Secretary of State of the United States of America also communicated to me on September 24th, through the United States Minister at Berne, a document assuring me that his Government was in wholehearted sympathy with the attitude of the League as expressed in the Council resolution communicated to the Chinese and Japanese Governments, and that he proposed to send to Japan and to China notes on similar lines.

The Council thanked the United States Secretary of State for this communication, adding that it would be happy to continue to keep the United States Government informed of any steps it might take. The Council also expressed the hope that the United States Government would be prepared to enter into communication with it. On September 25th, the United States Minister at Berne communicated to me the text of the identical note addressed by the United States to the Chinese and Japanese Governments.

Following on the replies of the Chinese and Japanese Governments to my telegram of September 22nd, and the additional explanations furnished to the Council by the representatives of the two Governments at the meeting on Friday,

September 25th, I was able to inform the Council that the withdrawal of the Japanese forces to within the railway zone was being carried out, and that, if on both sides efforts were pursued to arrive at pacification, the Council might hope for a satisfactory settlement of the problem.

I added that the Council must, in the first place, count on the firm goodwill of the two parties concerned, on their sincerity and on their sincere desire not to aggravate the situation. I stated that the Council would certainly wish, on the one hand, to address an appeal to the Japanese Government to withdraw its troops as soon as possible to within the railway zone, and I stated also that the Council had noted the declaration by the Chinese representative, who, referring to the undertaking contained in the telegram which his Government had addressed to me on September 23rd, gave an assurance that the latter would, in proportion as the withdrawal of the Japanese troops proceeded, assume responsibility for the security of Japanese nationals and the protection of their property outside the railway zone. I added that the Council would doubtless wish to be kept informed of the measures which would be taken by the two parties in reply to the appeal addressed to them.

At the following meeting of the Council, held yesterday (September 28th), the Japanese representative referred to the fact that the Chinese Government had stated through its representative that it would assume responsibility for the safety of Japanese nationals and the protection of their property. While noting the Chinese Government's admirable intentions, the Japanese representative gave the reasons for which it seemed to it necessary, before rescinding all the measures taken to ensure the protection of its nationals, to make certain that the local authorities were really in a position to maintain order, and that the Japanese were not likely to be exposed to danger as the result of the departure of the Japanese protective forces.

The Japanese representative also announced to the Council that the withdrawal of the Japanese troops was proceeding, and that the Japanese effectives stationed at Kirin had been reduced since the communication which he had made to the Council at the previous meeting. Outside the railway zone, there only remained, apart from Kirin and Mukden, small detachments at Hsinmingtung and Chenchiatung for the protection of Japanese nationals against the attacks of bands of Chinese soldiers and brigands which at that time were ravaging those districts.

The Japanese representative added that his Government would not fail to keep the Council closely informed on every phase of the situation and all the measures taken to secure a rapid settlement. As things were the Japanese representative thought that any further steps in that connection were unnecessary. In conclusion, he asserted once more that his Government had no territorial ambitions in Manchuria, and that it still firmly maintained its intention, which it had already manifested for some days past in the form of definite acts, to bring back its forces into the railway zone, in which the security of its nationals and of their property would be effectively protected.

The Japanese representative hoped that his Government would be enabled to carry out its intentions in full and as rapidly as possible.

The Chinese representative, after stating his satisfaction at hearing that the withdrawal of the Japanese troops was proceeding, expressed his uneasiness on a number of points. On what date would the evacuation be completed? In the evacuated localities, had the prisoners been

released and had the seized property been restored to its owners? He thought that certain steps might be taken to hasten the withdrawal of the troops, their withdrawal being desired, not only by China, but also by Japan and by the Council. In his desire to facilitate agreement between the two Governments, he announced that he was prepared, if this proposal were more agreeable to the representative of the Japanese Government, no longer to suggest, as he had done before, the despatch to the spot of a commission consisting of neutral members, but that the Council should assist the parties, in order that, with the assistance of neutral members, arrangements might be made on the spot which would make it possible to fix an early date for the complete withdrawal of the Japanese troops.

The Chinese representative will, I suppose, embody his proposal in a concrete form.

Such is the present situation, I only wish to refer to several essential points: firstly, the statement by the Japanese Government and by its representative that there never has been, and never will be, any question of the military occupation of Manchuria; secondly, the fact that the Japanese Government has on several occasions insisted, before the Council, on its intention to withdraw the Japanese forces as soon as possible to within the railway zone, in so far as the safety of its nationals and their property may be effectively guaranteed; thirdly, the fact that this intention has, according to the declaration made yesterday to the Council by the Japanese representative, already been translated, during the last two days, into definite action and that outside the railway zone Japanese troops are stationed in only four localities.

The Council has noted these reassuring statements by the Japanese Government. It feels certain that, in this very delicate affair, as in other affairs which have been laid before it, the goodwill of the parties and their loyalty to international engagements will be found to constitute the best guarantee for the peace of the world. Having had the matter laid before it under Article 11 of the Covenant, the Council will, after the close of this session of the Assembly, continue its efforts to assist the representatives of the two parties to obtain, by such measures as both may deem acceptable, a satisfactory settlement of a situation which has deeply affected the relations between two great nations and at one time even seemed likely, before the real progress achieved in the last few days, to constitute a threat to international peace.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will have heard with very great appreciation and deep interest the statement which the President of the Council has been good enough to make. He has given a completely objective account of the cases of both parties and of the action decided upon by the Council.

In the circumstances, I think the Assembly will agree with me that the Council should continue to carry out its pacific mission, and that there is no need for the two parties in question, or for the other members of the Assembly, to open a discussion on the statement just made by the President of the Council. It only remains for me to express the firm conviction of the Assembly that the efforts of the Council will rapidly be crowned with complete success.

93. — CLOSING SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : The twelfth Assembly has concluded its work, and the moment has come to take stock of the situation with all frankness, with the courage of sincerity, and at the same time with that sympathetic understanding which enables creative impulses to achieve their purpose.

This Assembly did not open in that atmosphere of chronic scepticism which has characterised the opening of previous Assemblies, an atmosphere which each year we have managed to dispel without difficulty, as it were by a ritual gesture. It opened rather in an atmosphere of legitimate distress caused by the serious lack of confidence which was rapidly spreading throughout the world, in every sphere where human effort had established order. Moreover, scarcely had we embarked upon our task when new and unforeseen events in the domains of finance and politics served still further to aggravate the psychological conditions under which we were called upon to deliberate.

Events such as these would undoubtedly have completely disorganised any international Conference convened to meet the requirements of the hour. But they did not, they could not, upset an assembly of States such as ours, which is, after all, but the transient reflection of a permanent entity, a new form of collective life soundly organised from the outset, forging its way and pursuing its destiny still under the impulse of its early inspiration; and, so, when darkness descends upon the earth, it at once takes its rightful place in the sun.

How has the twelfth Assembly reacted to these many adverse factors?

In the first place — and to me this is very important, though I recognise that to the uninitiated it must seem less so — the twelfth Assembly has proceeded methodically and enthusiastically with its ordinary work as if we were living in normal times, and has not allowed itself for a moment to be deflected from the accomplishment of its statutory task by the cries of alarm on every side — cries so insistent that it might have been thought that the work it was doing was not what was most urgently demanded by the times.

When the strong man is put to the test, he does not abandon his daily task; and that man alone is strong who derives from the daily round, the common task, such poise and calm as will enable him, when unexpected obstacles rise up in his path, to transform his energy into an all-compelling and irresistible force.

You will never know with what feelings of comfort and profound gratitude I have followed your discussions. Those discussions on many and varied subjects, in which responsible men from all over the world have participated despite their own anxieties — those discussions at which expert knowledge, goodwill and political good sense were perfectly blended, but which did sometimes, we must admit, seem to be not immediately relevant to the questions that called most urgently for a solution, will remain for all time a striking testimony in favour of this institution.

When the storm is over, it will be said of the twelfth Assembly: "When the world was going through that crisis, and men, despite wise counsels, were beginning to lose faith, the League of Nations, though a new creation in a world which was a prey to haunting anxiety, affirmed its will to live and to pursue the path mapped out in its constitutional character".

For this concrete act of faith, performed so calmly and so simply, for its power to maintain spiritual stability in an unstable world, the twelfth

Assembly will have earned the gratitude of future Assemblies and especially of those destined to know better times than ours.

But, it may be asked, what results has the twelfth Assembly achieved? Let us be frank. Some of those results have fallen short of our expectations; others have come up to our expectations; while yet others have so far exceeded anything we had a right to hope that I think, in future, all forecasts with regard to the Assembly's work will be discounted from the outset. The programme of an Assembly such as ours is not based on previous agreement between chancellories; we prepare our own programme and carry it out, applying to the unforeseen events of the moment the criteria of our fundamental charter.

Let us briefly analyse those results.

In the political field, the crisis has taken much of the sting out of the controversies which temporarily divide certain of our Members and which it has been their habit to discuss frankly and publicly here.

In all other fields — in the field of social, humanitarian and intellectual work and of health and transit — the League action has become more clearly defined, has extended its scope and has come nearer to attaining its goal.

In the economic field, the Council has approved the system of international mortgage credits as a first measure of assistance to sorely tried agricultural countries; but — let us frankly admit this — the twelfth Assembly has been able to add scarcely anything to the proposals of the economic experts, although, by adopting them, it has invested them with the authority attaching to its resolutions.

Having said so much, let us ask ourselves equally frankly if it could have been otherwise. We have been sitting at a time when States themselves were undecided as to the direction to be given to their national policy, and it has been difficult, therefore, to ask them to commit themselves *vis-à-vis* other countries before knowing exactly what undertakings they would have to give at home.

The League, moreover, is an association of States and, when a crisis affects all its Members in turn, it is only natural that, before acting as a collective body, those States should desire to deliberate among themselves as to whether the course proposed really points the way to salvation. Again, such slight delay as this involves is really only a moment of respite before the preparation of the big general solutions which we shall, I feel certain, be called upon to discuss in the very near future.

In the financial field, on the other hand, the Assembly's intentions have been more definite. It has asked the Council to take effective action with a view to financial assistance for States, and has requested the technical organs of the League to hold themselves in readiness, and, should the States apply to them, to accord such assistance immediately, whether by sending delegations or by some other means.

While we are speaking of finances, how can we avoid touching upon the disquieting problem of our own finances?

The twelfth Assembly, desirous of proving to the world by a noble gesture, which caused it no little effort, that it appreciates the needs of the hour, has imposed on the League sacrifices imposed by circumstances on each of its Members. I respect the Assembly's intention; I appreciate its efforts. May I, however, the President of this Assembly, be permitted, at all events in my individual capacity, to attribute to this gesture a symbolic value, believing firmly, as I do, that its effect must be restricted to the coming year and that it is not the prelude to a future policy. The fact is that League expenditure is expenditure in the cause of peace.

It may sound paradoxical, but, the greater the crisis the greater the League's responsibilities and the greater its expenditure.

True, we must be careful not to waste the nations' money. Let us not forget, however, that the contributions of States are simply in the nature of an insurance premium against terrible afflictions which it is our aim to banish for ever; let us not forget that those contributions are infinitesimal compared with the crushing financial burdens which the nations have freely assumed in order that they may make war upon one another. Our duty, obviously, is to do all in our power to repair the consequences of that tragic error — war. We must have recourse to every means, save one — we must not bungle peace by restricting the League's activities, for ours is the only invention ever devised for silencing the thunder of the guns.

In connection with finances, which are, after all, our means of action, how can we help thinking first and foremost and all the time of those whose duty it is to act on our behalf — I mean, the members of the Secretariat and of the International Labour Office?

I am too old and proved a friend of the Secretariat and of every one of its members for there to be any danger of their hearing from me the conventional compliments addressed to them at the close of each Assembly; but I should like to assure them of the high esteem in which this magnificent team of workers, perpetuating the Wilsonian tradition, is held by the Assembly — a team unremitting in its labour, wedded to supple methods and uncompromising in the pursuit of its objects.

True, from time to time we hear criticisms of the Secretariat, criticisms never devoid of courtesy. They bear witness to the important part which the members of the Secretariat have elected to play in the functioning of this institution. When anything goes wrong we say at once: "It is the Secretariat's fault". That is a compliment! But when a thing is going just as we want it to, no one says: "Yes, thanks to the Secretariat". It is so much a matter of course that no one dreams of mentioning it. There you have your revenge!

I should have liked to speak of our Secretary-General, but he is absent — do not misunderstand me — not physically absent, for there he sits with his ever-ready smile, which is so much a part of him that no one ever knows when he is pleased and when he is not. But, mentally, the Secretary-General is no longer with the twelfth Assembly. For him, it has long been over. His spirit is far away, and I will tell you where it is. After ranging over the Disarmament Conference and all the international Conferences that may follow in its train and all the coming Assemblies, his mind is now coping with the agenda of the twentieth Assembly.

We know, Mr. Secretary-General, that you remain here, firm as a rock, while we pass by, a never-ending stream. We know that your lead will always be followed because you are always ready to give a lead, vigilant and confident. But we beg you to come back to earth and join our councils. The twelfth Assembly has not yet terminated its proceedings. It is here before your eyes, anxious to express through me, its President, its affectionate admiration — the admiration of us all, your friends in joy or sorrow, or rather, I should say, in sorrow, for it is your joy to labour for us.

To come back to the results. What we have accomplished would honour any Assembly and satisfy the most exacting, even people who are only aware of the League when the Assembly is sitting, even those who regard the League as no more than a form of hypertrophy of the month of September.

But the twelfth Assembly has done one thing more — and that will be its claim to honour. More than any of its predecessors, it has paved the way for the future; more than any of its predecessors, it has refused to leave to chance the interval which separates it from the next Assembly.

What is the explanation? It is because instinctively it has obeyed the laws which govern collective achievement.

You have all noticed that, as a Conference is drawing to its close, the work it does appears more and more useful. There is a psychological reason for this.

Anyone who has kept in touch with international conferences — and I, though I represent a Power whose interests are essentially limited, have followed them nearly all with ungrudging attention, from the Peace Conference onwards — has observed that any diplomatic gathering goes through three phases.

The first phase is mistrust — national particularism and an uncompromising attitude are the predominating features. During that phase members threaten to leave the Conference if anyone ventures to suggest their reducing their demands below the minimum compatible with their national dignity.

The second phase is that of explanations. We say exactly what we think to one another, in an impeccable form. This is the stage where we are grateful to diplomacy for having remained the last refuge of courtesy, for, without it, how could we diplomats be so agreeably disagreeable?

The third phase is that of sympathy. Delegates are no longer hampered by the necessity of furnishing explanations with regard to their national mandate and begin to regard one another more benevolently. They find, each one of them, that their colleagues are not as bad as they may have been inclined to think. Personal relations begin to play their part and regret is felt that inter-State relations are not as satisfactory as these personal relations. Then gradually and insensibly the inter-State relations are merged in the personal relations. Then it is that the collective spirit of the Conference is formed, and from that moment the Conference really gets to work. As time goes on, even the most unexpected solutions are found to be acceptable. Unfortunately, just as the collective spirit is producing its effect, the Conference comes to an end, and the next one has to begin all over again.

This simply means that international life, like any form of life, is subject to the laws of matter, and that every constructive spirit has somewhere a material body behind it. We do not succeed in accomplishing our tasks as rapidly as we could wish, for we have to break up the collective body just when the spirit informing it is born.

The twelfth Assembly has understood this law which governs collective achievement, and, more than any previous Assembly, it has determined to perpetuate its endeavours; more than any other it has insisted on extending its action beyond the time when it should, officially, have ceased to exist.

The Disarmament Conference is at hand. The eleventh Assembly requested the Council to fix the date, which it did; but we all realise that it is thanks to the twelfth Assembly — which has given the delegates an opportunity of expressing their views and of removing all doubts with regard to the possibility of adjournment — that February 2nd, 1932, has become a categorical imperative of such compelling force that the nations would still meet at Geneva, even if no one mentioned disarmament between now and then.

The Disarmament Conference will be the touchstone of concord between the nations. The issue is not whether this or that view shall prevail, but whether the nations have decided to make a real advance in the direction of applying Article 8, so that — political problems being interdependent — we may know whether, by settling one of them, we can facilitate the settlement of all the others.

Accordingly, we welcome the adoption by the twelfth Assembly of the draft Convention for improving the Means of preventing War, which, together with the draft Convention for Financial Assistance adopted last year, proves that efforts with a view to security go hand in hand with disarmament schemes.

We hail with enthusiasm the action of the First Committee in referring to the jurists included in the delegations to the Disarmament Conference the question of the amendment of the Covenant and the insertion in our fundamental statute of an absolute prohibition of recourse to war.

We cannot but feel infinitely grateful for the suggestion for an armaments truce which you have adopted to-day — on the motion originally of the Italian delegation — in the form of the resolution in the name of five Powers. As a matter of fact, this is anticipating the Disarmament Conference. So anxious was the twelfth Assembly to perpetuate its activities that it even determined to play out the first act of that Conference.

An institution which, in these difficult circumstances, gives proof of spiritual stability and vitality, such as this cannot but command respect, and it has been the privilege of the twelfth Assembly to take unto itself the highest testimony of the League's prestige throughout the world.

For the League must aim at universality, and there are only two means of securing this. The first is to increase the number of Member States and the second is by more intensive and continuous collaboration with non-member States. But not to admit that the second means is only a preparation for the first and, normally, its happy prelude would be to misinterpret the laws of nature and to deny the wonder of invisible germination until such time as the flower blossoms which alone spells faith to those whose unbelief depends on ignorance.

The twelfth Assembly has made tremendous progress towards universality. The entry of Mexico into the League at this juncture proves that, although the world may be suffering from lack of confidence, one domain — the League — exists to which this does not apply.

Again, the fact that the majority of non-member States have collaborated in the Third Committee proceedings proves that, when it is a question of satisfying the nations' anxiety and strengthening the bases of peace, there is identity of will and outlook among the Member and non-member States, and for this I thank them all very sincerely.

I should like especially to thank the United States of America for their valuable co-operation with the League in the important problems affecting the maintenance and progress of peace. Let us hope that this collaboration will continue and, as far as possible, be extended.

But I want to make myself quite clear. We all realise perfectly the nature of their co-operation. It is voluntary, not arising out of any obligation, and cannot be held directly or indirectly to increase the obligations of the United States. Having said so much, I feel bound to add that the result has been to increase the prestige both of the League and of the United States in the eyes of the world.

In the light of these happenings, how should we refuse to admit that what we call our fundamental charter — the Covenant — is in reality simply a collection of commandments dictated by our own

conscience? What does it matter whether they are written or unwritten, accepted or not accepted? When conscience commands, men of honour act in the same way.

Lastly, it has been the privilege of the twelfth Assembly, before terminating its work, to record a great example of energy and to witness a happy *rapprochement*.

This lesson of energy was given to us by none other than Great Britain, that great nation, whose age-long history may be summed up in a few simple words: an implacable will to conquer by honourable means, in the face of dire adversity. May I be allowed to express to Great Britain the admiration we have all felt at this further proof of her determination to be true to herself?

As for the *rapprochement* of which I just spoke, what *rapprochement* could give us more pleasure than that of France and Germany, whose close co-operation in the interests of true peace has been newly strengthened at Berlin?

I ask you to compare the atmosphere in which we are concluding our work with that in which we

began it, and to ask yourselves whether any rational being can still doubt.

When it is a matter of choosing the best means of realising some new venture which is a living reality to all of us, doubt may be legitimate; yet to entertain doubts in regard to what does exist when we do not know for certain what we should put in its place is nothing less than suicide.

No, this time the enemy is not at our doors: he is within ourselves. Let us banish the enemy in our midst — deadly doubt, and most of all that absurd idea that the individual can be saved when the community is in danger of perishing.

Let us do this, and we shall hear the voice of instinct: "Man's destiny is imperishable". Let us do this and then we can say with firm conviction: "The hour of darkness is past, for the light is in us".

I declare the twelfth session of the Assembly of the League of Nations closed.

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH, 1932, AT 10.30 A.M.

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1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

Mr. de Valera, delegate of the Irish Free State, President in Office of the Council, took the Chair.

The Chairman. — Ladies and gentlemen. — In my capacity as President of the Council, I have the honour to declare open the thirteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

2. — ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE TO REPORT ON THE CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES.

The Chairman. — The first item on the agenda is the election of a committee to report on the credentials of the delegates.

According to the rules of Procedure of the Assembly, this Committee should be elected by secret ballot. There have, however, been frequent exceptions to this rule; and in view of the precedents, I feel that I shall only be anticipating the Assembly's wishes in submitting a list consisting of eight names as follows :

M. Aristides DE AGÜERO Y BETHANCOURT (Cuba),
M. Rudolf HOLSTI (Finland),
Count LAGARDE, Duke OF ENTOTTO (Abyssinia),
Sir P. D. PATTANI (India),
M. RAPHAËL (Greece),
M. Emile REUTER (Luxemburg),
M. Eduardo SANTOS (Colombia),
Anouchirevan Khan SEPABODI (Persia).

Members of the Assembly who may desire to put forward other proposals are invited to do so.

As no objection has been raised, I think I may conclude that the Assembly has decided that the Committee on Credentials shall consist of the delegates whose names I have just read.

The list proposed by the Chairman was adopted.

The Chairman. — My intention in proposing that the Assembly should proceed immediately to constitute the Committee on Credentials was to expedite the proceedings. The Committee on Credentials will therefore be good enough to meet at once in order that they may submit their report at the earliest possible moment.

3. — OPENING SPEECH BY Mr. DE VALERA, PRESIDENT IN OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL.

The Chairman. — It is customary for the Acting President of the Assembly to open the Assembly with a review of the work of the League of Nations during the previous year. The report of the Secretary-General, which deals very fully with that work, is before you. I do not propose, therefore, to do more than refer briefly to what appear to me to be the more important matters.

The outstanding event of the year has been the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments. I do not wish to appear unappreciative of the difficulties with which the problem of disarmament is surrounded. It must be recognised that some progress has been made and that proposals have actually been engaging the attention of the Conference which, a year ago, many here would have thought outside the realm of practical politics. But I do not think I shall be accused of exaggeration if I say that the measure of progress which has so far been made falls far short of what I am convinced are the desires and expectations of the peoples of the world.

Another event of outstanding importance during the year was the Lausanne Conference. While it is, perhaps, still too soon to assess the final results of that Conference, it will have much to its credit if it paves the way for the definite settlement of the problem of intergovernmental payments. The Lausanne Conference was not, itself, a Conference held under the auspices of the League of Nations, but it was inevitable that the Governments represented at Lausanne, the moment they felt themselves free to turn to the consideration of the wider and more fundamental problems affecting the financial and economic conditions of the whole world, should turn to the League for the most efficient and satisfactory machinery for organising further progress. This Assembly already had referred to it by the Council, you will remember, proposals on the same matters which had their origin in a resolution of the International Labour Conference.

The request of the Lausanne Conference serves in a striking manner to confirm the need for immediate international action in the economic and financial fields.

New tasks, therefore, of enormous complexity and difficulty have been accepted by the League, and, with the coming Economic and Financial Conference and the further sessions of the Disarmament Conference, it is already certain that the year which opens before us will prove to be one of the most strenuous and the most important in the whole history of the League.

Reference must, I feel, be made to the conflict in the Far East. When the Special Assembly began to discuss this question, serious fighting involving heavy loss of life was actually in progress in the region of Shanghai. That is happily no longer the case. But it is none the less true that the larger problems at issue in that conflict remain unsolved. The Commission which was dispatched by the Council to the scene of the conflict on the initiative of Japan has just reported. I am sure I voice the feeling of the whole Assembly when I express the hope that the report of the Commission will be conducive towards a just and final settlement of the

dispute, and that the methods and principles of the Covenant will find a justification in their triumph over all the difficulties with which this problem is surrounded.

As regards the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay, we have all been informed of the representations which the outgoing President of the Council, following the tradition of friendly vigilance which has grown around that office, has made to those two Members of the League, and we all, I am sure, approve of these representations. They were at once a reminder of the binding character of the undertakings not to resort to war assumed by Members of the League and an invitation to listen to the counsels of those friendly American Republics which were endeavouring to find an acceptable method of peaceful settlement. Each Member of the League will hope that these efforts, which are to be continued by the Committee which the Council has decided to appoint, will bring the dispute to an end.

I shall not attempt to summarise the work of the League in the second broad division of its task — namely, international co-operation in fields other than that of international peace and security. In spite of restrictions in the League budget, this work has continued steadily, and those who read the annual report will be able to assure themselves that the results have not been unsatisfactory.

I shall not refer to the several important minority petitions which have been examined, the committees of enquiry which have reported and the ratifications and accessions to League Conventions which have been received during the year. You will, however, allow me to mention, as being a little off the beaten track, the decisions which the Council and Financial Committee have taken in regard to requests for advice and assistance from Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Greece and Roumania, the help given by the League to China in her programme of national reconstruction, and the success of two missions of considerable humanitarian importance carried out with the help of the League — the rebuilding of the dykes on the Yang-tse-Kiang, the bursting of which had resulted in the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives, and the pacific re-instatement of the Kroo tribes in Liberia.

I have mentioned incidentally the question of the budgetary restrictions. Affecting, as it does, all the League's activities, it is of very great moment to the Assembly, and would appear to deserve more than a passing reference, but it will be dealt with very fully, I am sure, in the appropriate Committee, and I feel excused from considering it here.

That is the brief survey of the activities of the League during the year which, in accordance with custom, I have, in my capacity as Acting President of the Assembly, the honour to lay before you. I have said little of the difficulties which had to be overcome before it was found possible to make the progress which I have just reviewed. You will be aware of those difficulties, as you will be aware of the difficulties which prevented any progress at all being made in certain directions. I have no doubt that when the Assembly takes note of all these difficulties it will agree that the Secretary-General's report on the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly represents a record of no mean achievement.

But it would be a great mistake for us to think that the League can live on the commendations, however merited, and expressions of satisfaction which it receives from its friends or from this Assembly. Out beyond the walls of this Assembly, there is the public opinion of the world, and if the League is to prosper, or even survive, it must retain the support and confidence of that public opinion as a whole. It is often said that, in a

final analysis, the League has no sanctions but the force of world opinion. At the moment, that is profoundly true, and it seems to me, therefore, that, in the best interests of the League, a wider review of its position and work should be undertaken, on occasions like this, not so much in the light of our knowledge of the difficulties which explain its delays and its failures, as in the light of the fears, the criticisms, the prejudices, if you like, of public opinion in our respective countries.

It is time for us to ask ourselves what is the attitude of the outsider, the average man and woman, to the League, and to all this activity at Geneva? What impression will the survey which I have just made convey to the minds of our people, say in Ireland, and of your peoples in all your several countries? Friends and enemies of the League alike feel that the testing time has come; and they are watching to see if that test will reveal a weakness presaging ultimate dissolution, or a strength that will be the assurance of a renewal of vigour and growth. The eyes of all peoples are focussed on Geneva to-day as perhaps they have never been focussed on it before.

Let us be frank with ourselves. There is on all sides complaint, criticism and suspicion. People are complaining that the League is devoting its activity to matters of secondary or very minor importance, while the vital international problems of the day, problems which touch the very existence of our peoples, are being shelved or postponed or ignored. People are saying that the equality of States does not apply here in the things that matter, that the smaller States, whilst being given a voice, have little real influence in the final determination of League action, that they have not that which they were intended, and are entitled, to have under the Covenant.

People are becoming impatient and starting even to enquire whether the apparently meagre, face-saving results of successive League conferences and meetings justify the burden which contributions to the League budget, and the expense of sending delegation after delegation to Geneva, impose upon the already over-burdened national taxpayer. Finally, there is a suspicion abroad that little more than lip-service is paid to the fundamental principles on which the League is founded; there is a suspicion that the action of the League in the economic sphere can be paralysed by the pressure of powerful national interests, and that, if the hand that is raised against the Covenant is sufficiently strong, it can smite with impunity. . . . I shall not go further, but, let us make no mistake about it, the satisfaction with the position and the work of the League which we may feel in this Assembly is not shared universally by opinion outside. Blue books, as I might call them, and complacent resolutions cannot satisfy the general demand for effective action. We are defendants at the bar of public opinion with a burden of justification upon us which is almost overwhelming.

Do not misunderstand me. A great deal of the criticism which I have described is, without a doubt, unjustified. A great deal of it is uninformed. A great deal of it is the criticism of the man who, in national as in international affairs, demands immediate solutions for problems of the difficulties of which he knows nothing. A great deal of it is perhaps also not wholly disinterested. But if this criticism is unjustified, what have we done to give it a really effective answer? The vast collection of surveys, of reports and conference records accumulated in our archives is not the evidence that will disprove the charges which are brought against the League and that will show conclusively that the suspicions which have grown

up in the mind of the ordinary man are without foundation.

Ladies and gentlemen, the one effective way of silencing criticism of the League, of bringing to its support millions who at present stand aside in apathy or look at its activities with undisguised cynicism, is to show unmistakably that the Covenant of the League is a solemn pact, the obligations of which no State, great or small, will find it possible to ignore. The only alternative to competitive armaments is the security for national rights which an uncompromising adherence to the principles of the Covenant will afford. The avoidance of wars and of the burden of preparatory armaments is of such concern to humanity that no State should be permitted to jeopardise the common interest by selfish action contrary to the Covenant, and no State is powerful enough to stand for long against the League if the Governments in the League and their peoples are determined that the Covenant shall be upheld.

There is not a doubt that critics of the League will measure the confidence that can be placed in it by the confidence which the more powerful Members of the League themselves place in the security the League is capable of affording, and that will of a certainty be judged by the success or failure of the Disarmament Conference. Without progressive disarmament, it is almost impossible that the League should survive. The success of the Disarmament Conference is then of prime importance to the League, and I hope that enlightened public opinion in favour of disarmament will make itself increasingly felt in every State.

Of no less but of even greater importance, perhaps, is the Economic Conference.

On every side there is evidence of an impending economic collapse. Twenty-five million unemployed are crying out for the recognition of the right of themselves and their families to work and live; a hundred million people are faced with starvation in the midst of a world of plenty, a world where human energy and scientific and mechanical development have reached a stage of potential production capable of meeting many times the peoples' needs. It is our duty here to face this anomalous and desperate situation frankly and honestly, not as the representatives of States or parties or special interests, but as men who realise that the primary duty of statesmen, national and international, is to plan for the well-being and happiness of their fellows—the plain ordinary human beings in every country who feel and think and suffer. There is no doubt that, with a will, a solution for this, a purely human problem, but the fundamental problem of our day, can be found. But it must be a will that will seek effective action no matter what interest is crossed, a will that will probe deeper than an examination of the possibility of re-opening of the old channels of international trade.

This is not the place to examine this problem further, or to attempt even an outline of what the solution should be, but it is my duty to suggest that here, as in other fields, the time has come for action. That the whole basis of production, distribution, finance and credit requires complete overhauling is amply evident from the reports of the various committees which are summarised so admirably in the Secretary-General's report. If we shirk any item in this task, if we fail to make the radical changes obviously necessary, if we fail to organise our economic life deliberately and purposely to provide, as its first object, for the fundamental needs of all our citizens, so that everyone may at least be reasonably housed, clothed and fed, we shall be failing in our duty and failing cruelly and disastrously.

For certain items of the task international action is necessary, but the change of purpose — the deliberate shaping of economic activity to an ethical and social end — is work which each can best advance in his own State. The conditions change from country to country. The problem in the highly industrialised States is very different from that in the States industrially undeveloped.

Speaking for my own country, I am confident that if we are left to pursue our policy we shall succeed, not only in securing the proper adjustment of our own social and economic life, but be able in addition to contribute more than our share to human progress throughout the world. I want you to believe that we in Ireland desire peace — peace at home and throughout the world. In spite of the opinions you may have formed from misleading reports, I want you to know that our history is the history of a people who have consistently sought only to be allowed to lead their own lives in their own way — in peace with their neighbours and with the world.

If we are left free, our way will be the way of peace, of thinking in terms not of selfish interest, nor of the acquisition of territory, nor of petty power, but of human beings living as they have a right to live in the best that their own energies and our State can give them, whilst contributing to the world the best that is in us. I feel that other States can face the task in a similar spirit and with equal hope, and, because of that conviction and of the mutual help I know we can all render to each other, I consider it a great privilege for my country to occupy at this time the position of importance it holds on the Council of the League. *Go gcuidigh Dia sinn san ard obair ata romhainn agus nar leigidh Se riamh go dteipeadh orainn.* (May God assist us in the exalted task before us and may He not permit that we should fall.)

Before receiving the report of the Credentials Committee, there is a matter of intimate concern to the League to which I should like to refer — the resignation of Sir Eric Drummond. He has been Secretary-General of the League since its foundation. Those of you who have been personally associated with the work of the League throughout that time will appreciate better than any new-comer can what this institution will suffer if Sir Eric Drummond goes. Many distinguished statesmen have taken a notable share in laying the foundations and in the construction of this remarkable edifice. Sir Eric Drummond is not the least of these, and the part he has had to play is unique.

Perhaps he would himself say he has merely fulfilled the purposes of a buffer, slowing down the momentum of opposing interests, representing to each party the other's case until a position of agreement was found. But that is always a difficult task, and very often a thankless one, and Sir Eric Drummond appears to have faced it with equanimity, and, as a loyal servant of the League, to have faced it with success.

It is a duty and a pleasure to voice from this place an appreciation of his courtesy and impartiality and wisdom. The League owes him a great debt which can be repaid, not by tribute in words, but only by the maintenance and development of that international co-operation to which he has devoted so many valuable years, so much labour and so great an ability.

(The Assembly adjourned from 11.10 to 11.30 a.m.)

4. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The Chairman. — The next item on the agenda is the report of the Committee on Credentials.

I call upon the Chairman of the Committee, M. de Agüero y Bethancourt, to read his report.

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

Translation: The Committee appointed by the Assembly to report on the credentials of delegates met to-day, September 26th at 10.40 a.m., in the President's office.

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 Members are represented by delegates who are in possession either of full powers, letters of credentials from heads of States, letters from Ministers for Foreign Affairs, telegrams from the same sources or letters from permanent representatives accredited to the League of Nations:

Union of South Africa, Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Salvador, Siam, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

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

The following States Members have not as yet accredited delegates to the Assembly:

The Argentine Republic, the Dominican Republic and Honduras.

The Committee is glad to note that twenty-seven delegations are accredited by full powers granted by the heads of States.

The Chairman. — I beg to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report.

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

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

5. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE THIRTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman. — The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the thirteenth ordinary session of the Assembly. In conformity with the Rules of Procedure, voting will be by secret ballot.

May I call upon M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, and M. Hymans, first delegate of Belgium, as former Presidents of the Assembly, to be good enough to act as tellers?

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

The Chairman. — In the first place, I wish to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

The result of the voting is as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting . . . | 50 |
| Blank voting papers | 3 |
| Valid votes | 47 |
| Absolute majority | 24 |

The following were the votes obtained :

M. Politis (first delegate of Greece) 44 votes
Other votes 3 votes

I have the honour, therefore, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, to declare that M. POLITIS, delegate of Greece, is elected President of the Assembly.

I congratulate the delegate of Greece, M. Politis, on his election as President of the Assembly. I am sure that under his direction the Assembly will achieve valuable results.

I call upon M. Politis to take the Chair as President of the Assembly.

(M. Politis took the Presidential Chair.)

6. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The President :

Translation : I am deeply moved by this signal evidence of your friendly feelings towards myself, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

In calling upon me to occupy this responsible post, you have conferred upon Greece and upon her representative a very high honour, for which I am profoundly grateful. It was your wish, I imagine, to express your appreciation of my country's tried fidelity to the League and of my own devotion to its ideal and to the furtherance of its work.

I realise the responsibilities attaching to this high office with which I have been invested, but I venture to count upon your indulgent support and I trust that, by imitating and taking as my guide the example of my illustrious predecessors, I may succeed in fulfilling what I believe to be your expectations and in maintaining, in this Presidential Chair, the tradition of high impartiality and courtesy with authority which has been established in the direction of our proceedings. Respect for that tradition appears to me to be more than ever necessary, for we cannot hide from ourselves the fact that the thirteenth ordinary session of this Assembly is opening, as the President of the Council himself has just said, in an atmosphere of distressing anxiety.

In various quarters the horrible scourge of war has, alas, reappeared. The international organisation was powerless to prevent it. Once, however, that organisation set to work, it strove to limit the duration and circumscribe the effects of the scourge. It has achieved only very modest results. Its duty now is to pursue its efforts unremittingly until the centres of conflagration are entirely extinguished, while elsewhere it must be constantly on the watch, because there have appeared signs of a weakening of the spirit of peace and of the will for peace.

Faced by these facts, the peoples have begun to be obsessed by anxiety for the morrow. In some quarters there has even been a feeling of despair, and there is talk of the inevitability of impending catastrophes and doubt as to the utility and indeed the continued existence of the League. Those who, in the beginning, greeted the birth of the League with sneers and watched its early successes with a sceptical eye are rejoicing to-day at the obstacles which stand in the way of its further progress. They proclaim its failure, and even go so far as to prophecy its coming dissolution.

The sincerity which I owe you impels me to state frankly that such blindness arouses in me a feeling of profound sadness, for if, in the midst

of the troubles and difficulties of the hour, there is one thing which banishes despair and bids us hope, that one thing is, I feel, the rudimentary international organisation we call the League.

One moment's reflection will suffice to prove the value of that organisation and to show what, without it, would at the moment be the fate of mankind. There would be far more justification for fearing a fresh general conflagration if the League of Nations did not exist, if it had not already acquired the experience it now possesses, if it had not established or been the means of establishing guarantees of world peace — guarantees afforded by the Permanent Court of International Justice, the principles of the Protocol of 1924, the Locarno Agreements, the General Act of Arbitration and the Paris Pact. Those guarantees, I well know, are not yet enough to give the peoples any certainty that — admitting the possibility of sheer madness — they may not find themselves once again exposed to the horrors, the mourning, the ruin of war, — war that they have stigmatised as the most odious of crimes, that they have outlawed, to which they have solemnly vowed never again to have recourse.

Of course all these guarantees are not as effective as could be wished. But what conclusion are we to draw from that? Simply that, if they are not adequate, they must be supplemented, extended, strengthened and, if the international organisation as it now exists does not admit of this, the necessary measures must be taken to supplement it and improve it.

These facts can be seen by anyone, and the obviousness of the conclusion I have just put before you is increasingly evident to all.

At the same time, the League has to overcome many prejudices which subsist owing to an imperfect knowledge of the actual conditions of life among the peoples. The privations arising out of the present crisis have brought home to the peoples the fact that solidarity and co-operation constitute in international relations laws as inflexible as those which apply in the relations of individuals within their own country. The peoples are realising more and more that international peace, like social peace, depends upon the existence of a legal order, firmly founded and actually respected, in which the general interest comes before the individual interest, in which collective force replaces individual force, in which the peace of all ensures the happiness of each.

Those are fundamental truths, truths which are continually being proved in the political as well as in the economic sphere. Thus the work of the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments has shown disarmament to be so bound up with the international organisation that, as indeed the letter and spirit of Article 8 of the Covenant proclaim, the degree of possibility of achieving the first depends upon the extent and soundness of the second.

Because this idea seems to be better understood now than was once the case, we may dare to hope that the Disarmament Conference will achieve results exceeding the most optimistic forecast of its early days.

These considerations, I feel, justify me in saying that though the prevailing atmosphere is overcast and inclined to be stormy, yet here and there the sky is clear, and there are signs of fine weather again.

The Assembly should, I think, make this clear to the peoples, that it may calm their apprehension, encourage every effort in the direction of peace and legal settlement and once again give the world some hope of a better future.

7. — AGENDA: EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION.

The President :

Translation : The agenda of the present meeting involves a number of preliminary formalities, which I now call upon you to fulfil.

A note is being distributed to the delegations which I have approved and which is intended, in accordance with precedent, to give them some idea of the proposals I intend to submit to them.

I would ask you now to take a decision on the first point before you — on namely, the adoption of the agenda of the present session (document A.2(1).1932, Annex 1).

The Assembly may perhaps think fit to withdraw from the agenda of this session two questions which appear on it, in virtue of decisions taken at the last session, but in connection with which it has not yet been found possible to carry out the preparatory studies that had been contemplated. It does not seem that at present the Assembly could usefully discuss these two questions, which have been referred respectively to a Committee already constituted and to another Committee to be set up in the near future. The questions to which I refer form Items 4 and 7 of the agenda, namely :

Amendment of the Covenant of the League of Nations in order to bring it into Harmony with the Pact of Paris ; and

Consideration of the Report of the Special Committee to study the Existing System of Elections to the Council.

If the Assembly shares this view, it might decide, for reasons of expediency, to adjourn both these questions to its next ordinary session, this act being taken as signifying that it intends the preparatory studies to be continued and completed in the interval.

If no delegation has any objection to raise, I shall interpret your silence as implying consent and will ask the Assembly, unless any delegation wishes for separate votes, to take a single vote on all of the other questions appearing on the agenda — namely, items 1 to 22 — except, of course, the two questions just mentioned. To that list should be added the supplementary list distributed in accordance with Rule 4, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. These questions appear immediately after, in the same document, as items 23 to 27.

If no one has any objection to offer, I shall consider the agenda of the thirteenth ordinary session of the Assembly adopted in the form I have just proposed.

The agenda as amended was adopted.

8. — CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the constitution of committees.

The procedure established at previous Assemblies is to set up six committees ; but for reasons of expediency I propose this year that we should provisionally set up only five committees.

All the questions relating to the reduction of armaments, which were submitted at previous sessions to the Third Committee, are this year being examined and negotiated by the various organs set up by the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments. In these circumstances it seems to me, at first sight at all events, that the Assembly will not consider it desirable to appoint a committee to discuss the same subjects. I therefore propose that for the present no Third Committee should be set up. If it subsequently proves desirable

to constitute this committee, I shall immediately submit to the Assembly proposals to that effect.

If there is no objection to the above proposal, I suggest that the Assembly should immediately set up five committees, which will keep the same numbering with reference to their work as at previous sessions : the first to deal with constitutional and legal questions ; the second, with the work of the technical organisations ; the fourth, with the organisation of the Secretariat and the League's finances ; the fifth, with social and humanitarian questions ; and the sixth, with political questions.

In order to depart as little as possible from the procedure adopted at previous sessions, I propose that the Assembly should arrange for the meetings of the Committees to alternate as follows : the First, Second and Sixth Committees would meet at the same time, and so would the Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees.

If there is no objection, I shall consider these proposals adopted.

The proposals were adopted.

The President :

Translation : The delegations have doubtless already been requested to send to the Secretariat the forms on which they have entered the names of their representatives and substitutes on each Committee. The lists of members of Committees will be drawn up as quickly as possible, and the Committees will meet in this hall this afternoon to elect their respective Chairmen.

9. — AGENDA COMMITTEE: APPOINTMENT.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the constitution of the Agenda Committee. Following the practice of my predecessors, I propose that a small committee of seven members be set up to formulate proposals for the procedure to be followed as regards the placing of new questions on the Assembly's agenda.

If the Assembly is agreed, and if no delegation desires to suggest names for this Committee, I will, in accordance with precedent, venture to propose a list of names as follows :

Sir Donald CAMERON (Australia),
M. ANTONIADE (Roumania),
Sir W. MALKIN (United Kingdom),
M. MAYARD (Haiti),
M. PILOTTI (Italy),
Dr. TEVFIK RÜSTÜ Bey (Turkey),
M. WESTMAN (Sweden).

The proposed list was adopted.

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

The President :

Translation : At its last five sessions, the Assembly has decided that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should sit as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly, together with the Chairmen of the six ordinary Committees of the Assembly and the six Vice-Presidents elected by it. I would ask the Assembly, whether it agrees, in accordance with precedent, that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should, at the present session, also sit as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly.

The President's proposal was adopted.

The President :

Translation : I request the Agenda Committee therefore to elect its Chairman, so that then he may take part in the work of the General Committee.

11. — AGENDA: DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is a decision by the Assembly as to the distribution of the various items on the agenda among the different Committees which have just been set up.

In the note communicated to the Assembly, I propose that the items be distributed as follows :

First Committee : Items 5, 6 and 26.

Second Committee : Items 16, 17, 18, 23 and 25.

Fourth Committee : Items 8, 9, 17 (2) §4, 22 and 24.

Fifth Committee : Items 14, 19 and 20.

Sixth Committee : Items 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 21 and 27.

The above proposals were adopted.

12. — ORGANISATION OF THE SESSIONS OF THE ASSEMBLY: REFERENCE TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF FIVE.

The President :

Translation : The Committee of Five, which deals with arrangements for the organisation of the Assembly, has not yet been able to meet, as had been intended. It will no doubt meet during the next few days and send me in due course its report. In order to facilitate the procedure and in accordance with precedent, I propose, as soon as I have received the report, to hand it to the General Committee of the Assembly, which will later make known what action it considers desirable to take on the suggestions of the Committee of Five.

This proposal was adopted.

13. — ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : One of the items on the agenda of this session is the election of three non-permanent

Members of the Council. I thought the delegations might like to know at once the date on which that election will be held.

After consulting the rules and precedents governing the matter, I would suggest that the Assembly should hold the election on the afternoon of Monday, October 3rd.

The President's proposal was adopted.

14. — ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : I wish now to remind the delegations of the programme of work for this afternoon.

The Committees will meet one after another, at intervals of twenty minutes, in this hall, in order to elect their Chairmen, as follows :

First Committee at 3.30 p.m.

Second Committee at 3.50 p.m.

Fourth Committee at 4.10 p.m.

Fifth Committee at 4.30 p.m.

Sixth Committee at 4.50 p.m.

Agenda Committee at 5.10 p.m.

15. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES: DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE GERMAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : I have received a draft resolution from the German delegation, which reads as follows :

" That the part of the report on the Work of the League since the twelfth session of the Assembly and its introduction (pages XIV to XVI and 36 to 43), dealing with the question of the protection of minorities, be referred to the Sixth Committee. "

This draft resolution will be printed and communicated to all the delegations, and I shall make suggestions to the Assembly, at one of its subsequent meetings, as to the action to be taken upon it.

(The Assembly rose at 12.30 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH, 1932, AT 5.30 P.M.

CONTENTS :

16. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NAMES OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.
17. ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.
18. ADDITION OF TWO HONORARY MEMBERS TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.
19. COMPOSITION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.
20. MANDATES.
Draft Resolution proposed by the Norwegian Delegation.

President : M. POLITIS.

16. — ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NAMES OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : In pursuance of the programme which I submitted to the Assembly this morning and which it approved, the five Committees of the Assembly and the Agenda Committee met in turn this afternoon and elected their Chairmen.

The results of those elections were as follows :

| Committee | Chairman |
|-----------|--|
| First | M. BEELAERTS VAN BLOKLAND (Netherlands), |
| Second | MR. TE WATER (Union of South Africa), |
| Fourth | M. DE VASCONCELLOS (Portugal), |
| Fifth | Count CARTON DE WIART (Belgium), |
| Sixth | M. LANGE (Norway). |

The Agenda Committee has elected as its Chairman Tefik RÜSTÜ Bey (Turkey).

17. — ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : In application of Rule 7, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the next item on the agenda will be 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. Beelaerts van Blokland, Chairman of the First Committee, and M. de Vasconcellos, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, to be good enough to act as tellers.

The secret ballot will be by roll-call.

May I remind you that the voting-papers should contain the names of six persons and that names of countries should not be mentioned.

The vote will now be taken.

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 49 |
| Voting papers valid . . . | 48 |
| Absolute majority . . . | 25 |

The analysis of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Baron ALOISI (Italy) | 44 |
| Sir John SIMON (United Kingdom). . . | 42 |
| M. HERRIOT (France) | 42 |
| Baron VON NEURATH (Germany) | 42 |
| M. MEDINA (Nicaragua) | 38 |
| M. NAGAOKA (Japan) | 34 |

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, therefore, I have the honour to declare the following delegates elected Vice-Presidents of the Assembly : Baron ALOISI, Sir John SIMON, M. HERRIOT, Baron VON NEURATH, M. MEDINA, M. NAGAOKA.

18. — ADDITION OF TWO HONORARY MEMBERS TO THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : Before announcing the constitution of the General Committee of the Assembly, I should like to give the delegations an opportunity of expressing the feelings of respect, of appreciation and of gratitude they entertain for two very eminent statesmen whom we are privileged to have among us.

I refer in the first place to M. Motta, President of the Swiss Confederation, head of that country which offers us such cordial and generous hospitality. M. Motta, I would remind you, was President of the historic fifth Assembly of the League of Nations, the Assembly which framed the Protocol and over which he presided with a distinction still fresh in the minds of some of us.

I refer secondly to M. Paul Hymans, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, who presided with conspicuous authority over the first Assembly of the League of Nations, the Assembly which laid the foundations of the tradition which has now become our law, and who was elected a few months ago President of the Special Assembly convened under Article 15 of the Covenant.

Both these delegates have rendered the League quite exceptional services. They have given proof of such zeal and devotion to the League's cause that the Assembly, I feel sure, will be delighted to express its deep gratitude to both of them by appointing them, as an exceptional measure, honorary members of the General Committee, in order that they may be able to sit on a footing of equality with the elected members.

I have therefore the honour to propose that the Assembly agrees to appoint as honorary members of its General Committee the two statesmen whose names I have just mentioned and whose claims to our regard I have just recounted.

From the applause which has greeted my proposal, I take it that you agree to appoint M. Motta and M. Hymans honorary members of the General Committee.

Agreed.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : I am deeply touched by the great kindness which has just been extended to me. Your words, Mr. President, have gone straight to my heart. I only wish I could feel that I deserve your praises, but, indeed, I do not. I venture, however, to assume that, in speaking as you did, you desired more particularly to pay a tribute to the office which I held this year and thus to honour my country — the Swiss Confederation. Interpreted in this way, your words are doubly welcome and gratifying.

M. Hymans (Belgium) :

Translation : I desire most warmly to thank our President for his very kind and very flattering remarks. I am deeply touched by the honour done to me. I regard it as a mark of sympathy to one of the oldest members of this Assembly, one of those who have worked with it from the beginning, who have always believed in the spirit and mission of the League and who, in spite of present difficulties, continue to regard it as the safeguard of law, security and peace.

19. — COMPOSITION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The General Committee of the Assembly is composed then as follows :

Honorary members :

M. MOTTA (Switzerland),
M. HYMANS (Belgium).

Vice-Presidents of the Assembly :

Baron ALOISI (Italy),
M. HERRIOT (France),
M. MEDINA (Nicaragua),
M. NAGAOKA (Japan),
Baron VON NEURATH (Germany),
Sir John SIMON (United Kingdom).

Chairmen of the five [Committees of the Assembly :

M. BEELAERTS VAN BLOKLAND (Netherlands),
Mr. TE WATER (Union of South Africa),
M. DE VASCONCELLOS (Portugal),
Count CARTON DE WIART (Belgium),
M. LANGE (Norway).

Chairman of the Agenda Committee : Tefvik RÜSTÜ Bey (Turkey).

The President :

Translation : The General Committee having now been constituted, I propose that it should meet immediately after this sitting, in order to discuss with me the general arrangements for our work and the agenda of the subsequent meetings of the Assembly.

A desire has been expressed in several quarters which, unless there is evidence to the contrary, I am inclined to think is general — namely, that this thirteenth session should be rather shorter than previous sessions and that, if possible, the general discussion should not be quite so long as in past years.

So far, only a few speakers have handed in their names. It would be well if any delegates who intend to take part in the general discussion would send in their names either to me or to the Secretariat before to-morrow evening. This will enable us to arrange the agenda and decide on our programme of work.

20. — MANDATES: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : I have just received a proposal from the first delegate of Norway which, in accordance with the usual practice, I will now read.

" The Assembly,

" Following the precedents already established for several 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 documents dealing with the question of mandates which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the last session of the Assembly. "

This proposal will be printed and distributed, and I reserve the right to offer, at a later date, suggestions on the procedure to be followed.

(The Assembly rose at 6.25 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27th, 1932, AT 4 P.M.

CONTENTS :

21. REQUEST BY POLAND FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL.
22. PROTECTION OF MINORITIES : MANDATES.
Draft Resolutions submitted by the German and Norwegian Delegations.
23. QUESTION OF SUPPRESSING THE ASSEMBLY ATTENDANCE LISTS.
Communication from the General Committee :
Reference of the Question to the First Committee.
24. OPENING OF THE GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE TWELFTH ASSEMBLY.
Speeches by the Right Honourable W. M. HUGHES (Australia), M. QUO TAI-CHAI (China), His Highness the AGA KHAN (India), M. CABALLERO DE BEDOYA (Paraguay).

President : M. POLITIS

21. — REQUEST BY POLAND FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : I have just received the following letter, dated September 27th, from the Head of the Polish delegation :

"In accordance with the provisions of Article II of the Rules dealing with the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, adopted by the Assembly on September 15th, 1926, I have the honour to ask you to lay before the Assembly the request of the Polish Government that Poland be declared re-eligible as a Member of the Council.

(Signed) Auguste ZALESKI."

The text of this letter will be printed and circulated to the delegations.

The Assembly thus has before it a request for re-eligibility drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, making rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

Paragraph 3 of Article II of this resolution provides that the Assembly may not decide upon the re-eligibility of a State, except upon a request in writing made by the State itself. The request must be handed to the President of the Assembly not later than the day before the date fixed for the election ; it shall be submitted to the Assembly, which shall pronounce upon it without referring it to a committee and without debate.

The Polish Government's request having been submitted in the form laid down in the 1926 Rules, the Assembly will have to vote upon it at the meeting to be held on Monday, October 3rd, the day fixed for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, without reference to a special committee and without debate.

22. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES : MANDATES : DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE GERMAN AND NORWEGIAN DELEGATIONS.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember the two draft resolutions submitted to it by the delegations of Germany and Norway.

The draft resolution submitted by the German delegation is a proposal that that part of the report on the work of the League since the twelfth session of the Assembly (pages XII to XIV and 36 to 43) which deals with the protection of minorities should be referred to the Sixth Committee.

The Norwegian proposal is to refer those parts of the report which deal with mandates questions to the same Committee.

In accordance with precedent, I propose that the Assembly immediately adopt these two draft resolutions and decide, without further procedure, to refer the reports in question to the Sixth Committee.

Viscount Cecil (United Kingdom). — I do not desire in any way to oppose this motion, which seems to be quite a proper one, but I wish to call your attention to the very heavy agenda of the Sixth Committee. If these two items are added it will have no less than nine items to discuss, whereas the Fifth Committee has only three, the Second Committee only five, and the First Committee only three. In these circumstances, I would respectfully ask you, Sir, to consider whether some rearrangement cannot be made and whether, at any rate, the questions concerning the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, which belong as much to the ordinary functions of the Second and Fifth Committees as to the Sixth, might not be transferred to one of those Committees.

The President :

Translation : Due account will be taken of Lord Cecil's observation and I will see him in order to decide when and how his proposal is to be examined.

23. — QUESTION OF SUPPRESSING THE ASSEMBLY ATTENDANCE LISTS: COMMUNICATION FROM THE GENERAL COMMITTEE: REFERENCE OF THE QUESTION TO THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : I have to inform you of certain decisions taken yesterday at the first meeting of the General Committee of the Assembly.

The General Committee has been asked by a number of delegates to consider whether Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly need be retained. Under the terms of that rule, the Secretariat has to keep lists of the attendance at each meeting of the Assembly; these lists are circulated among the delegations for signature.

It has been felt — and most of us will agree — that this formality has gradually come to be of little value, and no one attaches much importance to it. At the same time, it involves a certain waste of time and some expense, to say nothing of the inconvenience to delegations.

In the circumstances, the General Committee felt that it would be well for the Assembly to do away with these lists by cancelling Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure.

It proposes, then, that the Assembly be asked to refer this request for the abolition of the formality in question to the First Committee for examination and, in the meantime, to suspend the application of Rule 12.

If no one has any remarks to offer, I shall take it that the Assembly agrees to the proposal, and the request will accordingly be referred to the First Committee for examination, the Assembly deciding, in the meantime, to suspend the application of the rule.

The proposals of the General Committee were adopted.

24. — OPENING OF THE GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE LAST ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The General Committee finds, secondly, that it is the general feeling of delegations that the work of this session of the Assembly should be completed as quickly as possible. This does not mean that it should suffer in any way, for the Assembly will sit as long as may be necessary, but that methods must be adopted to shorten as much as possible the various formalities and some of the discussions.

On behalf of the General Committee, I wish to repeat the request I made yesterday to delegations desiring to take part in the general discussion which will be opened to-day. Intending speakers, by sending in their names late, may considerably hamper our work. I would urge delegations therefore to let me know at the present meeting their intentions in this matter.

I will now open the general discussion of the report on the work of the League of Nations since the twelfth session of the Assembly (documents A.6. and A.6.(a).1932).

The Right Honourable William Hughes, delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

The Right Honourable W. M. Hughes (Australia). — Thirteen years ago, the representatives of the nations to the Paris Conference affixed their signatures to the Versailles Treaty, in which was embodied the Covenant of the League of Nations. To that historic document I attached my name, as the representative of Australia, a country which has ever since remained a loyal Member of the League, according it that support to which it is entitled.

I come now, after the lapse of years, as the representative of Australia, and, in the unavoidable absence of my leader, Mr. Bruce, I desire to congratulate the League upon the work it has well and faithfully done, and to say a word or two upon that which yet lies before it.

The scope of the League's activities is wide, but to the average man its chief function is to banish war from the world. It was for this purpose it was created, and by its success or failure to achieve this great end mankind at large will judge it. This point needs special emphasis at this juncture in the affairs of the world, and I make no apology for dwelling upon it for a few moments.

The circumstances under which the League came into being are well known. Of all President Wilson's fourteen points, none so completely captured the imagination of mankind, sickened by the horrors and groaning in the agonies of the world war, as did that which provided for a League of Nations banded together to ensure that henceforth peace should reign on earth. And so the world, in a state of spiritual exaltation bordering on hysteria, hailed the Treaty of Peace, with the Covenant as its corner-stone, with shouts of wild joy. The hopes and expectations of men were keyed up to great heights. They looked to the League to lead them to a new and better world — a world made safe for democracy, a world from which war, injustice and all evil had been banished.

Long years have passed since the League set up its establishment, and although, it has laboured and still labours diligently to fulfil the glittering promises which sustained men through the darkest days of the war, peace has not come upon earth, wars and rumours of wars still disturb men's minds, and no scheme of disarmament which mankind

can regard as an earnest of the intention of the nations to tread the paths of peace has yet been accepted.

Far from a new and better world, a world made "safe for democracy" and "fit for heroes to live in" having been created, crisis has succeeded crisis, bad has gone to worse, until at last financial and economic depression unprecedented in its severity and scope has reduced mankind almost to despair. Tens of millions of men are unemployed, trade is stagnant, bankruptcy stares many nations in the face, revolution and civil turmoil are the order of the day. It is in these circumstances that we meet here to-day.

I entirely agree with Mr. de Valera that the League is on its trial, the eyes of the peoples of the world floundering in the morass of the depression are turned towards it. The great problems that confront mankind are world problems; they cannot be solved by individual nations, co-operative effort is necessary, and the League must initiate, must lead, the nations, or, confessing itself unequal to the great task before it, let the sceptre fall from its palsied hand.

These are hard words. No one recognises more clearly than I do the tremendous difficulties that confront the League. Its powers are limited. Its members are sovereign States jealously and vigilantly guarding their sovereign rights. In great questions such as disarmament, the League can only act if it secures unanimity. We must not therefore expect miracles. Complete disarmament is an ideal which none but fervid enthusiasts, blind to the facts of life, can hope to realise at one stroke. But, admitting all this, it yet remains true that, unless civilisation is to crash, something must be done to set the feet of the nations on the narrow path that will lead mankind in the fullness of time to the green pastures of peace. That this is a stupendous task may be freely conceded, but I do not believe it to be beyond our powers if we approach it in the right spirit and in the right way.

I expressly refrain from saying one word that may be construed as criticism of the work of the Disarmament Conference, that has been these many months so closely, so earnestly, grappling with the question. But I venture to offer some observations that may help it in its great task.

The world wants peace. The League is striving to lessen the chances of war by reducing armaments. It does this as a first step towards that complete disarmament which will usher in the reign of peace of which the men of old spoke, when the sword should be beaten into the ploughshare. So far the Disarmament Conference has not succeeded. We know very well the reason for its failure. Every nation wants, and has a right to demand, security. The guarantee of security is then the condition precedent to any reduction of armaments.

Now let us examine the position. We ask for peace, but there can be no peace without security; and the nations can hardly be blamed if they hesitate to lay down their arms before this security is guaranteed. But where there is no stability there can be no guarantee of security. The causes of war are in the main economic in nature, and so are fast rooted in world conditions, which to-day are highly unstable.

The outstanding feature of the modern world is the interdependence of nations. This interdependence, arising out of the advance of civilisation and the wonderful improvements in production and the means of communication, grows more complete every day. Nations are no longer self-contained, with financial and economic systems resting on a national basis. The economic,

commercial, industrial and financial conditions of one country are dependent on those of others. Bad trade in one country breeds bad trade in others. Financial collapse in one reacts upon all. As things are now, no nation is master of its own destiny; effective control of the forces that condition the lives of the people has passed out of its hands, but has not been placed in the hands of any other authority; and so economic anarchy prevails throughout the world and threatens to destroy it.

There can be no peace in a world seething with industrial unrest which the nations are powerless to allay, where tens of millions of men are unemployed, saved from downright starvation only by public or private charity. There can be no peace in a world where our young men and women standing on the threshold of life see stretching out before them only the bleak prospect of an industrial lazarette. For them, and for tens of millions of their elders, our boasted civilisation holds out no hope, for them there is no place in the sun.

We must face facts. This is the day of democracy. The people rule, and whether they rule well or ill depends in the main on the conditions in which they live. It is in vain we cry, "Peace!" in a world where fear, suspicion, uncertainty haunt the minds of the people—a world that breeds bitter discontent and savage resentment, a world which slams the door of hope against the masses, that sets a nation against nation in an insensate and desperate trade war.

There are other things, too, that might be said, things that go down to the roots of national life and are a deadly menace to national security, but I refrain from saying them now. Brief mention, however, must be made of one other obstacle to world peace. How can there be peace, how can there be that security which the nations rightly demand as the condition precedent to disarmament, while there exists a power whose avowed purpose is the destruction of civilisation as we know it? Communism, which has its tentacles in every country in the world, is ceaselessly active. Everywhere its agents stir up industrial strife, foment class hatred and preach the class war. Daily, Communism gathers fresh strength. The existing depression drives tens of thousands flocking beneath the blood-red banner of Bolshevism. The workless millions, for whom the world has no place, to whom the future holds out no hope, listen with eager ears to its glittering but illusive propaganda. Against Communism there is but one effective antidote—economic prosperity. When the people are employed under decent conditions, when they have something to lose, something to hope for, the gospel of Bolshevism will fall on deaf ears.

I will not elaborate my argument further. I have sought to make clear in a very few words what I conceive to be the lines along which the League of Nations should attack the great problem of Disarmament. Nations are, after all, but aggregations of individuals, and the policies of nations reflect the ideas and needs of the people; that is to say, they reflect the economic conditions in which the people live. To-day, policies that are not primarily economic in character do not interest the people, who insist that the programmes of political parties shall be economic in scope and purpose. For they have been taught by bitter experience how completely their lives are conditioned by their economic circumstances; the standard of living, the wages for their labour, the prices for their goods, the security for their investments, the value of their money, their prospects in life, their happiness, all are dependent upon economic conditions. Yet, as I have reminded you, the economic mechanism

is now international in character. It has passed out of the hands of national Governments, but no authority has been evolved to control it.

The condition precedent to world peace — I do not mean a mere truce enforced by poverty or lack of opportunity, but a peace that will endure — is the settlement of our economic troubles on lines that will provide work for the unemployed millions and ensure stability of prices at levels that are compatible with a reasonable profit to the producer and a decent standard of living for the worker. In the warm glow of prosperity, sullen tempers will mellow and bitter discontent and class hatred be replaced by smiles and good fellowship. Economic war will no longer embitter nations nor the fear of revolution, of civil tumult, of financial and economic chaos disturb men's minds. When economic stability is firmly established, national security will be less endangered and disarmament proposals more readily accepted.

Here is the League's opportunity to justify itself in the eyes of the peoples of all the world and to establish itself firmly in their good opinion. Mankind, floundering hopelessly in the morass of the depression, is urgently in need of guidance, of help. Let the League stand forth boldly and summon the nations together to evolve a means whereby prosperity and peace may walk hand in hand. I know, of course, that the League, far from ignoring the economic problem, has exhaustively explored it from every angle. But what is wanted now is action. Diagnosis is not enough; the world knows that it is sick almost unto death, what it wants now is a remedy for the malady that so sorely afflicts it; and, given courage and vision, a remedy can be found, for the depression is man-made, and as man made it, so can man sweep it away.

The President :

Translation : M. Quo Tai-chi, delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

M. Quo Tai-chi (China). — Before the Secretary-General's report is discussed, I must be permitted to say a few words in memory of him whose tireless spirit never faltered in the struggle for the one ideal of the League of Nations — to establish the reign of peace and justice throughout the world. M. Aristide Briand, whose passing is a loss to all of us here that it will be hard to retrieve, deserves from China a particular sense of gratitude, for even during his very last months he consented to accept the Presidency of the Council, presiding with characteristic leadership over the meetings which the Council held to seek a solution of the most serious controversy ever known in my country's relations with foreign Powers. I trust that the name of Aristide Briand will ever be cherished in the hearts of all peoples united by a common respect for the Pact which this great Frenchman and world citizen so largely brought about.

Never before has participation in the general discussion of the Secretary-General's report on the work of the League been of so much concern to the Chinese delegation. Never, perhaps, has the League meant so much for any other country as it has come to mean for China since the last session of the Assembly. I may even say that never before have relations between the League and one of its Members involved problems so momentous for the League of Nations itself as those arising out of the appeal which my Government addressed to it more than a year ago. Since then we have been brought face to face with contingencies that involve, not only saving Manchuria for China, but making the world safe for the League.

It is far from my intention to enter now upon questions that are to be discussed by the Assembly at its special session, but, as you must recognise, it would be closing one's eyes to the facts to pass over in utter silence a problem that is occupying the minds of all here present and is not only dealt with in detail in the report before us, but, from certain points of view, comes well within the agenda of the present session of the Assembly.

The outstanding problems dealt with by the League — bringing the Covenant of the League of Nations into full harmony with the Pact of Paris, finding the way to disarmament, and solving the financial and economic questions — have none of them escaped the repercussions of what has happened and still is uncurbed in the Far East. The interdependence of nations needs no further proof, and I can only hope that the sufferings of my country may serve as a lesson to others and pave the way toward a true understanding of the wrongs in the world and of the necessary trends in the development of international law. To take one example, it seems to me that in international law, on account of the dispute in the Far East, already a doctrine is evolving and has secured general acceptance — the doctrine of the non-recognition of the results of aggression. It was proclaimed by the United States of America, on January 7th last, and, with a single abstention, was unanimously accepted by the special Assembly on March 11th.

In the other branches of the League's activity, such as those connected with technical organisation, social, political and other matters, they too are affected by events in the Far East. Whatever their nature, all questions taken up by the League of Nations have one fundamental point in common, that they are dealt with upon the basis of obligations freely undertaken and faithfully carried out. If this fundamental basis is anywhere undermined, the whole edifice of international co-operation will collapse.

As regards the problem of securing a general agreement of nations whereby may be obtained, not only a limitation, but also a great and immediate reduction, in their armaments, the Chinese delegation has only this to say : No nation in the world is more eager than China for this agreement to be established, and, to this end, China will continue to co-operate in every way possible. However, in common with the other nations, China is aware that the matter of national armaments is closely linked with the matter of national security. To the extent that a country's sovereignty and territorial and administrative integrity are threatened, it becomes indispensable to it to maintain or even increase its means for military defence. The Chinese people are very unwilling to become a militarised nation. Such an event would be deemed by them a calamity. It is, therefore, with emphasised anxiety that China looks forward to the result of its appeal to the League and to the conscience of the world for action which will bring to a just and proper settlement the threat to its national independence and territorial integrity made by the acts of Japanese militarists during the past year.

As to the other matters which we shall more particularly examine at this ordinary session, I should like, first, to say a few words about the work of the League of Nations in connection with my country : the help given to the victims of the floods in China and the collaboration of the League in communications and transit, hygiene and intellectual co-operation. While we will deal with these matters in detail in the competent Committees, I cannot allow this occasion to pass without expressing the gratitude both of my Government and of the Chinese people to the Members of the

League of Nations and to the private societies which, in execution of the resolution voted on this subject last year, so generously responded to the appeal on behalf of the victims of the disastrous floods. As our Acting Chairman told you on Monday in his opening address, those floods are, happily, we assume, now permanently curbed — barring phenomenal rises — thanks to the successful completion along the Yangtze and Hsueh rivers of three thousand miles of dykes constructed this past year by Chinese engineers and Chinese labour under co-ordinated local authorities. I must also make grateful acknowledgment to the experts appointed by the League of Nations and, in particular, to Sir John Hope Simpson, Dr. Borcić and Professor Ciuca, all of whom carried on their work with untiring devotion.

I should like also to thank others who were sent out to China on special missions either by the Communications and Transit Section or by the Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation. With regard to intellectual co-operation in particular, I note with pleasure that the International Committee says in its report that it is considering sending a mission of educational experts — Professor Langevin, Mr. Becker, Professor Tawnay and M. Falski — to China as “the outstanding event of the past year”. I am happy to be able to inform you that the mission of Chinese educators, which was provided for in the scheme, arrived in Europe about a month ago.

I must also mention the mission of Mr. Poné and Dame Adelaide Anderson, sent out to China by the International Labour Office to assist the National Government in the organisation of a service of factory inspection. All these missions have carried out their work with tact and ability, and it is a real satisfaction to note this tightening of the bonds of close collaboration between my country and the League of Nations, which will, I am sure, be of very great advantage to China while also being of some importance to others.

The Assembly has, at former sessions, expressed entire approval of this collaboration, from which, in the words of one of the Assembly resolutions, “the happiest results may be anticipated”. This year again, should occasion arise, you will undoubtedly once more approve the effort in China towards reconstruction, undertaken in a spirit of sincere international joint effort.

The President :

Translation : His Highness the Aga Khan, delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

The Aga Khan (India). — Among the outstanding work of the League during the last year has been the Disarmament Conference, in which I myself have been privileged to take part. We all know the great difficulties which that Conference has had to encounter in undertaking its formidable task, yet we are all confident that, with patience, goodwill and co-operation, these difficulties can be overcome. The Conference has now laid the foundations upon which its constructive work can be raised. It is approaching the most critical part of its labours, the problem of shaping a Convention that shall embody in the form of definite obligations the principles laid down in the resolution adopted by the General Commission on July 23rd. On its success may depend nothing less than the peace of the world. That alone should inspire us to go forward wholeheartedly in the supreme endeavour to consolidate peace and disarmament and banish that fear which is the enemy of peace.

But upon the success of the Disarmament Conference depends also, in increasing measure, the prosperity of the world.

The Assembly meets again under the shadow of the economic depression which in the past year has become more intense and presents its problems to-day in a form more urgent and no less baffling than on the occasion of the last Assembly. India, at once a great industrial nation and a great producer of primary products, has not escaped the blast. The crisis is widespread and, with every day that passes, it becomes more evident that no solution will be fruitful which does not embrace the needs of all countries, and that in the co-operation of nations lies the only sure hope of the world's salvation.

The world therefore looks to the League, and it is essential alike for the credit of the League as for the welfare of the world that these hopes should not be disappointed. A propitious beginning has indeed been made at Lausanne, but it is a beginning only, and here again we cannot fail to observe the intimate relation that the problem of peace and goodwill may be found to bear to our economic and financial difficulties.

I need not disguise a certain measure of disappointment, on reviewing the activities of the League in this field during the past year, that the energies of the League, and in particular of its technical organisations, have been concentrated, as it seems to me, perhaps in an undue degree upon the solution of purely European problems. I do not, however, wish to dwell upon this at the moment. The World Economic and Monetary Conference will, I hope, be subject to no such limitation. In that Conference, India hopes to participate, and will make to it, for the general good, such contribution as her position in the sphere of finance, commerce and industry dictates or allows.

The unhappy dispute between China and Japan, which is a matter of such deep concern to us all, must, since the report of the Commission appointed by the Council is not yet before the Assembly, be regarded at this stage as *sub judice*. I will say no more than that the Government and the people of India deeply deplore the relations at present subsisting between these two great Eastern and Asiatic nations, which, whether in their religious, cultural, geographical or commercial aspects, present so many points of contact with India, and they earnestly hope that a solution satisfactory to all parties to the dispute and consistent with the principles to which we are pledged will be found.

We are also unfortunately confronted with a dispute between two other members of our society. I refer to Paraguay and Bolivia. It is the earnest hope of us all that the good offices of the League will lead to a speedy settlement which may redound at once to the credit of the League and to the goodwill and restraint of everybody concerned.

I cannot let this opportunity pass without saying once again how gladly India welcomes the presence of representatives of the Republic of Turkey.

We have also before us the application of the Government of Iraq for admission to the League. The League is a world-wide organisation and it is of first importance that the universality of its obligation, extending to all countries and to both hemispheres, should never be obscured. The admission of each new State to our membership is another milestone on the road to the attainment to that co-operation between all the nations of the world for which we cannot cease to strive, and to which indeed the admission of these two Asiatic States will bring us sensibly nearer.

The President :

Translation : M. Caballero de Bedoya, delegate of Paraguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Caballero de Bedoya (Paraguay) :

Translation : At the sixty-eighth session of the League Council, M. de Madariaga, delegate of Spain, proposed the appointment, either of a Rapporteur or of a Committee of the Council, consisting of three members, to follow closely the progress of the conflict between Bolivia and Paraguay and, if need be, to get into touch with the Powers who are at present endeavouring in America to arrange for a settlement of the dispute by pacific means.

On behalf of my Government, I desire to express our full and complete acceptance of that suggestion which the Council has approved. Paraguay accedes to the proposal whole-heartedly and unreservedly. How indeed could we have done otherwise ? As M. Matos, the President of the Council who has just relinquished office, so rightly remarked : If Paraguay has not yet had recourse to the League of Nations, it is simply because the Commission of Neutrals is still proceeding with its work of mediation.

Paraguay will on no account take responsibility for any difficulty or delay in regard to the steps that are being taken to allay this conflict. We merely ask for justice, a full measure of justice.

We are here to proclaim our utter aversion to all forms of violence.

In declaring itself prepared to join in or to second the efforts at peace-making initiated by the American nations acting in conjunction, the Council is giving tremendous impetus to the very idea upon which the League is founded — the principle of international solidarity. There devolves upon the League of Nations, as the competent social body, a legal obligation to maintain peace, and, under the terms of Article 10 of the Covenant, its Members have undertaken to respect and preserve, as against external aggression, the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League.

There can be no question but that acts of violence have been committed in violation of the Covenant and that other still more serious acts may supervene. It is a matter of urgency that this state of affairs should cease.

Confident, therefore, in the justice of our cause and conscious of our international undertakings, we will accept, for the examination of the claims which have been put forward, any procedure for pacific settlement that will afford us guarantees of justice and impartiality. Paraguay reiterates here her willingness, in the absence of agreement between the parties, to accept the proposal to refer the matter to arbitration, even with a view to the framing of an agreement of reference.

The Assembly rose at 5.50 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH, 1932, AT 11 A.M.

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25. — EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY WITH REFERENCE TO THE EARTHQUAKES IN GREECE.

The President:

Translation: M. Nagaoka, first delegate of Japan, wishes to make a communication to the Assembly.

M. Nagaoka (Japan):

Translation: It was with feelings of deep emotion that I read in the Press the account of the tragic disaster that has so unexpectedly and so cruelly befallen the fair land of Greece — your own country Mr. President. From information received up to the present, it appears that more than three thousand houses have collapsed and dozens of villages been destroyed through violent earthquake shocks, which occurred during the night and buried a large number of hapless victims under the ruins. I earnestly hope these reports are exaggerated, and I am sure that all those present share that hope.

In 1923, you will remember, Japan herself suffered a similar disaster and, on that occasion, the Assembly, moved to a magnificent gesture of

human solidarity, gave us evidence of its profound sympathy. That gesture has remained a vivid memory with us, and now I in my turn would like to propose that we address to the noble Greek nation, which has been stricken by a disaster of the same kind as that which threw my country into mourning, an expression of the sympathy felt for one of its Members by the whole of the League of Nations.

M. Raphaël (Greece):

Translation: I should like to thank the representative of Japan for the sympathy he has expressed towards my country. I especially appreciate them as coming from the delegate of a country which has often suffered similar catastrophes. It is dreadful to think that the people chiefly affected are refugees who, after so many struggles had successfully founded homes for themselves in Greece.

M. Motta (Switzerland):

Translation: The Assembly will certainly desire to associate itself with the remarks of the Japanese delegate, and I should like to be its spokesman in expressing to Greece our heart-felt sympathy with her in her misfortune, which is felt as a misfortune to the whole League of Nations.

26. — DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President:

Translation: Before passing to the agenda, I have a communication to make to the Assembly. You will recall Lord Cecil's remarks, at yesterday afternoon's meeting, concerning the number of questions referred to the Sixth Committee and the possible advantage of redistributing the work so as to lighten that Committee's programme.

After discussing the question with Lord Cecil, I find that it would be better for the moment to leave things as they are. If the Chairman of the Sixth Committee subsequently decides that the Committee cannot complete the whole of its programme, it will be for him to inform the General Committee of the Assembly so that some decision may be taken with regard to questions still outstanding. The General Committee would then submit to the Assembly whatever proposals might seem to it appropriate in the circumstances.

27. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE TWELFTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion of the report on the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly.

M. Costa du Rels, delegate of Bolivia, will address the Assembly.

M. Costa du Rels (Bolivia) :

Translation : My first words from this platform will be to associate myself wholeheartedly with the motion submitted by M. Nagaoka expressing our sympathy with Greece in the disaster which has befallen her.

Far from wishing unduly to prolong the deliberations of this Assembly, I shall lend myself willingly to that economy of speech enjoined upon us by our President as one of the firm but friendly measures designed in order that this thirteenth session of the Assembly may gain in efficacy what it has to lose in length.

In connection with the constitution of a Committee of the Council to follow developments in the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay, the delegate of Paraguay thought fit to make from this platform a further reference — a dim echo, it is true — to the unfortunate misunderstanding which separates his country from mine. The Council's decision will, I feel sure, give rise in my country to a feeling of relief and even of confidence; for already, two months ago, amidst all the superabundance of well-intentioned efforts everywhere displayed, vying with each other to bring about peace, my country fully appreciated the tact, the vision and the moderation shown by M. Matos as President in Office of the Council.

These qualities will at the present juncture be deeply appreciated in Bolivia, for they lie at the root of human as well as political wisdom and comprehension, and that is an essential condition for inducing the peoples to comply with the rational observance of their obligations, without, however, offending either their interests or their dignity. My country possesses over its own territory, and hence over the part bounded on the east by the River Paraguay, rights ensuing from an inviolable, irrefutable principle of American law, a principle unceasingly proclaimed alike in prosperity and in adversity — the *uti possidetis juris* of 1810.

In this connection, the constitution of a Committee of the Council appears to me to be certainly a wise measure, and that Committee will, I feel sure, achieve admirable results, acting directly or in conjunction with the Commission of Neutrals which was originally formed to prevent the conflict of 1928.

It was most gratifying to me yesterday to hear the delegate of Paraguay say that his country does not desire on any account to incur respon-

sibility for any difficulty or delay in regard to the measures taken to arrest the dispute. Neither does Bolivia desire to incur such a responsibility, having agreed on September 18th last to the immediate cessation of hostilities. What, however, was the result? An even more serious outbreak of the violent means the effects of which my country has borne calmly during the past eighteen days.

Bolivia has suffered too much from war — and still suffering from its disastrous and dire results — not to be ready to accept a pacific solution. I say solution, not a mere paliative such as was offered us in 1928. Paliatives are as bad as the disease itself; this is abundantly proved by present events. My country, then, strong in the knowledge of her rights and in the justice of her cause, anxious but unperturbed, looks to the appointed bodies to offer her a solution, which in her view must be marked by two fundamental characteristics: permanency and security, the one a function of the other. That solution, however — who could think otherwise? — can only be contemplated, can only be adopted in the spirit of the League Covenant, to which my country has affixed her signature.

The President :

Translation : M. Caballero de Bedoya, delegate of Paraguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Caballero de Bedoya (Paraguay) :

Translation : I note the declaration just made by the delegate of Bolivia. The time has come for acts in confirmation of the undertaking solemnly entered into, here on this platform, to cease to resort to violence as a means of settling disputes.

Any discussion on the substance of the question, on the titles of ownership to the Chaco Territory, is idle and out of place. The parties must now defend their rights before arbitrators or judges. Nothing then can be simpler than to agree to arbitration. We are waiting, and we are sure that, whatever results from the deliberations of the Committee of the Council, Paraguay will comply with such recommendations as the Committee may think fit to make to the parties for the pacific settlement of the dispute.

The President :

Translation : I do not think it is necessary to prolong this discussion, but I shall, I feel sure, be interpreting the unanimous feeling of the Assembly in saying that it takes note of the declarations which have just been made by the representatives of Bolivia and Paraguay as regards the firm intention of their respective Governments to submit the unfortunate dispute which divides them to a procedure of pacific settlement. They have at their disposal a regional body — the Commission of the American States — and a more general body which has just been set up by the Council of the League. If, as I am convinced, their pacific intentions are genuine, one or both of those bodies will succeed in finding a fitting solution of this dispute and peace between these two countries, which for a brief spell is troubled, will be restored, and permanently restored.

It is the duty of this Assembly of the League to note that a pacific procedure has been instituted; the Assembly will follow that procedure with interest and in the certainty that the desired result will be obtained.

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

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : I hesitated for a long time before deciding to come up to this platform, from which I have had the honour to speak on many occasions — at least once each year since 1920. I shall therefore be brief.

It seems to me that one point should first be noted : the general discussion on the work of the League between the sessions of the Assembly is, in principle, a necessary — indeed an essential — feature. The Assembly is the body set up by the Covenant to enable that discussion to take place and the Covenant was so designed as to provide a world platform for the statesmen responsible for each country's policy.

This year the discussion will, I take it, be greatly curtailed. Public opinion, however, must not be allowed to misunderstand the reasons for this. More than at any other time, perhaps, the situation might be deemed to warrant, on the part of the delegations, remarks, criticisms and statements of all kinds. If they have, of their own free will, agreed to forgo this discussion it is because the major questions — those particularly deserving of most thorough examination — are being dealt with by special *ad hoc* conferences.

I may mention, as coming within that category, the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, the special Assembly, which is dealing with the conflict between China and Japan, and the World Economic Conference which is to meet a few months hence.

For reasons of expediency and in order to save time, it is perhaps as well that this Assembly should curtail its general discussion. That we all feel, is imperative and only reasonable in the circumstances. Perhaps — let me stress that word — perhaps we are right in following this course, without its constituting in any sense a precedent. The Swiss delegation desires to emphasise this point.

We are passing through a critical time and the position is serious. On this subject the President of the Council and the President of this Assembly have spoken unreservedly and to the point. No one who sought to deny, or even to gloss over, the difficulties confronting us could be considered a far-seeing friend of our institution, which should, by virtue of its origins and aims, be capable of bearing the bitterest truths without danger of collapsing.

I have, however, been struck by the extreme triteness, not to say injustice, of certain verdicts passed upon the League. There are those who, having in view the constitution of a new Europe, proclaim that the League is at its last gasp, imagining that its dissolution would release the seeds of life from which that new Europe is to spring. Others, who have never had any faith in the League nor loved it, deliberately confuse the responsibilities of the States with the League's responsibilities. But the League itself is the outcome of international undertakings which aimed, among other things, at setting up a permanent body for purposes of discussion and co-operation. That work, which, is at once political and technical, has, so far as its technical side is concerned, been taken over by the League Secretariat.

Whatever the imperfections of that organisation, this is not the time to develop the matter. Any sincere and thinking man realises that in the Secretariat there has been created an international technique unknown before. To-day, no international conference of any importance is convened, even outside the League, without the Secretariat being asked to give its technical services. That fact is of inestimable importance.

The League has set up another autonomous body, the International Labour Office. This organisation was designed to promote and ensure solidarity between the various factors of production. That solidarity is to-day manifest to all.

There remained yet another great organisation to be founded : the Permanent Court of International Justice. The Court's task was, and still is, to withdraw from the realm of force the doctrines and rules of law. That supremely difficult task it has satisfactorily performed.

We all know, alas! the cases in which League action has proved power less or inadequate. We have before us the failure of the League's efforts in the economic sphere, efforts which, none the less, must be continued.

We look with misgiving tinged with anxiety at the conflict still proceeding in the Far East. We turn our eyes with almost equal misgiving towards Paraguay and Bolivia. Here I desire to associate myself, on behalf of my delegation, with the appeal for justice and arbitration addressed by our President to those two States of the South-American Continent, which is, as I believe, called upon to play so great a part in League affairs.

Again, the cause of disarmament is meeting with obstacles of a very serious nature.

If, however, we go to the root of the matter, is it reasonable to make the League, as such, responsible for the present situation, when the responsibility really rests with the individual States and with their Governments? Nothing amazes me more than the tendency in certain quarters — I am not speaking of the Governments — to threaten to abandon the League, if this or that claim, this or that political postulate, is not met, and met immediately. No Government in the world, it seems to me, could contemplate with equanimity the collapse of this institution, this one great hope. For the small Powers, it would mean renouncing all possibility of bringing their influence — their beneficial influence — to bear in international matters. For the great Powers, it would mean an inevitable return to the old system of big alliances, rivalries and bitter competition. The League, even if it is weak and inadequate, remains a bulwark of peace, an active symbol of the progress of mankind.

The man in the street, I know, is tired of mere words. He feels that facts, realities, do not square with words and theories ; sooner or later this feeling takes hold even of the intellectual, who, in his meditations, pores over the fate of human societies. Yet I feel sure that both the man in the street and the intellectual are turning uneasily away from those who seek the happiness of their fellow-men in a return to the past, forgetting that the law of progress is the same for individuals and societies — a constant and carefully maintained equilibrium between the preservation of what is vital in the past and the no less vital needs of evolution.

All men believe in the necessity of an international order. Any man who dared to say he did not recognise that necessity as part of the general order of ideas would cease to deserve the name of one of God's creatures. If States are not yet prepared to give up a considerable part of their sovereignty — and in this first phase of the League's life they have shown that they are not prepared to do so — then they owe it to themselves, and the obligation may without exaggeration be termed sacred, not to break the instrument that enables them to work together ; for, despite all, its value is beyond count, and, once broken, it could never be remade.

(The Assembly rose at 12.5 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH, 1932, AT 11 A.M.

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28. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE
TWELFTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY:
CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the general discussion of the report on the work of the League since the twelfth session of the Assembly.

M. Herriot, first delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Herriot (France) :

Translation : France does not wish to allow this general discussion, this public searching of conscience, to terminate without making her voice heard from this platform and once more proclaiming her loyalty to the principles of the League. This she considers the more necessary as the *bise* of pessimism seems this year to be the prevailing wind at Geneva.

Only a few days ago, Mr. de Valera, the President of the Council, exhorted us to tackle frankly the question whether we were suffering from some serious malady or merely going through the period of "growing pains", to make allowance for criticism, whether justified or born of rash impatience, and to remember that our duty lies in action.

Still more recently, M. Politis, the President of this Assembly, spoke of the period of torment

through which the world is passing and urged that the inadequacy of our work up to the present should inspire in us not discouragement but rather a determination to redouble our efforts in the direction of international organisation, which alone can confer on the nations the blessings for which they yearn, including peace, the most precious gift of all.

I associate myself with this act of faith, on behalf of France, which will have nothing to do with the negative attitude of pessimists or sceptics.

In the first place, I should like to draw your attention and that of public opinion to a truth which I believe to be of great importance and which was, I think, implicit in the speeches of my predecessors on this platform — it formed, indeed, the keynote of the speech delivered yesterday morning by the President of the Swiss Confederation.

The League of Nations has, in the regular process of its development, followed the laws which govern all organic growth and determine the evolution of every living cell. It has split up into a number of organisms. It has created or given the impetus to many activities which, if we have the will, will ultimately be co-ordinated. It has given birth to the Disarmament Conference, it has set on foot investigations with a view to the world organisation of labour, it has made the Lausanne Conference possible, it has promoted arbitration, it was responsible for Locarno and it set up the Permanent Court of International Justice. Each of these institutions has been living its own life and has given numerous proofs of its abundant vitality.

No one is better able to appreciate the growth of our duties than our honoured Secretary-General, Sir Eric Drummond, whose work has steadily expanded and become more complex.

As regards that most burning subject — the Disarmament Conference — I will not say anything calculated to disturb the proper atmosphere of serenity of this Assembly. We are here to stress, not those points on which we are still divided, but those on which we are already agreed. There are at the present time problems on which we disagree,

and on each of those problems we ought, in my view, to express our opinions with a frankness which I am sure you all regard as preferable to reserve or dissimulation. But this is neither the time nor the place to discuss them, lest in the present difficult circumstances we should run the risk of further aggravating them. Some of these questions are of such a serious nature that it is our duty conscientiously to consider them in their every aspect, for we it is who will have to bear the responsibility in the last instance, we who, if we make a mistake, may endanger the human lives entrusted to our care. These are not matters on which it is possible to improvise a decision. The international peace code will be no easier to establish than have been those internal codes which determine order in civilised society.

For the rest whatever complications there may be, France is still determined to work courageously for their solution in the interests of the Disarmament Conference and of world peace.

I shall not now stop to consider whether the 1924 Protocol, for which, as you will understand, I feel a sort of paternal affection, would not have contributed largely towards the settlement of the problem or have offered one of those universal solutions so dear to the French mind, that particular type of mind with which we are so often twitted. That was what happened with the Declaration of the Rights of Man, which has made some headway since.

Other methods were chosen: so be it, but I for my part will not admit that the work done at Geneva in June and July was not of real value. It is easy to pick holes in any work. It is, I think, more useful to point out the results obtained.

We now come to a striking example of the second of the causes which explain the apparent crisis in the life of our institution. We have come down from the ideal plane to realities. We must now grapple with facts and no longer be content with general ideas. If we are to institute a new order of things, we must liquidate the past which weighs so heavily upon us and transform institutions which have existed for hundreds of years. Philosophers, who are sometimes inclined to think in purely abstract terms — far be it from me to criticise them — may wonder at the slowness of our progress. Anyone, however, with any historical sense who remembers that the horrible form of barbarity called war is as old as the human race, and that our task is to up-root an evil that goes back thousands of years, will understand this slowness.

I am continually being asked what is France's doctrine for arriving at the desired result.

I reply once more: the Covenant; nothing but the Covenant; the Covenant in its integrity.

I am convinced that if we were to meditate more often upon that remarkable Article 8, instead of merely quoting it, and were to attempt — all of us — to extract from its six paragraphs the fund of wisdom contained in them, we should there find the elements of the doctrine for which we are still looking. For us, the Covenant is the law.

For the rest, although we regret the partial absence of the great American democracy here, where we are laying the foundation of what we hope will be a successful work, how can we fail to observe — for the encouragement of pacifists — that simultaneously with our efforts, the most enlightened minds in the United States are endeavouring to strengthen the Briand-Kellogg Pact. That is the significance of the appeal made by President Hoover in a document which has become essential in any discussion on disarmament; that is the significance of an extremely important speech by Mr. Stimson, the scope of which has not perhaps been as fully estimated as

it deserves and which, regarding neutrality in the face of the crime of war as impossible, imposes on States the duty of holding joint deliberations in the dire event of the appearance of that terrible scourge.

Although the determination to tolerate war no longer still finds many different expressions, at least that determination is now common to all civilised nations. Henceforth it should not be regarded as legitimate even to contemplate this horrible solution.

Other results have been achieved during the last international year. Mr. de Valera made a striking reference from this platform to the links, spiritual at least, which united the Lausanne Conference with the League of Nations. People forget easily, but they should try to remember in what conditions, in what a threatening atmosphere and in the face of what divergencies of views that meeting opened only a few months ago. And yet it terminated in an agreement.

Possibly some of us were too near to that scene of action to measure its full significance. Let me quote the opinion of a man: renowned for his independence of judgment: "Lausanne," he said, "is the most important step taken since the war towards re-establishing confidence in political affairs and in business. Lausanne was the 'great bright spot' in a lurid picture of mistrust, fear and hatred. With patience, wisdom and courage we might usher in the beginning of the end of that long period of human suffering, and the beneficial results of this would be felt in every home throughout the world by a suffering and exhausted humanity."

That is the considered opinion of an impartial observer. Can it be said that France, which associated itself so wholeheartedly with what was done at Lausanne, is opposed to the necessary reconciliations?

One of the fruits of the Lausanne Conference was the recent Stresa Conference, undertaken to prepare for the reconstruction of Central and Eastern Europe and with the object of submitting an effective plan of work to the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

Numerous efforts had already been made to arrive at this result, but in vain. On this occasion, however, under the chairmanship and thanks to the activity of M. Georges Bonnet, an agreement was reached on very precise economic and financial recommendations and on a draft convention for the revalorisation of cereals. In that definite field, Germany, the United Kingdom, France and Italy — that country which offered the Conference such charming hospitality — were at one with the agricultural countries directly concerned. By single-minded co-operation, those divergencies of view which had been so much in the public mind were eliminated.

As a result, it seemed possible to hope that Europe might finally achieve that solidarity which must unite her in spite of conflicting interests and views.

This result has been obtained by a combination of ideas — German, French, Italian. Is not that a most encouraging example? Doubtless, it is only one stage on the road, but the road has been marked out. All that is needed now is that we should not abandon it. France for her part will not stint her contribution to the common task. The results, for Europe, of the Stresa Conference, will, we hope, be endorsed by the Commission of Enquiry. Moreover, they are, in our view, only preliminaries to a work of much vaster scope, which, at the instance of the United Kingdom and under the impulse of the League of Nations, the World Conference, whose Preparatory Committee is to

meet in a few days' time, will take steps to make a reality.

There we have, I think, indisputable facts countering the insinuations or charges made by the pessimists. A year which has produced such results is certainly not a barren year. I venture to say that these results, far from invalidating the need for the League of Nations, have but confirmed that need. To judge the League we must understand it; to appreciate its efforts we must determine the limits and conditions of its work.

I think I may say quite definitely that the League has two great enemies—the spirit of reaction and the spirit of demagoguery. It cannot satisfy the claims of either. It must be content with carrying out its task honestly.

The League, indeed, has no means of avoiding the difficulties which are arising in every direction; it must even be bold enough to proclaim that these difficulties will constantly increase. This is so, because, in the first place, the League's jurisdiction extends to the greater part of the civilised world. The time is past when political problems could be discussed among a few European States as the arbiters of the destinies of all. Every year nations are joining us or returning to the League. A few weeks ago we had the great pleasure of welcoming Turkey. Shortly we shall receive Iraq. The vote taken in the Argentine Chamber gives us promise of the return in the near future of specially valued friends. Yesterday we heard our President announce, with joy which was shared by us all, that Paraguay and Bolivia had agreed to the settlement of their dispute by our pacific methods of procedure. We offer them our cordial congratulations.

But the time is past, too, when the problems arising out of the intercourse of States were, as at the end of the eighteenth century, purely political in character and depended on the application of a few moral principles. The pressure of economic needs; the consequences of mechanisation, once hailed as a liberator and to-day the begetter of so much wretchedness; the diffusion and complexity of interests; the incidence of the creation and transfer of wealth—all these factors have given rise to countless complications. Moreover, often we cannot solve them because we cannot yet define them; and the League has before it the prospect of adding the role of economic arbitrator to its already complex role of political arbitrator. To solve these difficulties, however, the League offers a new procedure—the method of frank, and open discussion.

I for my part only wish it were wholly possible, without impropriety, to approach every aspect of the subjects raised, to explain any misgiving, to let it be judged by colleagues as well-wishing as yourselves, to speak directly without risk of indiscretion or importunity. In our view, the League should obtain two essential results: first, it should reduce, if not abolish, secret diplomacy, which has led to so many wars; and, secondly, it should put an end to the classic tradition of groups of dominant Powers, the tradition of the balance of power, by placing on the same level all nations, great and small, and calling upon them to help in forming a public opinion of a new type, exclusive of any kind of hegemony. If these open discussions lead us to success, it means agreement; if not, the solution is arbitration and the Hague Court. The League of Nations provides us with judges.

Admittedly, the League has not yet abolished violence; but it has already reduced the field in which violence can be employed. It offers every nation which is prepared to act in good faith a complete and constantly available system for a legal means of settlement. I say emphatically that no country is more resolutely determined

than France to employ those legal means in their entirety and without mental reservations.

Such are the very simple and sound reasons why the French delegation, though fully aware of the obstacles which lie before it as before you all, refuses to associate itself with any campaign of pessimism or any impression of discouragement.

My illustrious predecessor and friend, M. Aristide Briand, now sleeping in the peace of the tomb, would have voiced the same convictions, with that magic which so often cast a spell upon you all. I should like at least to evoke the thought which the poet of old illustrated with so vivid an image: he contrasted the idleness of those who allow themselves to glide along on the placid bosom of a river with the toil of those struggling upstream against the swift current. Friends and colleagues, we must not lay down our oars; we shall never be really in peril so long as we do not allow our will to flag.

The President:

Translation: Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, delegate of the United Kingdom, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (United Kingdom). In the very interesting and eloquent speech to which we have just listened, M. Herriot has protested with great justice and truth against the exaggerated spirit of pessimism which prevails in certain quarters. He has pointed out, in words which I could not possibly imitate, the many reasons why that pessimism is not justified. I do not think he gave any single reason of greater importance than when he referred to the great success which had been achieved by the Conference at Lausanne. That is indeed a most gratifying and encouraging circumstance, not only because of the actual results which it achieved—the value of which must depend on how they are worked out—but because it opened the way, it was the first step, towards what I hope will be the beginning of the economic rehabilitation of the world.

The Conference of Stresa and the proposed World Economic Conference are the children of the Conference of Lausanne and, if they can produce results equally successful, then indeed from the economic point of view we may consider that a very important step has been taken. But, after all, M. Herriot would not deny—certainly I would not deny—that it is not only the exaggerated pessimism which we have to consider. Much of that is dictated by the desire that the League should come to an end. There are unfortunately in all countries, in mine as well as in others, lunatics who really desire that the attempt to organise peace should fail, and they naturally exaggerate every failure and every difficulty of the League. But, apart from those, there are perfectly sober, well-intentioned favourable critics who are undoubtedly anxious and uneasy at the present state of things. Such anxiety and uneasiness were voiced with great force and great effect in the extremely valuable and interesting speech made by the President of the Council, Mr. de Valera, at the opening of our proceedings, and the importance of that speech was not only that it stated the case with great force, but that it stated clearly and unmistakably in this hall what all of us know is being freely said outside it.

What are the broad charges that are made? I think to sum them up in a single phrase, the charge is that the League of Nations extravagantly does nothing. That is a double charge. As to the charge of extravagance, no doubt that is pressed beyond all reason and all justice. As we constantly point out, the amount spent on the League is a mere fraction, an infinitesimal fraction, of what the

nations are spending in preparations for war. I think I have pointed out from this tribune that the cost of a single great battleship, if it were invested at 5 per cent, would pay the British contribution to the League very nearly three times over; and if the cost of three such battleships were invested it would be possible to pay the whole cost of the League to all the nations of the world.

The charge, therefore, that we are spending enormously greater sums than we ought to spend is quite unjustified. But that does not, of course, mean that we are not spending more than we need and that there are not economies which might usefully be made without interfering with the essential efficiency of the League. We have all of us read the extremely moving and interesting extract from the speech of one of the representatives of Norway, my friend M. Hambro, which has unquestionably raised issues of great importance. For myself, as a warm advocate of the League and a profound believer in its necessity and value, I welcome most heartily the fact that on this occasion a searching examination into the expenditure of the League is going to be made by the Fourth Committee. I trust that the Committee will find that economies are possible and I am quite certain it will not, in the search for economy, hamper the efficiency of the League.

However, that, after all, is a minor charge and a minor issue. It adds something to the venom of the other issue, but it is not the important question. The main charge is that the League has shown itself inefficient; that it talks but does not do anything. Taking a broad view of its activities since its foundation, no fair-minded man would, of course, make such a charge, for the achievements of the League have been of very considerable importance and of immense value to the happiness and peace of the world. But that is not what is meant. What is meant is that in certain great issues, certain great international questions, the League has shown itself unable to attain a successful result.

In the first place, there is one thing I want to say — I think it was said very eloquently by M. Motta, but I want to repeat it. I want to say that this charge is primarily not a charge against the institution of the League, but a charge against its Members. I see no reason whatever, in anything that has occurred, to question the wisdom of the conception of the League or the effectiveness of its machinery for the objects it has in view. Wherever it has been fairly and genuinely applied, without fear and without hesitation, the machinery of the League has produced admirable results. I can give a very simple instance which has come within my own observation quite lately. We have been considering the affairs of one of our Members, the Republic of Liberia. I am not going to discuss — indeed, it would be very improper for me to do so at this moment — the results that have been achieved, but I say in the presence of my colleagues without hesitation that the discussions in connection with that matter have shown that the machinery of the League can work with complete smoothness and complete efficiency and that there is nothing wrong, as far as the machinery is concerned, with the Organisation to which we belong. That, moreover, is not merely the opinion of an individual like myself.

M. Herriot remarked just now with great truth that we welcome most heartily the entry of Turkey into our organisation, and the decision reached by the Argentine Parliament that it desires to renew its co-operation with this Assembly. Those are facts of all the more value in that those countries have arrived at such decisions, not suddenly in an access of emotion, but after profound and careful consideration prolonged over many years. It is the

result of a deliberate decision on the part of each of them that, in their view, the League of Nations is doing useful service and deserves to be supported by all persons of good will throughout the world.

There is, I think, something amiss. But what is wrong rests not so much with the League if as with the Members of the League. For various reasons there is — I will not say a decay — but a diminution in the will to peace. Let us face that fact fairly and definitely. By this I do not mean that there is an inclination to war. I see no sign of that; but there is a diminution in the enthusiasm and the great desire for peace which after the great war swept over the world like one great movement of opinion. That was bound to happen, and everyone who considered the situation knew that it was bound to happen. Anyone who had any reason to form their opinions on this matter knew that only a certain interval would elapse before, to some extent at any rate, the old feelings of the nations would resume their sway.

This was bound to happen as the memories of that great orgy of carnage gradually receded, and as new generations began to grow up to whom the war was only a matter of narrative and not of experience. That is what is happening now; there is a slackening in the enthusiasm for peace.

Let us look at any of the great questions in connection with which the League is said not to have done its part. We rejoiced greatly to hear from Bolivia and Paraguay yesterday that they, both of them, accepted the principle of a pacific settlement of their dispute. We hope with great confidence that that resolve will rapidly be carried into effect. Nevertheless, the real trouble has been — I make no charge against either country — that these two Members of the League, or one or other of them, has not in fact, in carrying out its policy, completely by accepted the principles of the Covenant of the League.

Let us take another example — the problem of the Far East. There can be no doubt that if the Covenant had been applied by both parties — again I make no criticism of one or other — in its integrity and without reserve, this difficulty with which we are faced would never have come to pass. Some say that the dispute was due to one party; others that it was due to the other; but on one point we must be agreed — namely, that if the principles of the Covenant had been fully applied we should not have had to deplore the long-continued dispute which has so embittered the annals of the Far East.

I know we shall be asked why, if these failures took place, the League did not enforce the sanctions provided? I shall not go into that question. No doubt it is a proper question and one which will require, at the proper time, full and complete examination; but do not let us forget that the question of the application of sanctions implies a breach of duty, and, though it may or may not be that the other Members of the League ought to have acted with more vigour, I express no opinion. One thing is clear — namely, that in this great dispute one or other party must have been guilty of a breach of their duties under the Covenant of the League. The truth is that in this matter these countries, and others, are not acting fully in accordance with the spirit of the League.

I will venture to say a word — and only a word — on the far more important issues which are unfortunately going on between France and Germany. I ventured to say last year that, if they could be appeased and if a real agreement could be reached between those two great countries, seventy-five per cent of the unrest of the world would come to an end. I do not think that was an exaggeration. I would repeat that statement to-day, and, without

venturing to criticise either party would add, that there can be no doubt that, if the policy of each of them were fully guided by the principles of the Covenant which they have accepted, their difficulties, their disputes, their controversies would automatically come to an end. The truth is this — and it is this which we have all to recognise, my country as well as the others — that no machinery for the maintenance of peace, however good it may be, however well devised, and whatever form it may take, can work unless the will to peace is there. What then must be done? Each of the countries, each of the Governments, must examine whether it cannot bring its policy more closely in accord with its principles — the principles of the Covenant.

But, apart from that, one great test is offered to us at this moment as to whether we are sincere in our will to peace. I refer to the great question of disarmament for which the Conference, that great Conference, has been summoned. The question is being asked in every quarter of the world: Are the nations really willing to disarm? Are they really ready to give this practical concrete evidence that their will is for peace and not for war? No one questions that disarmament can be realised. Do not let us be told any more that the practical difficulties are insuperable. Every nation can disarm if it chooses, and the nations can all agree to disarm if they choose to do so. The whole question is this: Are the Governments, and specially the Governments with great military and naval forces — actual or potential — are they really in earnest? That is the question the world is asking. That is the question which the common people of the world, believe me, insistently put. What is going to be the answer? For answer we must give — yes or no. There is no escaping it, no evasion is possible, no shirking of the issue.

Are we going to disarm? Are we going to reach an agreement for a genuine disarmament treaty or not? The question has been asked and the answer is awaited. If the answer is in the affirmative, if such a treaty is agreed upon, I have no doubt that the whole international atmosphere would change as if by magic. It is not that a disarmed nation is incapable of war — of course not; but if the nations enter into a common agreement for a real and substantial reduction of armaments, they will thereby have made a definite choice for peace and not for war. I believe that, in that case, all these international difficulties would rapidly disappear.

But if the answer is in the negative, if disarmament is not realised, there will inevitably be a reversion to pre-war conditions. Let us make no mistake. The situation will be infinitely worse than if we had never tried to disarm. If we had never tried to disarm it would have been deplorable, but, if we try and fail, it will mean that the nations are not prepared to abandon war.

A great statesman in my country said that the nations must disarm or perish. He was profoundly right. Such is the issue we have to face, and the choice of the solution they will adopt lies with the statesmen at the Conference. They hold in their hands the future of civilisation — nay, the future happiness of the world — and I pray to Heaven that their choice will be rightly guided.

The President:

Translation: His Excellency Baron Aloisi, first delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

Baron Aloisi (Italy):

Translation: I wish to thank you very sincerely for the cordial welcome extended to me in this

Assembly — the first I have had the privilege of attending — to which Italy has made and is still making her contribution in a spirit of complete loyalty ever since the foundation of the League.

The President has appealed to us to act, so that you must not expect from me any but a brief straightforward speech. All I have to do is to confirm, simply but clearly, the continuity and consistency of my country's foreign policy, our will to co-operate and our determination to spare no effort to help free the world from the difficulties with which it is at present contending.

You already know the principles by which my Government is guided. Italy has sent to this platform eloquent exponents of her policy, and her ideals and practical interests have been repeatedly set forth in this Assembly. If I attempted to expound them afresh I should merely have to repeat what has already been said here on more than one occasion. What the League wants to-day is not words but urgent and effective action, in order to define and solve the grave problems which now face it.

Two of those problems formed the subject of a speech delivered by M. Grandi in the Assembly last year: the problem of disarmament and that of the economic crisis. On that occasion we laid before you very definite ideas on both those subjects: the need to translate into action the undertakings embodied in the Covenant by a reduction and limitation of armaments, the need to free the world from the Nessus shirt of post-war ultra-protectionism.

I shall not revert to the first of these problems. During the twelve months which have elapsed since September 1931, when the Italian delegation submitted its proposal for an armaments truce, up to the recent meetings of the Bureau of the Conference, the problem of disarmament has passed through a phase of technical discussions which have proved both long and difficult. Those discussions, by showing the serious obstacles which stand in the way of disarmament have — let us admit it — weakened the confidence we had placed in its practical and immediate possibilities; but — and on this I would lay stress — they have in no way shaken our determination to arrive at concrete results. In the matter of disarmament we have our own ideas and principles. You know them already: the need to reduce armaments to the lowest possible level; the need to effect a perequation of the armaments potential of States; and, lastly, the need to strengthen through disarmament the security of every individual State and hence the security of all.

The eminent President of the Swiss Confederation told us yesterday that it is not reasonable to make the League bear responsibilities which properly belong to the States and Governments. I quite agree with him. It is, however, certain that the success of the Disarmament Conference is an essential condition for the growth of confidence among the peoples, and without that confidence the work of organising international society would be alike vain and ineffective. May I be allowed then, from this platform, to express the most earnest and most ardent hope that we may finally arrive at a Disarmament Convention and bring to a close this painful phase of unrest in the history of Europe?

What I have said of disarmament I might say almost equally well of economic questions. Even in the economic sphere we have for a long time past made clear the guiding principles of our policy.

We have been faced during recent years with a progressive stiffening of all those measures which tend to hamper the international movement of

goods, of capital and even of services — that is to say, men. Every State has thought to protect itself by seeking to thrust on others the consequences of the general depression or of its own difficulties. Thus, what with Customs restrictions and prohibitions, quota systems and preferential treatment, prevention of transactions in foreign exchange and of the circulation of capital, prohibitions and restrictions of immigration — more and more obstacles have impeded the free play of economic forces, the unrestricted operation of which should have brought the world back to a state of normal economic equilibrium. All the States, within the limits of their sovereign rights, have adopted the same measures, which not only cancel one another but have the effect of aggravating the general situation and making the solution of the problem yet more complicated and more difficult.

In all this there exists a fundamental inconsistency.

The lives of the peoples are now being lived in an ever-widening environment, and the bonds which unite nations are indestructible. In economic matters the interdependence of all the phenomena relating to the production and circulation of wealth is becoming closer and closer.

Our common interests demand then that we should transfer the problem to the field of international co-operation, for only by so doing shall we overcome the difficulties of the present hour and facilitate the return of world economy to a normal state or something approaching a normal state.

Italy is conscious that she has done everything in her power to oppose the mistaken policy of which I have spoken. She has taken no initiative in regard to prohibitive measures; she has fought all proposals that might bring about dangerous restrictions, and only within the limits imposed by absolute necessity has she departed from the line marked out by treaties based on the principle of equality, and then only in order to defend herself against the restrictions of others.

Steadfastly adhering to these ideas, Italy has always been and still is ready for any international action based on a sound, balanced and liberal Customs and currency policy. Italy is of opinion that on an international plane effective action is possible and that only by such action, backed by a spirit of goodwill, will it be possible to alleviate these difficulties which are general.

M. Herriot instanced just now the work of the Stresa Conference as a striking example of the possibilities of co-operation in a sphere which is at once economic and political. I gladly associate myself with his view and with the congratulations he addressed to those who have worked with such goodwill.

We, for our part, are ready, in conformity with the recommendations of the Conference's report to take part in a European endeavour to restore better conditions of life in one important area of Europe by a bold liquidation of the past, a liquidation which is necessary if we are to consolidate new-found possibilities. Such an effort calls for the active co-operation of all States, which are equally interested in the development of trade, the restoration of currency to a sound basis and a reversion to a more stable economic and financial

system. Similar action must be taken in the wider sphere of Europe as a whole and of the whole world. Italy is ready to co-operate to that end, with absolute confidence in the work of general economic reconstruction. Several of the eminent speakers who have preceded me on this platform described — some of them indeed painted a gloomy picture — the unhappy situation in which all the countries of the world are at present placed. The possibility of irreparable disasters was even mentioned.

You will perhaps allow me to say a word of hope and confidence.

An examination of the situation in my own country, which, like every other country, has felt the effects of the present general difficulties, but in which the order and regularity of work have never been disturbed, emboldens me to say what I am about to say. The development of public works, undertaken with a view to improving production and increasing national wealth, and the great measure of solidarity existing between the different classes of the population have helped in Italy, to alleviate the evils and misery of unemployment.

The great development of arts and crafts, of small-scale industries easily adaptable to changing circumstances, the vigorous economic and financial policy followed by the Government in order to balance foreign and home prices — these factors have enabled my country to hold its own and to adapt itself sufficiently to the necessities arising out of the crisis. We certainly cannot boast of any very great financial resources, but we are happy to say that life pursues its even tenor in Italy, and that the Italian people are fully confident that their patient work, sobriety and respect for social order will enable them to overcome present difficulties and allow the country to return to a state of sound and permanent equilibrium.

While a vision of the evils which afflict so large a portion of the world is necessary to impel Governments to seek remedies, it is equally necessary that a voice should be heard from this platform expressing confidence in the future and the hope that our decisions may be supported by that determination which alone can lead us to salvation.

I have ventured to restate in the Assembly, in the concisest possible form, some of the principles of our foreign policy. I had no intention of saying anything new; on the contrary, I was particularly anxious not to do so. Our work must be eminently thorough; constancy and continuity are, I am firmly convinced, the qualities most necessary for that work. We believe that Italy's chief contribution to world reconstruction must be a contribution of continuity and stability. The Fascist Government has on some occasions anticipated solutions the need for which has subsequently been confirmed by events. On other occasions we have simply refused to believe that certain solutions were impossible. At all times we have been at pains to act in accordance with clear and well-defined principles. You will find us to-day still following the lines we were following yesterday, intent on bringing all our determination and power to bear, in order that the world may emerge triumphantly from this present crisis and in so doing learn valuable lessons on international cooperation.

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3RD, 1932, AT 11.30 A.M.

CONTENTS:

29. REQUEST OF POLAND FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL.
30. APPLICATION BY THE KINGDOM OF IRAQ FOR ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.
Report of the Sixth Committee.
31. CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES OF THE KINGDOM OF IRAQ.
Report of the Committee on Credentials.
32. ADMISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF IRAQ IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

President : M. POLITIS.

29. — REQUEST OF POLAND FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the vote on Poland's request for re-eligibility for election to the Council.

The Assembly will remember that I informed it, at the meeting on the afternoon of September 27th, of a letter bearing that day's date from the Polish delegation, submitting, on behalf of its Government, a request for re-eligibility.

There is no need to read this letter again, since it has been communicated to all the delegations.

I stated at the meeting on September 27th that Poland's request for re-eligibility had been submitted in the proper form and within the time-limits prescribed in the rules of 1926 dealing with elections to the Council. It is therefore for the Assembly to vote on this request, in accordance with the provisions of the resolution of September 15th, 1926, laying down the rules for such elections.

In order that the matter may be put clearly before you, I will read you the provisions of Article II, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the resolution of 1926 :

" A retiring Member may not be re-elected during the period between the expiration of its term of office and the third election in ordinary session held thereafter, unless the Assembly, either on the expiration of the Member's term of office or in the course of the said period of three years, shall, by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast, previously have decided that such Member is re-eligible.

" The Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting tickets deposited, deducting blank or spoilt votes. "

The Assembly is thus called upon to take a decision by secret ballot. As the name of each delegation is called, a representative of that delegation will deposit its voting card in the ballot-box.

Each delegation will write on the voting card " Yes " if it is in favour of re-election, " No " if it is not favourable, and " Abstaining " if it does not desire to express any opinion.

I will ask M. Rosso, delegate of Italy, and Sir John Simon, delegate of the United Kingdom, to be good enough to act as tellers and to take their places on the platform.

(M. Rosso and Sir John Simon took their places on the platform as tellers.)

The President :

Translation : The ballot is now open.

(The ballot was taken by roll-call.)

The President :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of votes cast | 51 |
| Blank or spoilt voting papers | 4 |
| Number of valid votes | 47 |
| Majority required for acceptance (two-thirds) | 31 |
| Number of votes in favour of the request | 41 |

The request for re-eligibility has therefore been granted.

I should like to thank the tellers for their assistance in counting the votes.

30. — APPLICATION BY THE KINGDOM OF IRAQ FOR ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS; REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Sixth Committee on the admission of the Kingdom of Iraq to the League of Nations (document A.42.1932.VII, Annex 2).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Lange, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and M. Yevtitch, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Yevtitch, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Yevtitch (Yugoslavia), Rapporteur :

Translation : The report of the Sixth Committee has been distributed to you, and I do not think it is necessary for me to read it. I will only say that the Sixth Committee unanimously approved the admission of Iraq into the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : As no delegation has asked to speak, I think I may take the silence of the Assembly as indicating its desire to take a vote at once.

The Sixth Committee's report recommends the admission of the Kingdom of Iraq to the League, and we should accordingly apply Article 1 of the Covenant, which requires a two-thirds majority for the admission of a State to the League. We will therefore take a vote by roll-call. The name of each delegation will be called. Each delegation should reply "Yes" if it is in favour of the admission of Iraq, "No" if it is not in favour, or "Abstaining" if it does not desire to express an opinion.

(The vote was taken by roll-call.)

The President :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows: fifty-two delegations took part in the ballot, and all voted for the admission of Iraq. I have therefore great pleasure in stating that the Assembly has just declared unanimously in favour of the admission of this new State to the League of Nations.

I think I shall be interpreting your feelings in expressing my congratulations to the new State Member of the League.

M. Yevtitch, Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Yevtitch (Yugoslavia), Rapporteur :

Translation : The accession of each new Member to the League should be welcomed as a happy event. It is necessary, nay, indispensable, to the development of our institution that it should grow. Strength lies in numbers — that is a well-established truth — and our Assembly is to-day called upon to receive a new Member.

It is a pure coincidence that it should fall to the representative of a country whose whole history has been one long and bitter struggle for liberty to contribute his modest quota to the task of admitting the Kingdom of Iraq to the League of Nations. I reflect with pleasure on the fact that international institutions have developed enormously in our day and now exercise very considerable influence on international life. Things were very different at the time when my country was striving to secure its freedom. In those days, the conception of international collaboration and solidarity fell far short of our present ideas, thanks to which we are now privileged to welcome the Kingdom of Iraq as our equal. We can thus register a measure of tangible progress in international life which no one will deny. The fact of Iraq's admission is the most conclusive proof we could possibly have.

In welcoming Iraq into the League, I share sincerely and profoundly in the joy which her people must now be feeling, and I realise the tremendous importance that this solemn moment must have for them. I am particularly happy at Iraq's admission, since that country, as the result of the termination of the mandate, is now beginning life as a free and independent State. But this moment is important, not only for the Kingdom of Iraq and the Iraqi, it is significant for the League of Nations, for the League's work and for its future.

The entry of the Kingdom of Iraq into the League has, in my opinion, a two-fold significance. In the first place, our membership is thereby increased, and the League's work and importance enhanced, inasmuch as our efforts are rendered more universal by the addition of each Member into our ranks. Secondly, at the very moment when, as our President said the other day, a wind of pessimism seems to be sweeping through Geneva, spreading doubts as to the vitality of our institution, I venture to hope that Iraq's admission will help to dispel this pessimism. We should therefore stress this significant fact and see in it a good omen for the future of the League.

The Kingdom of Iraq, up to the present under a mandate entrusted to the United Kingdom in virtue of Article 22 of the Covenant, has now acquired full independence, thanks to the sincere and friendly co-operation of the mandatory Power, to which I would pay a well-merited tribute, and thanks also to the collaboration of the other Members of the League.

We must all rejoice that a wise and prudent application of the Covenant, which, in Article 22, lays upon the mandatory Powers a sacred trust of civilisation, should to-day be so happily crowned by the admission of Iraq, now a free and independent State, to membership of the League.

As one who has had some share in this work, I desire, on my country's behalf and in my own name, to welcome the Kingdom of Iraq into the League of Nations, and to express my sincerest wishes for the prosperity of that young State and the happiness of its people.

The President :

Translation : M. Lange, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Lange (Norway), Chairman of the Sixth Committee :

Translation : I should like, in the first place, to associate myself wholeheartedly with the congratulations voiced from this platform by M. Yevtitch, our distinguished Rapporteur. In adding a few words to what he has said, I wish to emphasise one aspect of the independence which the Kingdom of Iraq has acquired to-day on entering the League of Nations.

It is right that recognition of such independence should be conditional upon Iraq's entry into the League, the first official manifestation in history of the interdependence which must necessarily exist between nations, for nowadays, more than ever before, interdependence is the logical corollary of independence. That fact is often not realised; and perhaps the failure to realise it is largely responsible for the crisis through which we are now passing. I am not, however, going to deliver a dissertation on that dismal subject. What I want to emphasise on the occasion of Iraq's entry is rather the moral character of the fact of interdependence between the nations.

No event, no crisis, can occur in any country without its effects being felt, and deeply felt, in other countries. But, on the other hand, through the interdependence of interests, through the interdependence of currents of opinion which ignore the existence of frontiers, every State derives support from international co-operation and international solidarity.

At the special Assembly last spring we admitted Iraq's neighbour to membership of the League, and one important region of Western Asia is thus more fully represented here this year.

On more than one occasion in its early days, the League, through this Assembly, gave very full and sympathetic consideration to the interests of certain elements of the population in that part of Western Asia. On entering the League, Iraq has made a solemn declaration, recognising her duties towards the racial and religious minorities within her borders. What I wish to say now is that those minorities must know, as the Government of Iraq must know, that there are around them in all the other countries currents of opinion which represent the interests they are themselves defending, and which will follow with the closest attention the development of the State of Iraq and the fate of the different elements in her population.

With these remarks, which, I feel confident, voice the unanimous opinion of the Sixth Committee, I desire to second with the utmost cordiality, on behalf of the Committee and of my country, and also on my own behalf, the sincere congratulations addressed to the new Member of the League of Nations, to the Kingdom of Iraq.

The President :

Translation : I thank the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee for the explanatory observations they have been good enough to make on the decision we have just taken and on the meaning they attach to your unanimous vote.

31. — CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES OF THE KINGDOM OF IRAQ: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : In order that the representatives of the Kingdom of Iraq might take part in the work of the present meeting, I requested the Credentials Committee to examine the credentials of the members of the Iraqi delegation. I will ask

the Chairman of the Credentials Committee to submit the Committee's report.

His Excellency M. de Agüero y Bethancourt will address the Assembly.

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

Translation : The Committee appointed by the Assembly to examine the credentials of delegates met again, in order to ascertain whether the representatives of Iraq were duly accredited to take part in the work of the Assembly.

The Secretary-General of the League of Nations transmitted to us the full powers by which His Majesty the King of Iraq has accredited, as his representatives at the present session of the Assembly, His Excellency Soury Pasha el Said, Prime Minister, first delegate, and His Excellency Runtam Bey Haidar, Minister for Finance, second delegate.

Having examined these credentials, the Committee considers that the representatives of Iraq are duly accredited.

The President :

Translation : Does any delegate wish to speak on the conclusions of the report of the Credentials Committee?

As no one has asked to speak, I shall consider the conclusions of the report adopted, and shall accordingly request the delegates of the Kingdom of Iraq to take their places among us.

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

(The delegates of the Kingdom of Iraq took their seats in the Assembly.)

32. — ADMISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF IRAQ IN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The President :

Translation : Gentlemen, it is my privilege and special pleasure, on behalf of the Assembly, to congratulate you as delegates of the Kingdom of Iraq and to extend to you a cordial welcome among us.

Let me assure you that we fully understand and share the legitimate joy which you must be feeling at the present moment, for to-day is a great day for your country. Iraq, by a unanimous vote of this Assembly, has just received the well-merited reward of the praiseworthy efforts she has made during the past few years to organise the country, to establish her political status, to delimit her frontiers and to cope with the multiple problems confronting her rulers as the outcome of the needs of national life and the complexities of international relations.

Now, after many centuries of foreign domination, Iraq has at last recovered her liberty, and she may, if she so wishes, revert to the traditions of the fabulous civilisation whose glory and splendour the names of Nineveh and Babylon have perpetuated in the memory of mankind. Henceforward, she will know no other form of submission than that which is known to all of us here: obedience to the rules of international law and respect for the general obligations specifically assumed towards the League of Nations.

We enter the more readily into Iraq's joy in that to-day is not only a great date in Iraq's history, but a great date in the history of the nations and in the development of the League. Her admission assures us the invaluable co-operation of the Arab race. It marks the beginning of the

political resurrection of the various peoples belonging to that race, a proud and noble race which, thanks to its qualities of valour, tenacity and energy has made so deep an impress wherever it has dwelt and wherever it has passed.

Iraq's admission, moreover, marks the steady progress of the League towards a condition of universality corresponding alike to its ideal and to our experience of life. Facts are showing more clearly every day that the organisation the foundations of which were laid by the Covenant will not yield us all we are entitled to expect of it until all the nations have agreed to participate in its life.

During the past year our membership has been increased by three, and now numbers fifty-six States. After the entry of Mexico, we had the privilege of welcoming Turkey, and now after Turkey comes Iraq. The successive admission of those last two countries assumes in my eyes the value of a symbol; for, long subject as they were to a regime of oppression from which they have succeeded in freeing themselves, they stand to-day on a footing of complete equality in the family of nations assembled for the welfare of mankind. Thus the gates of the League stand ever open, ready to welcome all nations. It is our inmost hope that those who are not yet among us may one day take here the place to which they are entitled in our joint work of pacific endeavour. Let them rest assured in advance that they will receive the sincere and cordial welcome so characteristic of League life.

Viewed from yet other aspects, Iraq's admission is a highly significant event. It shows that peoples who are worthy of liberty are not slow to achieve it when they have acquired a realisation of their national qualities, when they can apply those qualities in such a way as to merit the esteem and consideration of the world and when they are fortunate enough to have at their head, for the purpose of making those same qualities manifest, an enlightened guide.

That is why, now that the moment has come to welcome the Kingdom of Iraq here, our thoughts turn in particular to its eminent chief, His Majesty King Feisal, and we extend to him our sincere congratulations on the great work he has successfully accomplished.

The present event shows further that the institution of mandates is not, as its detractors and those of the League may have thought, a hypocritical mask for annexation in disguise, but a necessary apprenticeship through which, before reverting to or achieving liberty, the peoples must necessarily pass who have perhaps lost or are not yet experienced in the use of liberty. When we see, as the example before us shows, that this is indeed the case, we must rejoice at the existence of an institution capable of producing such results, and must congratulate alike the people which has employed it for its own emancipation and the Power which has successfully acquitted itself of its task as educator.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has given the world yet another signal proof of the supreme virtues of liberalism and magnanimity and of its rare administrative and political ability. The civilising mission which that Power is carrying on in the most diverse and remote parts of the globe offers, as it has always offered, a guarantee of order and prosperity and constitutes at the same time a school of energy and liberty.

May I, on behalf of the Assembly, extend to the United Kingdom Government an expression of our gratitude and our admiration?

I should be falling short of my duty were I to omit, in this expression of our thanks for the work carried out in Iraq, the Permanent Mandates Commission. That body may justly claim its share in the success of the institution over whose sound working it is responsible for watching.

This event is characterised by yet another feature which it is my duty to point out: it bears witness to the League's capacity to achieve pacific successes and to keep abreast of changes which the life of the peoples makes necessary. Thanks to that power, we see in the example of Iraq, with the consent and to the satisfaction of all concerned, the birth of a new State which, without the League — the history of the last century enlightens us on this point — would probably never have taken place save by violence. The League thus gives the lie to those who bring against it a charge of perpetuating existing situations and obstructing the normal course of life; for it shows that, by the very action of its rules, it does in fact afford an opportunity of attaining by evolution what otherwise could in most cases only be obtained by revolution.

When, despite the difficulties and preoccupations of the present hour, we see the League capable of ensuring, even in this direction, the regular working of its machinery we feel persuaded that the crisis through which it is said to be passing is only apparent and that its vital functioning is unimpaired. In that the Kingdom of Iraq has given us an opportunity of demonstrating and rejoicing in the League's vitality, that country is entitled to our reiterated congratulations and cordial welcome, to which we would add, in all sincerity, our very grateful thanks.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency Noury Pasha el-Said, first delegate of Iraq, will address the Assembly.

Noury Pasha el-Said (Iraq). — I should like first of all, if I may, to thank you all most sincerely on behalf of my Government for the decision which you have just taken and by which you have admitted our country to membership of the League of Nations.

Iraq appreciates very greatly the high honour of being received into this society of free nations, and we are deeply touched by the cordial and encouraging words which the President of this Assembly has just addressed to us as representatives of our August Sovereign and of our country. We can assure you that these words will be very much appreciated by our people, who have impatiently awaited the realisation of their hopes.

The regime provided for in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations was provisional, and the Iraqi people have never ceased to aspire eagerly to their complete and lasting independence. By the decision which you have taken to-day, you have not only performed the great duty which was incumbent upon you, but you have also rendered justice to a nation which, although still young, is the proud possessor of a great past of several civilisations. It is also our duty, on this historic occasion, to express our gratitude to Great Britain for the admirable and timely manner in which she has performed her task, not merely in the letter but in the spirit of the Covenant of the League.

In all the vicissitudes of my country's existence, there has always been one man especially who has never lost confidence in international justice and the future of his people. I refer to His Majesty King Feisal, and I am sure you will agree that the homage which has been rendered to him in this great Assembly is the homage which he deserves.

At the end of a relatively short period of time, Iraq can claim to be a united country with a

constitutional regime which has proved itself worthy of co-operating with you in the fulfilment of your great ideals in the service of the peace of the world.

As member of the Assembly, where all nations — whether great or small — are equal, we acknowledge the great responsibility which devolves upon us, and we can assure you that we shall spare no effort to perform our task loyally and honourably.

Situated, as she is, at the cross-roads of the great trade routes, Iraq declares that she is fully sensible of the important rôle which she is now called upon to play. Her sole ambition will be to continue her progress, to maintain and work unceasingly for the establishment of the most friendly relations with her neighbours, and to co-operate loyally to the utmost of her ability in the work of this great Assembly in the cause of universal peace and general prosperity.

At this moment of national rejoicing, you will allow us to express the hope that, within a short time, we may be able to welcome to membership of this great League our brothers whose destiny has not yet been decided. It is by governing that one learns to be a good governor. The example given by the greatest Empire deserves to be studied and followed. In expressing our sincere and abiding gratitude to the British people, we know that we are interpreting the sentiments of all our people.

The President :

Translation : Sir John Simon, first delegate of the United Kingdom, will address the Assembly.

Sir John Simon (United Kingdom). — My colleagues in the Assembly will permit a few words at this interesting and historic moment from the representative of the country whose privilege it has been to guide the State of Iraq through the period of adolescence to the full status of manhood, and in this connection let me express at once on behalf of my Government our sincere thanks to you, Mr. President, and to the Prime Minister of Iraq for the reference made to the discharge by my country of its duty under the mandate.

This moment is historic because Iraq is the first State to emerge from the mandatory regime. When the mandatory regime was instituted, when Article 22 of the Covenant was drafted and discussed, there were not wanting critics and cynics who hinted that the whole mandatory system had been devised merely as a cloak for colonisation and annexation. All who are interested in upholding the Covenant of the League and of maintaining in its entirety the principle for which the League of Nations stands are entitled to rejoice to-day that the admission of Iraq as a Member to the League is a sufficiently emphatic answer to that suspicion.

There is also the most significant circumstance, already mentioned by the President, that Iraq is the first Arab country to join the League. We all of us believe that, in this step with which we are associating ourselves to-day, Iraq is helping us to make an advance towards that ideal of the League as the universal and all-embracing institution which we wish it to be. I venture to express the confident hope that the Government and people of Iraq will, in this new position of responsibility and authority, exert ever increasing influence in that part of the world in maintaining the causes of progress and of peace.

Lastly, there is an historic reflection which I permit myself, and, indeed, we should be dull in the historic sense to-day if we did not find something infinitely striking in the fact that we are admitting, by the path of Article 22, to full membership of the League the newest of States but one of the most ancient of countries. I recall the famous phrase employed by the English philosopher Francis Bacon when he was dwelling on the mysterious continuity of human life. He wrote *Antiquitas sæculi iuventus mundi*, or, as it has been expressed in English by a Victorian poet :

"We are ancients of the earth,
And in the morning of the times."

We salute our new comrade, recalling that, for many of us, the country over which His Majesty the King of Iraq rules is the country that has been the source of religion and of civilisation for half the world, that it encloses within its boundaries the place that was the Garden of Eden, the area that was afflicted by the flood, that it can show to-day the records of Father Abraham and Ur of the Chaldees, records of Nebuchadnezzar and the Kingdom of Babylon, records still remain of the ancient empire of Nineveh and Sennacherib.

It is with a deep sense of the continuity of history and of the spirit which may make all things new that we salute the State of Iraq and welcome it to the Assembly of the League of Nations.

In welcoming the new State and wishing it all success and prosperity in the future, let me in a concluding sentence pay a warm tribute to King Feisal and to his Ministers, without whose wise and energetic co-operation it would have been impossible, whatever might have been the goodwill on the side of the Power discharging its mandate, for the young State of Iraq in the space of no more than twelve years to qualify, as it has qualified, to take its place, as it now takes its place with the assent and approval of us all, in the comity of the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : As there are still a large number of speakers who wish to address the Assembly, I shall postpone the discussion until this afternoon.

(The Assembly rose at 1.15 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3RD, 1932, AT 3.30 P.M.

CONTENTS :

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35. ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

President : M. POLITIS.

33. — ADMISSION OF THE KINGDOM OF IRAQ INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS : CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : Teflik Rüstü Bey, delegate of Turkey, will address the Assembly.

Teflik Rüstü Bey (Turkey) :

Translation : In my capacity as representative of the Turkish Republic, I am particularly glad to express, here in this Assembly, the great satisfaction I feel at seeing Iraq a Member of the League of Nations.

My Government, which has followed with the greatest sympathy the birth and growth of the young State, is especially pleased, inasmuch as Iraq is a country with which we have so much in common and whose past is bound up with the history of Turkey itself. The relations between the two peoples go back many centuries and have during that time developed in an atmosphere of mutual respect and affection.

I am particularly happy to note on this occasion that the wise policy pursued by Iraq — a policy corresponding to that of the United Kingdom and Turkey — has inspired neighbouring States with full confidence, thereby rendering a signal service to the cause of peace by helping to establish increasingly intimate relations between Turkey and the United Kingdom and between Turkey and Iraq.

The only territorial question, as we know, that could not be solved by the Treaty of Lausanne was the question of Iraq's frontier, which was finally settled as a result of amicable negotiations between the United Kingdom and Turkey. What rendered such a solution possible was the renunciation by Turkey, in favour of an independent Iraq, of her rights and titles to the vilayet of Mosul. The treaty concluded with that object and signed by Iraq on a footing of perfect equality with the other two contracting parties formed the basis of the Turco-British and Turco-Iraqi friendship, which has now proved its worth. That treaty was at the same time the first formal manifestation of the existence of Iraq as an independent nation. Since then, Iraq has been, in our eyes, a sovereign State.

Thus Turkey, by concluding a series of conventions with Iraq, has helped to establish relations of the kind which should exist between her and such a neighbouring State. It is, then, a profound satisfaction to see among us my friend Noury Pasha, the eminent Prime Minister of that country the admission of which to the League constitutes a further step towards universality, the true object of the League.

I cordially congratulate the young State and wish it a very prosperous future.

I have great pleasure also in heartily congratulating His Britannic Majesty's Government on its wise and far-seeing policy in Iraq.

I cannot conclude without saying a word about Syria.

I desire first to express my confidence in the efforts made by France — with whom Turkey is anxious to maintain and develop friendly and neighbourly relations — in the direction of Syria's emancipation; and I trust that Syria, mindful of the conditions and methods which have rendered possible what we are witnessing to-day, will, in the same spirit, follow the path traced out by Iraq, so that we may be privileged to welcome her in the near future as a Member of the League.

The President :

Translation : M. Bérenger, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Bérenger (France) :

Translation : As delegate of France, I desire to express here my Government's approval of the conclusions contained in the Sixth Committee's report recommending the admission of Iraq, as a sovereign State, to membership of the League of Nations.

Iraq, with Syria and Palestine, was, in a past which is still invested with all the glamour of religious and historical prestige, one of the cradles of Indo-European civilisation and still remains one of its sanctuaries.

Now, after centuries of obscurity, liberated at length, Iraq is taking her place once more in the amphictyony of independent nations assembled on the shores of the Lake of Geneva in pursuit of the ideals of world peace. France desires to express her good wishes on this the occasion of the resurrection of one of the oldest States, which to-day becomes also the youngest State in the world.

France reaffirms her friendship for His Majesty King Feisal and the Arab nation, which, with all its ardent patriotism, has never ceased to accord the mandatory Power that patient collaboration which was the essential factor in the success crowned by to-day's ceremony. The French Government takes this opportunity of paying its tribute to the British Government for the noble use it has made of its power as mandatory, gradually bringing to a state of full liberty the Iraqi nation, which for twelve years had been entrusted to its care under the terms of Article 22 of the League Covenant.

France thus confirms the doctrine which she has constantly held as regards the evolution of mandates, and which she has expounded more than once at Geneva through her qualified representatives.

For this reason, I associate myself unreservedly with the words just spoken by the distinguished delegate of the Turkish Republic, who uses all his authority to maintain and consolidate neighbourly relations between Turkey and the adjacent States.

I desire also to associate myself with the hopes to which expression has been given regarding the Arab world. A great example is offered to the Arab peoples to-day; they will find in it, through permanent contact with other civilisations, an opportunity to multiply and extend their relations with the various other communities. The French Republic is doubly grateful — as a mandatory Power and as a Moslem Power — and it is with these sincere feelings that she expresses her full and entire approval of the proclamation of the independence of Iraq within the framework of the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : The Aga Khan, delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

The Aga Khan (India). — On behalf of the Government and peoples of India, I wish most heartily to congratulate Iraq on her independence and to welcome her entry into the League.

The whole world knows the long and intimate spiritual, cultural and economic relations between India and the lands that to-day form the Kingdom of Iraq. We sincerely hope and pray that a future of great prosperity and peace, worthy of its great history, awaits Iraq as a Member of the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : M. Foroughi, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

M. Foroughi (Persia) :

Translation : After the eloquent speeches you have heard, I am sure you will not wish me to speak at too great length on the present occasion. I should like, however, in a few words, to express our great satisfaction at witnessing the entry of the Kingdom of Iraq into the League of Nations. Our satisfaction is two-fold. In the first place, from the point of view of the League, which is thus taking one more step towards universality. From this point of view, Iraq's entry into the League is of particular interest to Persia, which, until recently, was the only country of Western Asia represented here. The entry of Turkey, which is already an accomplished fact — and I desire to extend to that country the hand of brotherly greeting — and that of Iraq, which is about to become an accomplished fact, will bring Persia out of her isolation. Secondly, from the particular point of view of Persia: there are, as you know, many close bonds uniting us with Iraq and with Turkey, and the entry of those two countries into our great community can only render those bonds closer and our collaboration more effective in the international field.

Persia has business to transact, agreements and conventions to conclude and frontier questions to settle with Iraq. We feel sure that these problems will be solved by direct negotiation and without any difficulty; but the fact that Iraq is now a Member of the League of Nations must tend to facilitate the rapid settlement of all such questions. I was therefore anxious not to miss the opportunity of addressing our warmest congratulations to Iraq, our neighbour, and to the United Kingdom, which, to the satisfaction of us all, has so nobly fulfilled its duties as mandatory Power and enabled the country under mandate to assume the direction of its own destiny.

The President :

Translation : M. von Rosenberg, delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

M. von Rosenberg (Germany) :

Translation : I also desire to express once again my country's deep sympathy towards the State whose entry into the League we are celebrating.

Iraq, whose history is age-long, whose contribution to the culture and civilisation of mankind makes her pre-eminent, has always formed a special centre of world interest. Now, thanks to the qualities of her people, the riches of her soil, and a situation which makes her an intermediary between the Mediterranean countries and the territories on the Persian Gulf, she will — without a doubt — be called upon, in the future also, to play an important part in international life and world economy.

Germany offers her best wishes for the happy and prosperous future of the now independent Kingdom of Iraq and entirely associates herself

with the congratulations which are being addressed to-day to the people of Iraq and to their august Sovereign.

The President :

Translation : M. Nagaoka, delegate of Japan, will address the Assembly.

M. Nagaoka (Japan) :

Translation : I have great pleasure in associating myself with the eloquent words of the President and those of my colleagues who have preceded me on this platform.

At a time when the League of Nations is dealing with questions of essential importance for the future of the human race, it is with feelings of gratification that we welcome the Kingdom of Iraq. That country's admission to the League is of peculiar significance and importance inasmuch as it is the first example of a territory under mandate that has passed rapidly and confidently through a period of evolution and finally attained the status of independence provided for in Article 22 of the League Covenant.

With real pleasure I express my sincere hope that this State, now independent and sovereign, may continue to prosper as a Member of the League, and that the most cordial relations both of friendship and of commercial and economic co-operation may be fostered between the Kingdom of Iraq and Japan, both of which are Asiatic countries, despite the great distance that separates them.

The President :

Translation : M. Rosso, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Rosso (Italy) :

Translation : The delegation on whose behalf I have the honour to speak also desires to express, from this platform, its profound satisfaction at the unanimous decision which the Assembly has taken to-day. By this act Iraq assumes her rank among the sovereign and independent States. To-day marks the beginning of her co-operation in the work of solidarity and peace which forms our common task. Her assistance and her presence at Geneva will be doubly valued in that this assembly of nations has included as yet no direct representative of the Arab race, that noble race which has played so remarkable a rôle in history and which, we are convinced, is called upon to advance still further along the path of civilisation and progress. Our conviction is strengthened by the knowledge of the spirit in which the Iraqi Government has undertaken to carry out all its duties towards the League, for that spirit gives us an assurance of its loyal and effective co-operation.

By the entry of Iraq into the League, the last of the conditions laid down for the termination of the mandate over that territory has been fulfilled. As Members of the League, we have reason to rejoice on seeing to-day for the first time the achievement of the aim laid down in Article 22 of the Covenant.

The tutelage which the mandatory States, acting on behalf of the League, exercise over the populations of the territories ceded to the Allied and Associated Powers constitutes, in the words of the Covenant, a sacred trust of civilisation. It aims at directing the development of those peoples during such time as may be necessary to enable them to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world. The United Kingdom in its capacity as mandatory Power over Iraq has nobly acquitted itself of its task, and to that country our thanks are due.

The work of the mandatory Power, however, has undoubtedly been facilitated by the enlightened policy of His Majesty King Feisal and of the Iraqi statesmen, as, indeed, by the Iraqi nation itself, whose patriotic virtues and sense of discipline have contributed in no mean degree to the fulfilment of their claims to independence.

It is the cordial wish of Italy that this new sovereign State, which is now entering the League and which, by its accession to the Covenant, will henceforth possess all the guarantees of security that the Covenant ensures to all the Members, may enjoy rapid prosperity and a peaceful and happy life in the comity of nations.

The President :

Translation : M. de Modzelewski, delegate of Poland, will address the Assembly.

M. de Modzelewski (Poland) :

Translation : I should not wish this demonstration of welcome to the Kingdom of Iraq to be concluded without the voice of Poland being heard.

No one can understand better than my country the happiness of a people in the presence of its national resurrection. The hour of freedom sounded for us fourteen years ago; we are happy and proud that to-day it should have sounded for another country. We associate ourselves wholeheartedly, then, with to-day's manifestation, and wish all happiness and prosperity to the new Kingdom of Iraq.

34. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE TWELFTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: CLOSE OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion on the report on the work of the League since the twelfth session of the Assembly.

M. Valdés-Mendeville, delegate of Chile, will address the Assembly.

M. Valdés-Mendeville (Chile) :

Translation : You will not, I hope, reproach me with prolonging for a little this traditional debate, which circumstances have already greatly curtailed. At the present juncture, when international life is out of joint as a result of the problems now confronting us, it seemed to me desirable to make, on my country's behalf, a few brief observations.

I shall offer you neither an expression of unbounded confidence nor one of blind faith; words, however, such as were uttered by the eminent Prime Minister of France, when he considered the essential results to be obtained, justify some hope, even and indeed primarily for the smaller nations, whose disquietude of every kind has its origin, in most cases, in the existing economic disorder.

Chile has collaborated uninterruptedly, from the beginning, in the League's manifold activities, and, although at times we have been somewhat disheartened, our confidence in the League has never been seriously shaken.

True, the League's political work has not been of vital concern to us Chileans, and, although, as a State which is a Member of the international comity of nations, we are interested in that work, the League has necessarily been engaged most constantly upon problems which lay outside our

essential concerns. At the same time, the League has more than once been obliged in this connection to exercise its pacific action in regard to various problems relating to our continent.

At this very moment it is helping to find a pacific solution of the conflict between Bolivia and Paraguay, and has been called upon, by the action of the Council, to lend its invaluable assistance in support of the efforts which the American nations are making with that object. The Chilean Government, which has taken a willing part in those efforts, has always acted on the basis of the legal and moral duties ensuing from the Covenant, and, when it signed the collective American declaration of August 3rd last, it took account more particularly of the obligations arising out of Article 10. My Government trusts, then, as indeed we all do, that a pacific solution may be found for the conflict which divides these two sister nations.

Over and above the League's political work, there is its economic work, for it is obvious that at the present moment economic problems really dominate the situation. Even the problem of disarmament — a capital issue, is envisaged by us primarily as a factor in the restoration of confidence, which would permit of economic disarmament. I expressed this same view only a few months ago speaking from this platform, and I added — so true is the opposite — that "when the interdependence of world interests is thus evident, a proper economic understanding would constitute one of the soundest guarantees of universal peace". You will, then, realise my delight at hearing the words of Baron Aloisi, the eminent delegate of Italy, when he stated his incontestable case. Trade restrictions, quotas, control of foreign exchange, and the like, form a concatenation that is both formidable and inescapable, so that it is often difficult to distinguish the relationship between cause and effect. Countries that are producers of raw materials, for example, are obliged, in order to correct their trade balances, to adopt currency and Customs restrictions prejudicial to a large number of manufacturing countries. But such measures are, in their turn, an inevitable consequence of the policy followed by other States, which have felt obliged to impose restrictions on the trade in such materials, either with the object of protecting some similar natural product or with a view to facilitating its replacement by an artificial product.

The whole scheme of international trade has become distorted to such an extent that, in this twentieth century, we have been driven to recommend a return to the prehistoric system of barter as the best solution.

In the sphere of finance, the repercussions are disastrous for all alike. How can we wonder, for example, that countries which are relatively new, whose pride it has been never in the whole course of their existence to have failed to meet their financial obligations, are forced to do so now? How can we be surprised if these countries, already so sorely tried by the world crisis, have at length gone under economically, in the face of the barriers to the normal disposal of the products by which they live?

That is why so many nations have set their hopes on the success of the proposed world economic and monetary Conference. How many grave dangers might be averted by some form of international discipline for production, calculated to restore the economic balance by a readjustment of the system of international trade involving a resumption of commerce by joint agreements such as would permit of the sounder circulation of capital! National efforts to safeguard or restore normal constitutional, financial and social conditions in every country would also be facilitated.

It cannot be denied that, while the memory of the victims of the war imposes on us sacred duties in the matter of pacific organisation, the presence of thirty millions of human beings condemned to abject poverty by the present crisis and trade war, or constituting a crushing financial burden on State budgets, makes it no less urgently incumbent on us to turn our attention to economic organisation.

The League possesses all the complex and far-reaching machinery, all the strength required to make the Conference a success. It possesses all the complex machinery, for it can call upon all the circles, all the authorities interested, and, without a doubt, upon a constructive will; it possesses all the far-reaching machinery, for, deaf to the charge of "crisis" which pursues it, it is pressing steadily onward towards universality. The ceremony that has just taken place is a clear proof of what I say.

In the space of one year three new Members, all enjoying our cordial esteem, have come to join this body. May I add my good wishes to those addressed to Iraq, to that State which has entered to-day on its independent life under conditions very similar in some respects to those which saw our birth 120 years ago?

May I add my word of rejoicing at the news announced to us a few days ago, which points to the adhesion in the near future of the Argentine Republic, my country's neighbour and good friend?

Let us hope, then, that the Economic Conference may be in practice and to all intents a world conference. Already we should be preparing for it, so as to ensure that it shall provide for the examination of all the problems which might tend to poison the economic life of the peoples — admittedly interdependent — whether those peoples are situated close at hand or far from the scene of its efforts.

A comparison has been made between this vast consultation and a consultation of doctors over a patient sick unto death. Let us not be guilty of the mistake of neglecting, on the ground that it is so small, the treatment of an organ which, if only half cured, might later spread its poison throughout the body.

If this Assembly could take a full share of responsibility in the preparation of the Conference, and if it could give to the competent bodies specific means, encouragement and directions, far from being the drab and unhistoric Assembly which some foretold, it would go down to posterity — more fittingly than many other Assemblies — as a truly historic gathering.

The President :

Translation : M. Paredes, delegate of Salvador, will address the Assembly.

M. Paredes (Salvador) :

Translation : The Government and people of my country have followed with the keenest interest the efforts of the League of Nations, and more particularly of the Council, to bring about a pacific settlement of the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay.

As the representative of a State of Central America, I am happy to voice here the satisfaction we feel at the well-weighed and judicious words which M. Matos, the President of the Council, addressed to both parties, at the same time faithfully interpreting the pacific sentiments of the American continent.

May I venture in this connection to draw the Assembly's attention to the important declaration made on August 3rd last at Washington by the representatives of nineteen Latin-American States? The signatories of this declaration, which was unanimous, included, besides the American States

Members of the League of Nations, the Argentine, the United States of North America and Brazil, who desired to associate themselves with the declaration; and thus it may, in my opinion, be regarded as accurately reflecting the views of the most clear-sighted statesmen of our continent.

The declaration reads as follows:

"The representatives of all the American Republics meeting in Washington, the seat of the Neutral Commission, having been duly authorised by their respective Governments, have the honour to make the following declaration to the Governments of Bolivia and Paraguay:

"Respect for law is a tradition among the American nations, who are opposed to force and resort to it both for the solution of their controversies and as an instrument of national policy in their reciprocal relations. They have long been the proponents of the doctrine that the arrangements of all disputes and conflicts of whatever nature or origin that may arise between them can only be sought by peaceful means. The history of the American nations shows that all their boundary and territorial controversies have been arranged by such means.

"Therefore, the nations of America declare that the Chaco dispute is susceptible of a peaceful solution, and they earnestly request Bolivia and Paraguay to submit immediately the solution of this controversy to an arrangement by arbitration or by such other peaceful means as may be acceptable to both.

"As regards the responsibilities which may arise from the various encounters which have occurred from June 15th to date, they consider that the countries in conflict should present to the Neutral Commission all the documentation which they may consider pertinent and which will be examined by it. They do not doubt that the country which this investigation shows to be the aggressor will desire to give satisfaction to the one attacked, thus eliminating all misunderstanding between them.

"They furthermore invite the Governments of Bolivia and Paraguay to make a solemn declaration to the effect that they will stop the movement of troops in the disputed territory, which should clear up the atmosphere and make easy the road to the solution of good understanding which America hopes for in the name of the permanent interests of all the countries of this hemisphere.

"The American nations further declare that they will not recognise any territorial arrangement of this controversy which has not been obtained by peaceful means, nor the validity of the territorial acquisitions which may be obtained through occupation or conquest by force of arms."

I was anxious to emphasise the importance of the declaration I have just read and to affirm my faith and confidence in the part the League is called upon to play in the settlement of the Bolivo-Paraguayan conflict.

May I also point out that the terms of this declaration of August 3rd are in conformity with the principles underlying Articles 10, 11, 12, and 13 of the Covenant of the League of which most of the Latin-American States signatories of the declaration are Members.

Moreover, the declaration of August 3rd is in harmony with the resolution adopted by the Special Assembly on March 11th, 1932, which declares that:

"... it is incumbent upon the Members of the League of Nations not to recognise any situation, treaty or agreement which may be brought about by means contrary to the Covenant of the League of Nations or to the Pact of Paris."

Despite all the difficulties and uncertainties of this grave problem, one point is now gained: both States have evinced a full realisation of their position as Members of the League of Nations; and in so doing they have remained faithful also to the fraternal ideal of the American continent.

The President:

Translation: M. Zumeta, delegate of Venezuela, will address the Assembly.

M. Zumeta (Venezuela):

Translation: We have heard it authoritatively stated from this platform that responsibility for the prevailing want of confidence in the League on the part of world opinion rests, not with the League itself, but with the States which caused that want of confidence. The League is perhaps the victim of certain serious errors of omission. I am optimistic enough not to despair; but it would be unfortunate if such omissions or lapses were allowed to form precedents fatal to the realisation of the League's aims.

I trust, then, that the conflict between Paraguay and Bolivia may serve once and for all to annihilate the distance which appears to separate Geneva from the American world.

The Covenant, which is our law, defines our obligations at each stage of a dispute or conflict between two States. There is no reason why, when such States are American, the competent organs of the League should not fulfil those imperative duties in agreement with the permanent or temporary institution set up for a similar purpose by the republics of the New World.

There is every indication that this year will be a memorable, if not a critical, one in the history of the collaboration between the Old and the New World in the work of peace which has been assigned to the League.

The President:

Translation: As there are no more speakers on my list, I shall declare the general discussion closed.

Before doing so, however, it is my duty, in conformity with the resolution of the General Committee of the Assembly, to explain — as did M. Motta — why the general discussion has been so short this year.

Usually, the general discussion lasts for several days, and most of the delegations take the opportunity of coming to this platform to inform public opinion on the great political and economic questions which have arisen since the previous session of the Assembly and to set forth the policy of their Governments on each of those questions.

This year, there has been no lack of questions of this nature — far from it. They have this year been more important than ever. I need hardly recall the problem of disarmament, the economic and financial crisis through which the world is passing, the Far-Eastern dispute and the re-establishment of peace in South America.

All these questions are holding the attention of the world and are, indeed, stirring public opinion to its depths. They are, however, all being dealt with by other organs of the League — the Disarmament Conference, the Council, the Special Assembly which has preceded and will follow the present ordinary session, and the Commission of Enquiry for European Union — and will shortly be dealt

with by the World Economic and Financial Conference. All these questions, as treated by these organs, have been followed by public opinion with intense interest.

In the circumstances, I have every reason to think that, in the opinion of most of the delegations, it would serve no useful purpose to raise these important and serious questions during this general discussion. That does not mean that the delegations do not take the very greatest interest in them; it merely signifies, I am sure, that they considered it preferable to save the Assembly's time and enable it to be devoted more fully to the essential task of the Assembly — to take stock of the work of the Council and the Secretariat in order to give it a fresh impetus.

I would add that any delegations which, but for this consideration, would have desired to make some general statement here will have an opportunity of doing so at the end of the present session.

I therefore declare the general discussion closed.

35. — ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : Before reminding you of the rules of procedure governing the election of non-permanent Members of the Council, I will, in accordance with the wish expressed by the Portuguese delegation, ask M. de Vasconcellos to make a short statement.

M. de Vasconcellos (Portugal) :

Translation : The delegation of the Portuguese Republic to the thirteenth Assembly of the League of Nations, in conformity with its declaration of September 23rd, 1930, does not intend to put forward its candidature for one of the vacancies as a non-permanent Member of the Council; but it desires, before this election, to urge, on behalf of its Government, that the Committee appointed by the Council to examine the present system of elections should submit its report as soon as possible, in order that that report may be discussed and voted on at the next Assembly and an end thus be put to a situation which is prejudicial to a certain number of States.

The President :

Translation : Following the practice of my predecessors in this office, I would remind you of the provisions of the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, making rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

Article 1, paragraph 1, reads as follows :

"The Assembly shall each year, in the course of its ordinary session, elect three non-permanent Members of the Council. They shall be elected for a term commencing immediately on their election and ending on the day of the elections held three years later by the Assembly."

Before opening the ballot, I would again remind you of the provisions of Rule 22 (a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, which apply in this case.

The rule reads as follows :

"(1) The Members whose representatives are to sit on the Council as non-permanent Members of that body shall be selected by the Assembly by secret ballot.

"(2) 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.

"(3) 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 the most votes at the second ballot, up to a number double of that of the seats still to be filled, and those Members shall be elected which obtain the greatest number of votes.

"(4) 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 computing the absolute majority prescribed for the first and second ballots, the Assembly will, I think, agree with me that, as at previous sessions, we should here, by analogy, apply the rule contained in the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, concerning the "rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility".

This resolution provides as follows :

"The Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting papers deposited, blank or spoilt votes being deducted."

In electing the non-permanent Members of the Council, blank or spoilt voting papers must not be counted when the number of votes is reckoned. The absolute majority should be calculated on the basis of the total number of valid voting papers.

If no one has any remarks to make, I shall assume that the Assembly, adopting the precedents of previous sessions, agrees to take the course I suggest. (*Agreed.*)

I would emphasise the point that, to be valid, voting papers must bear the names of States and not of persons. Further, no voting paper must contain more than three names of States — that is to say, as many names of States as there are vacancies to be filled.

May I ask M. Zulueta y Escolano, first delegate of Spain, and M. Henri Bérenger, delegate of France, to come to the platform and act as tellers?

(*M. Zulueta y Escolano and M. Henri Bérenger took their places on the platform as tellers.*)

The President :

Translation : We will now proceed to ballot by roll-call.

(*The ballot was taken by roll-call.*)

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of votes cast | 52 |
| Voting papers blank or spoilt | 0 |
| Voting papers valid | 52 |
| Absolute majority | 27 |

The votes obtained by the States are as follows :

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| Poland | 48 |
| Mexico | 46 |
| Czechoslovakia | 46 |
| Portugal | 3 |
| Turkey | 3 |
| Austria | 2 |

Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Hungary and Iraq
have each obtained one vote.

I declare that Poland, Mexico and Czechoslovakia, which have obtained an absolute majority, are duly elected non-permanent Members of the Council for a period of three years. I have pleasure, on behalf of the Assembly, in offering my warmest congratulations to those States.

I wish also to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

(The Assembly rose at 5.35 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 10TH, 1932, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : M. POLITIS

36. — WORK OF THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the draft resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee on the work of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union (document A.46.1932.VII).

(On the invitation of the President, Dr. Lange, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and M. Motta, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Motta, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland), Rapporteur :

Translation : My report will be a purely verbal one and very short.

The Sixth Committee proposes, in its draft resolution, first, that the Assembly should take note of the work done by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union during the past year; and, secondly, that it should confirm the authority of the Commission and request it to submit a report on its further work to the next ordinary session of the Assembly in 1933.

The work done during the first part of 1932 does not, it must be admitted, amount to very much. It would, however, be taking a wrong and disproportionate view to draw unduly pessimistic conclusions from that fact. Circumstances of which we are all aware have made it impossible for the Commission of Enquiry for European Union to discuss and complete certain work which it had contemplated.

It is certainly true to say that, economically speaking, 1932 has been, and still is, dominated by the Lausanne Conference. Recently — on September 30th and October 1st — the Commission of Enquiry examined the results of the Stresa Conference, those results being a sequel to the Lausanne Conference. The Commission passed a resolution, which I do not propose to read, as it has been published and is so well known to you.

I incline to the belief that next year will see more interesting developments and that, as a result of the World Monetary and Economic Conference, the Commission of Enquiry for European Union will have more to do.

At its recent session, the Commission paid a moving tribute to the memory of Aristide Briand, its first Chairman, and I am sure that this plenary Assembly will desire to associate itself wholeheartedly with that tribute of gratitude.

At the first meeting of the last session, the Commission appointed M. Briand's successor in the person of M. Herriot, who was elected by a show of hands. At its next session, which will probably be held before the end of the year, the Commission will have to appoint new officers, and I have no doubt whatever that M. Herriot will be confirmed in the office of Chairman for next year. On that occasion, the Commission will also have to appoint its Vice-Chairmen.

The Secretary-General of the League of Nations is at the same time Secretary of the Commission of Enquiry. That fact constitutes, apart from certain other rules which have been sanctioned here, a further demonstration of the close connection between the Commission of Enquiry and the League of Nations. A Commission of Enquiry which tried to remove itself from the direct influence and inspiration of the League would no doubt be an undesirable and even dangerous organ. On the other hand, a Commission of Enquiry for European Union, working within the framework of the League and in very close touch with it, is bound, in due course, to achieve important and useful results. Here, as elsewhere, discord and antagonism would constitute dangers, while concord is the earnest of success. With perhaps a slight extension of meaning, the Latin proverb which originated with one of the greatest of the Roman historians "*Concordia parvæ res crescunt, discordia maximæ dilabuntur*", may be held to apply to the Commission of Enquiry for European Union and the League of Nations. By agreement — that is, by concord and entirely harmonious co-operation — small things grow; by discord, the greatest go to pieces.

The President :

Translation : If no one asks to speak, I shall put to the vote the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly takes note of the report (document A.16.1932.VII) of the Secretary-General to the Assembly on the work done by the Commission of Enquiry for European Union during the past year ;

It requests the Commission to pursue the work undertaken in conformity with the principles laid down in the resolution of September 17th, 1930 ;

It requests the Commission to submit a report on its further work to the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

The draft resolution was adopted.

37. — COLLABORATION OF WOMEN IN THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on the collaboration of women in the organisation of peace (document A.49.1932.IV, Annex 3).

(On the invitation of the President, Mlle. Kerstin Hesselgren, Rapporteur, took her place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Mlle. Kerstin Hesselgren will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Hesselgren (Sweden), Rapporteur. — The report before us is very short and I do not think, therefore, that it will be necessary for me to read it. I will only make a few observations before I submit the draft resolution to the approbation of the Assembly.

The question of the collaboration of women in the organisation of peace was raised in the Assembly last year by the Spanish delegation and gave rise to an interesting discussion on the question whether the proposed collaboration should be of an official or an unofficial character. The Third Committee, which had the question on its agenda, as well as the Assembly, took the view that, as the question of official collaboration had already been settled by Article 7 of the Covenant, it was rather the form for an unofficial collaboration that would have to be sought.

As you will remember, the Council, to which the matter was referred by the Assembly, thought it advisable to divide the question into two parts, the first relating to co-operation with the Disarmament Conference and the second to the general work of the League.

The Secretary-General was requested to submit a report on the first question to the session of the Council in January 1932. The suggestions made in that report have already been put into force.

As regards the second part, the Secretary-General was instructed to consult the women's organisations on their views concerning this kind of collaboration and to prepare a report for this Assembly. The women's organisations were unanimous in their view that the question of official collaboration is, as it is said in this report, a *sine qua non* for the full collaboration of women in the work of the League. The Sixth Committee has taken the same view that the best way to secure the full collaboration of women in the work of the League would be by increasing the possibility of their taking an official part in its proceedings. This possibility is, of course, already embodied in Article 7 of the Covenant; but, as experience has shown that the opportunities afforded by that article have not been taken advantage of by many countries, the Committee thought it might be advisable to call the attention of the Governments to Article 7 in a resolution which I shall have the honour to submit in a few moments. The fact that stress has been laid on official collaboration does not mean that other ways have not also been sought and discussed. I will not, however, take the time of the Assembly by enumerating them, as they are all mentioned in the report.

In conclusion, I venture to hope that the enthusiastic support given by individual women and women's organisations throughout the world towards the ideals for which the League stands will be further encouraged and consolidated by the

following resolution, which I trust will meet with the unanimous approval of the Assembly :

The Assembly,

Expresses its warm appreciation of the work done by women in support of the League of Nations (document A.10.1932), and welcomes wholeheartedly the efforts made to increase their collaboration ;

Notes that the Women's Organisations consulted are unanimous in declaring that equal status between men and women is a prerequisite of the effective collaboration of women in the work of the League and that their collaboration can be most effectively exercised through the competent official organs of the League and of the Governments ;

Reminds all the States Members of the League of Article 7 of the Covenant, which has in view the possibility :

(a) For the Governments of the States Members to appoint competent women to Assembly delegations, to Conferences and on Governmental Committees of the League ;

(b) For the Council to appoint competent women on technical League Committees as assessors and experts ;

(c) For the Secretary-General to include competent women in the higher posts of the Secretariat.

The President :

Translation : Mme. Isabel Oyarzabal de Palencia, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

Mme. Oyarzabal de Palencia (Spain). — I should like to say just a few words, in the name of the Spanish delegation, to thank every member of the delegations that have been working on the Sixth Committee and have taken such an interest in this question. I wish to thank them for their courtesy and for the manner in which they have expressed their findings in the report, which is the outcome of the motion introduced by the Spanish delegation last year.

After participating in the work of the Committee, and reading the results of that work, I have been able to appreciate that Spain only voiced what was really a unanimous desire and intention. The fact that the word "unanimous" has been mentioned in all the answers of the Women's Organisations is, I think, a good prophecy for future work, and I feel sure that women will also unanimously co-operate in the work of the League of Nations and, therefore, in the work of peace.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall regard the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

38. — RUSSIAN, ARMENIAN, ASSYRIAN, ASSYRO-CHALDEAN AND TURKISH REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report on the refugee question (document A.51.1932 Annex 4).

(On the invitation of the President, Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil (United Kingdom), Rapporteur. — The report that I have to present to you is, I think, a short and a clearly worded one, and I do not propose to read it. The subject with which it is concerned is familiar to a great many members of the Assembly. They will recall that one of the greatest delegates to the Assembly we have ever had, Dr. Nansen, was so closely associated with this work and had it very much at heart. When his lamented death took place, it was decided to carry on his work under an Office which would bear his name. It is a great work carried on in memory of a great man. The object is to deal with one of the most tragic results of the great war—that of the people who, for one reason or another, had to leave their countries and become refugees in other countries.

It is obvious that these people can be dealt with in one of three ways. The best and most satisfactory course, where it is possible, is that they should return to their own country and resume their life there. For political and other reasons, however, that is not always possible.

The next best course is that they should be absorbed in the life of the country in which they are refugees, but that also is not always possible, for economic and sometimes for other reasons.

If neither of those results can be achieved, there remains the resource of finding them temporary assistance which will enable them to stay where they are, or to find some other part of the globe in which they can more easily obtain a living.

Broadly speaking, those are the three activities of this organisation. Naturally, this work carries with it a number of subsidiary activities, such as assisting the refugees politically, socially, or in other ways while they are residing in some country other than their own.

Like all other work, this work for refugees has been rendered more difficult and more harassing by the great economic depression which is afflicting the whole world ; but it is being carried on with the idea and the hope that in a relatively short number of years the question will be solved finally and for ever by the successful adoption of one of the first two methods I have described.

With those very brief remarks, I will read to you the resolution which is proposed, making comments here and there.

The Assembly,

Notes with satisfaction the interesting report (document A.24.1932) of the Governing Body of the Nansen International Office for Refugees and the important work in favour of distressed refugees throughout the world effected during the past year by the Office in spite of the difficulties created by the economic depression ; and

Expresses its gratitude to the organs of the Office, and particularly to its President, Dr. Max Huber, for their devoted efforts, which have so much contributed to those results ;

Hopes that a satisfactory arrangement may soon be made between the Governing Body and the mandatory Power for the future care of the refugee population in Syria ; . . .

It is hoped that some arrangement may be made by which the second of the two objects which I have indicated — the definite absorption of the refugees in the population of the country where they live — may be promoted.

Requests the Office to examine the possibility of effecting the transfer to the Armenian (Erivan) Republic of a further 20,000 Armenian refugees from other countries who may express the desire to be settled in Erivan ; . . .

This is the first method of dealing with the problem — repatriation of the refugees.

Recalls the offers of financial and other assistance made by various Governments in connection with the Erivan Settlement Scheme initiated by Dr. Nansen ;

Invites those Governments to consider the possibility of placing at the disposal of the Office the financial and other assistance formerly promised to Dr. Nansen ;

Recommends the national committees nominated by the Governments for the purpose of obtaining funds for the Erivan Settlement Scheme to resume their efforts for obtaining funds, and invites the Governments which have not already done so to nominate such committees ; . . .

I venture to add a word to emphasise that recommendation. I know how difficult it is at the present time to do anything to raise money for any object, yet I do feel that, on behalf of these people, who are perhaps some of the most helpless creatures on the face of the earth, we ought to renew and increase the efforts we have made for their assistance.

Requests the Office to endeavour to alleviate the unfortunate situation of the 20,000 Russian refugees in China rendered destitute by recent floods ;

Expresses the hope that the various private organisations interested in refugee work may agree to co-operate with the Office as far as possible, and invites the Office to make a report on this subject to the Council at an early date ; . . .

I am sure this proposal will commend itself to the Assembly.

In order to place more adequate funds at the disposal of the Office :

Once more strongly recommends the Governments to apply fully the Nansen Stamp System and to initiate the creation on their territories of national committees for the Nansen Memorial Fund ; . . .

This question is probably sufficiently well known to render any explanation by me unnecessary.

Urges Governments not to proceed to the expulsion of a refugee unless he has obtained permission to enter an adjoining country ; . . .

It is obvious that, if a Government, for some reason or other, desires to expel a refugee who has no country and no Government to which he can appeal for its protection, it is very earnestly to be desired that the Government should not expel him until it is satisfied that the country to which he is going is ready to receive him ; otherwise, he is left absolutely in a hopeless and friendless position. It is a great cruelty to him, and I venture to hope that Governments will very carefully consider how far they can meet this appeal.

Requests the Council to take the necessary action on this resolution.

The President :

Translation : As no one has asked to speak, I shall consider the Sixth Committee's report and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

39. — MANDATES: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on the question of mandates (document A.53.1932.VI, Annex 5).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Rolf Andvord, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Andvord will address the Assembly.

M. Andvord (Norway), Rapporteur :

Translation : My report has been distributed, and I shall only make a few brief remarks.

The Sixth Committee observed that, thanks to the efforts of the mandatory Powers and the able and impartial co-operation of the Permanent Mandates Commission, the mandate system has continued to produce excellent results. This is strikingly illustrated by the gratifying event we have just witnessed: the admission to the League of Nations, after only twelve years of mandatory administration, of the Kingdom of Iraq, which has thus been granted complete independence.

The Government of the United Kingdom received congratulations from numerous delegations on the progress made during the period in which Iraq has been administered under the mandates system, and tributes were paid to the work of the organs of the League.

Among the special questions with which the League has had to deal this year, the Sixth Committee devoted particular attention to the problem of the determination of the frontier between Iraq and Syria, the position in Western Samoa and the situation of the native population of the Pacific islands.

The Sixth Committee earnestly trusts that, in future, nothing will prevent the Mandates Commission from holding the two ordinary sessions yearly which it considers indispensable for the fulfilment of the duties entrusted to it by Article 22 of the Covenant. There are sacred duties the complete and entire accomplishment of which must not be influenced by temporary crises.

On behalf of the Sixth Committee, I have the honour to recommend that the Assembly adopt the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

Having taken note of the work accomplished by the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council in regard to the execution of Article 22 of the Covenant :

(a) Renews the expression of confidence in them voted by the past sessions of the Assembly, and again expresses its appreciation of the results they have achieved through a spirit of co-operation which it is essential to maintain ;

(b) Expresses its particular gratification at the progress made under the mandate system in Iraq, thanks to which that country has been able to gain complete independence and admission to the League ;

(c) Considers it highly desirable that the decision reached by the Assembly at its twelfth session to reduce the annual ordinary sessions of the Permanent Mandates Commission from two to one should not in future be renewed, even as an exceptional measure, inasmuch as it would have the result of seriously hampering the effective and regular performance of the important duties entrusted to the League of Nations by Article 22 of the Covenant.

The President :

Translation : As no one has asked to speak, I shall regard the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

40. — WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION FOR INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on Intellectual Co-operation (document A.54.1932.XII, Annex 6).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Bech, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Bech will address the Assembly.

M. Bech (Luxemburg), Rapporteur :

Translation : During 1932, there has been renewed activity in the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, the gratifying results of whose work give us reason to hope for still greater achievements in the future. As you will see from the report before you, we have especially emphasised all the technical aspects of the co-ordination of intellectual activities throughout the world and we welcome with satisfaction the results achieved in the higher plane of thought in general.

In connection with these activities, the meeting of persons of the highest intellectual authority in the birth-place of Goethe, on the occasion of the centenary of his death, will be regarded as a milestone on the road towards intellectual rapprochement.

Again, in this same connection, the discussions of the scientists assembled at Milan revealed a spirit of perfect impartiality.

The report also brings out the happy results achieved by our Organisation in sending a mission of experts to China to help in the Chinese Government's scheme for the re-organisation of education. The report of that mission of educational experts will always rank as a document of the highest intellectual value.

Efforts in the sphere of education, in its various stages, have characterised the work of the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation during the current year, and the Organisation, by so moulding the younger generation as to consolidate peace, is realising its principal aim. The success attending its present work in this field is an earnest of its success in the future.

I have the honour to propose that the Assembly adopt the following draft resolutions :

General Resolution :

The Assembly,

Having considered the report of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation on the work of its fourteenth session (document A.11.1932.XII) and the report of the Governing Body of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation (document A.19.1932.XII) ;

Noting the contents of the reports submitted by the representative of France to the Council at its last session, both on the activities of the Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation and on its methods of work and organisation :

(1) Observes with satisfaction the important results obtained during the past year, and

Approves as a whole the programme of work of the Organisation for the year 1932-33 ;

Education :

(2) Emphasises the importance of the formation of national educational information centres and the establishment of direct relations between those organisations, with the help of the International Centre constituted by the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, and trusts that the other forms of international co-operation which are now being organised in regard to the various stages of education will be developed ;

Revision of School Text-books :

(3) Appreciates the results of the efforts made to provide a procedure for facilitating the revision of school text-books, and attaches the greatest importance to the documentary material collected on this question by the Institute ;

Subject to the explanations given in the Committee's report, approves the more extensive application of the Casares resolution, as recommended by the Committee ;

Instruction on the League of Nations :

(4) Emphasises the importance which it attaches to all questions connected with the instruction of youth in the aims of the League and to the promotion of an international spirit ;

Is glad to note the action taken in this sphere both by the Educational Information Centre at Geneva and by the Paris Centre, and draws the attention of Governments in particular to the enquiry now in progress concerning the education of teachers in training colleges with a view to their giving instruction regarding the League ;

Re-organisation of Education in China :

(5) Desires to place on record the special value of the assistance given by the Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation in the study of educational problems in China and in the work of re-organisation which the Chinese Government proposes to undertake ;

Thanks the distinguished persons who have been good enough to co-operate with the League in this matter and through whose zeal the important achievements realised have been made possible ;

Expresses the hope that this co-operation, so successfully begun, will be further extended in the same spirit of comprehension and practical activity ;

Broadcasting :

(6) Notes that the Organisation has given effect to the recommendations made by the

Assembly at its last session concerning the international aspects of broadcasting ;

Attaches special importance to the meeting of experts whose duty it will be to examine the conditions which international agreements concerning broadcasting should fulfil ;

Moral Disarmament :

(7) Expresses its satisfaction with the valuable co-operation which the Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation has been able to afford to the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, with a view to the study of the problem of moral disarmament ;

Trusts that the Conference may find it possible, on the completion of its work, to include among the documents setting forth its results an act in a form to be determined later, which would assist the efforts that are being made to bring about the intellectual rapprochement of the peoples ;

Is convinced that, in this field, the Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation can place at the disposal of Governments means of action of proved effectiveness ;

Scientific Study of International Relations :

(8) In connection with the scientific study of international relations, the Assembly trusts that the Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation will extend still further its activities in this sphere and will endeavour to give wide publicity to the results of conferences such as the Milan Conference ;

Intellectual Rôle of the Press :

(9) Whereas the Press plays a part of the first importance in the education of the masses, and may be counted upon to provide powerful assistance in raising their intellectual level ;

The Assembly asks the Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation to seek the most effective means of completely attaining this end, and

Requests it, in consultation with the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation and representative journalists, to study the methods by which the Press might contribute to a better understanding between the peoples by perfecting their knowledge. The conclusions of this study shall be submitted to the fourteenth Assembly ;

National Committees :

(10) Recognises once again the important part played by the National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation and the necessity of encouraging those already in existence and of affording them additional means of carrying out the more and more numerous tasks of increasing importance which they have to perform ;

Preservation of Historical Monuments :

(11) The Assembly,

Approving the resolution adopted by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and acceding to the latter's request that it should communicate to the Members of the League the recommendations drawn up by the Athens Conference concerning the preservation of historical monuments and works of art :

Entrusts to the Organisation for Intellectual Co-operation the task of transmitting the said recommendations to the Governments on its behalf ;

Administrative Questions :

(12) Having noted the results of the administration of the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation

as shown by the report of the Governing Body of that Institute :

Expresses its satisfaction with the excellent methods employed which have made it possible to develop the activities of this organisation and, at the same time, to consolidate its financial position ;

International Educational Cinematographic Institute :

(13) Having considered the report of the Governing Body of the International Educational Cinematographic Institute :

Expresses its satisfaction with the systematic development of that Institute's work and, in particular, with the results of the numerous enquiries already completed or at present in progress ;

Has pleasure in recognising once again the value of the International Review published by the Institute and the friendly reception given to it both in educational circles and by the technical experts of the film industry ;

Trusts that the Institute, by extending its activity in those spheres which already engage the attention of the League of Nations, may be able to promote the use of the powerful means of dissemination represented by the cinema in favour of the League's work.

The President :

Translation : Mlle. Vacaresco, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Vacaresco (Roumania) :

Translation : Year after year, with a monotony which the Assembly's indulgence always forgives me, I come before you to impart the reflections inspired in my mind by the growth of that powerful alliance — intellectual co-operation, the Paris Institute and the Institute of Rome. The programme we have entrusted to them they are, in the face of many difficulties, endeavouring to carry out by earnest effort, and with satisfactory results. Theirs is a vast and an austere task. Let us compare it with the state of mind which is to benefit by their action. Let us compare our constructive idea with the men it is striving to win over, our ideal with the passions it is seeking to awaken or to destroy.

When an engineer or an architect sets to work to construct the arch of a bridge or build a house or palace, he knows beforehand the quality and the strength of the material he will have to use, just as men of science base their work on material realities which have grown plastic in their hands. Intellectual co-operation, too, aims at positive results. Imbued with that immense desire for peace which you know so well, the League of Nations one day asked whether it would not more readily achieve its noble and most admirable purpose by forcing the peoples to a better understanding of each other. Yet, notwithstanding the conferences which constellate Europe — and I might say the world — the nations still live in ignorance of each other. They know nothing, or practically nothing, of each other's traditions and past ; and to intellectual co-operation was given the task of seeking to teach them this that they did not know. But intellectual co-operation spells intellect, and the intellect of the individual varies and fluctuates within him as widely as his temperament, his character and his destiny.

But then, once endued with intellect, he sets out in pursuit of a thought, or of a way of action. He strongly develops his individuality and retires upon himself as upon a well-armed fortress.

The intellectual *élite* may be said, indeed, to consist almost entirely of these fortresses, standing and taking the measure of each other's strength. It may be that, later on, the work thus brought to fruition will form part of the common patrimony, and the idea and the ideal in itself may perhaps become a universal idea, a universal ideal. But, in the meantime, the intellectuals were against us; they called our programme slow. They like novelty; publicity suits them, but not propaganda. They even went so far as to accuse us of harping too much upon that fair word "peace", and bade us find some other name for it.

The Press, which for long we had invited to work with us, the Press, its thoughts elsewhere, or indifferent to our cause, offered us merely occasional articles and brief reports. The publicity of intellectual co-operation was passed over in silence. They even went so far as to criticise us for all the "scribble" we are naturally obliged to accumulate. I repeat: the intellectual *élite* likes novelty, it likes a bolt from the blue. It likes, too, flights of fancy and of the imagination; and these amuse the masses also. But here we are working under the auspices of the eternal. Intellectual co-operation was loath to cast all that into the domain in which it had traced out so lofty a path; and it was right. Its present triumphs — calm, serene, wrought in the empyrean where immortal thoughts are born — are proof of the beauty and the harmonious continuity of its work.

You have doubtless read the magnificent article which Thomas Mann, who himself belongs to the great intellectual *élite* of the whole world, has devoted to the work of the Committee on Arts and Letters. Snatching poetry away from the table of the gods, Paul Valéry has bidden her serve us and appear in our midst at our deliberations.

The present hour, the hour in which we live, is fraught with uncertainty. Politics — plain politics — financial policy and economic policy are none of them bankrupt, I know, but are simply suffering a transient failure. The policy which Paul Valéry calls the policy of the mind — that policy alone has progressed; it alone has penetrated and warmed our hearts; it alone, through intellectual co-operation, will help us.

We are here not only as representatives of our Governments, whose eager servants we are, but as representatives of the great international people of peace. In the name of that international people, I commend to you the policy of the mind — that is the policy of intellectual co-operation.

The President :

Translation : If no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the draft resolutions adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

41. — WORK OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT ORGANISATION: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report on the work of the Communications and Transit Organisation, submitted by the Second Committee (document A.52.1932.VIII, Annex 7).

(On the invitation of the President, Mr. te Water, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Auguste Schmidt, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Schmidt, the Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Schmidt (Estonia), Rapporteur :

Translation : On behalf of the Second Committee, I have the honour to submit the report on the work of the Communications and Transit Organisation. That report formed the subject of detailed discussion in the Second Committee and was unanimously adopted.

The present world-wide economic and financial difficulties may tend to divert public attention from the human activities which are not directly determined by the campaign against the crisis. In view of the gravity of that crisis, the Economic and Financial Organisation of the League of Nations has quite naturally been called upon to intensify its endeavours. None the less, the other League organisations have never ceased, despite the unfavourable general situation, to work with great zeal and devotion.

As regards the Communications and Transit Organisation in particular, it is only right to note that its activities during the past year have been both useful and varied.

You will observe first that the Fourth Conference on Communications and Transit met in October 1931. It dealt with various questions, several of which aroused keen interest in a large number of countries. But, in addition to those questions which the Fourth Conference referred to it for examination, the Organisation has devoted itself to the study of the most varied questions. Among those, I might quote the many questions relating to road traffic, the unification of river law, the internationalisation of civil aviation, the unification of transport statistics, the great public works schemes.

Reference should be made also to the fact that, during the past year, collaboration between the Communications and Transit Organisation and the Chinese National Government has proceeded in an entirely satisfactory manner.

This brief enumeration, which is far from complete, will make it clear to you how varied are the tasks devolving upon the Communications and Transit Organisation.

Despite the budgetary restrictions imposed upon it, as indeed upon other organisations of the League, the Communications and Transit Organisation has yielded a maximum of useful work, a fact which the Assembly, I feel sure, will duly appreciate.

As my report has been circulated, I think I need not read it. I have the honour to submit it to you for approval, together with the accompanying draft resolution, which reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Having considered the work accomplished by the Communications and Transit Organisation between the twelfth and thirteenth ordinary sessions of the Assembly :

Greatly appreciates the results obtained in the Organisation's various spheres of activity ;

Expresses, in particular, its satisfaction with the conclusions reached by the Fourth General Conference on Communications and Transit, and trusts that those conclusions will lead to good results ;

Attaches special importance to the work accomplished by the Committee of Enquiry on Questions relating to Public Works and National Technical Equipment ;

Notes with satisfaction the close collaboration that has been established between the Organisation and the Chinese National Government, and expresses its conviction that this collaboration will be wholly successful.

The President :

Translation : As no delegate has asked to speak, I shall consider the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

42. — WORK OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Health Organisation (document A.50.1932.III, Annex 8).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Lev Winter, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Lev Winter will address the Assembly.

M. Winter (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur :

Translation : When the Second Committee appointed me Rapporteur on the work of the Health Organisation, I felt that a great honour had been paid me; and when I followed the discussions of the Assembly and of the various Committees I realised that my position was much more privileged than that of almost any other Rapporteur.

In all the other discussions, a note of pessimism and doubt was sounded: hesitation, divergence of opinion and difficulties appeared. But how different, despite its comprehensiveness, the discussion on this question in the Second Committee proved! The speakers were unanimous in their appreciation of the Health Organisation's work, and the discussion must have been most encouraging to the Organisation itself. Every speaker urged that it should continue and extend its work. It was not intended, however, that its activities should be in the direction of giving presents all round, but rather that it should concentrate its efforts and select those activities best calculated to bring progress into new areas, as indeed was urged by the delegate of the United Kingdom.

The reason why the discussion on the Health Organisation's work differs from that on many other items of the thirteenth Assembly's agenda lies, in my view, in the difference between the object of its work and the activities of the other Sections of the League Secretariat.

All the other reports contain draft resolutions and recommendations, the application of which depends on the legislation of the fifty-seven States Members of the League. Of recent years, we have seen how difficult it is to meet the requirements of the diverse interests, laws and administrative organisations of the States.

The Health Organisation, however, does not as a rule ask the Member States for anything of that kind. Its work rarely affects their laws. Its activities make no demand on them, but actually second the efforts of the national health administrations. The Health Organisation asks for no contribution, but only appeals for international help on the occasion of a great disaster. May I

point out in passing that such appeals have met with a most remarkable response? The Health Organisation states that it is anxious to continue this disinterested and absorbing work and relies on the mutual support of Governments. The Organisation's budget is not large and it cannot grant subsidies. But the gratitude felt towards it is the outcome, not of material gifts, but of the systematic co-operation it offers Governments desirous of this co-operation as a means of supplementing and perfecting the Public Health Services in their respective countries, so that they may use their own resources and their own organisation for the safeguarding of public health. The value of this co-operation is due both to the exceptional abilities of the Director and the whole staff of the Organisation, and to those of the different national experts, as well as to the international experience that has been acquired all over the world.

These international studies — which provide a wealth of international information and enable the experience thus obtained to be applied — will form the main work of the Health Organisation. The scheme is already clear. It will relate to the study of the most widespread diseases, to social diseases and to methods of prevention. Naturally, this work must proceed on somewhat empirical lines and, for that reason, Sir Hilton Young expressed the hope that the Health Organisation would devote itself solely to the study of the most important questions. I agree with that view: *non multa sed multum* must be our watchword in international work.

The fewer catastrophes there are due to natural causes the less will emergency assistance be necessary and the easier it will be for the Health Organisation to concentrate on productive work. As the public health services of the various States are improved, the Health Organisation will be able to devote itself more fully to international study and research.

The British delegate felt that my report should stress the Health Organisation's work on the standardisation of vitamins and vaccines, the arseno-benzol treatment of syphilis and the radiological treatment of cancer. The work in connection with vitamins has already been embodied in the pharmacopœia of several large countries and will assume growing importance for the inhabitants of those countries and of any others desiring guarantees as to the vitamin content of the foodstuffs they buy.

The study of the results of syphilis treatment in five countries is now almost completed and will show which methods are most effective.

Twenty countries have adopted the method recommended by the Health Organisation for recording the results of the radiological treatment of cancer, so that an international comparison of these results can now be made.

In the light of these brief observations, which were intended to give you a survey of the Health Organisation's activities, the Assembly will understand that the Second Committee was able to approve that Organisation's work.

The Second Committee has instructed me to submit to you, on its behalf, the following draft resolution:

The Assembly,

Notes with pleasure that a number of Governments have responded to the appeal made last year on behalf of the flood victims in China, and thanks these Governments for their generous action, which constitutes a tangible proof of their spirit of international solidarity;

Is gratified that Governments and their health administrations are increasingly contributing to,

and having recourse to, the experience of the Health Organisation in relation to those questions of hygiene on which the international co-operation provided by that Organisation is essential to progress, and values particularly the machinery which permits such Governments to obtain consultative opinions and the technical collaboration of that Organisation ;

Considers that the Health Organisation, by means of its expert enquiries, its service of epidemiological intelligence, including that of the Eastern Bureau, and by the missions undertaken under its authority, fulfils the requirements of Article 23 of the Covenant, by virtue of which the League of Nations will endeavour to take international measures to prevent and combat disease ;

Takes note of the report (document A.28.1932. III) which has been submitted to it on the work of the Health Organisation, and approves the work carried out by that Organisation since the last session of the Assembly.

In my report you will find three other proposals.

The first, originating with the Hungarian Government, is that the study of international reciprocity in the care of the sick should be included in the Health Organisation's programme of work. The Committee proposes that the Assembly should ask the Council to refer the further study of the question to the Committee set up by the Council on May 20th,

1931, to study in all its aspects the question of assistance to indigent foreigners. The Hungarian delegation has endorsed this proposal.

The Committee's second proposal relates to a request by the Indian delegation, supported by the delegate of China, for the convening of a conference on rural hygiene in the East. The Committee proposes that the Health Committee should be invited to consider the feasibility of convening a conference and to present a report on the subject at the next Assembly.

In the third proposal, the Second Committee suggests that the Assembly should invite the Health Committee to consider afresh the report of the Reporting Committee on Maternal Welfare and the Hygiene of Infants and Children of Pre-School Age on which several delegations had observations to make.

I have the honour to request the Assembly to approve the draft resolution which I have submitted and also the proposals to which I have just referred.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the report and the draft resolution accompanying it adopted.

The report and the draft resolution were adopted.

(The Assembly rose at 12.30 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINTH PLENARY MEETING

• TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11TH, 1932, AT 10.30 A.M.

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43. — PENAL AND PENITENTIARY QUESTIONS : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE ; RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on

penal and penitentiary questions (document A.58.1932.IV, Annex 9).

(On the invitation of the President, Dr. Ethel Osborne, Vice-Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and M. Pella, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Pella, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Pella (Roumania), Rapporteur :

Translation : I have the greatest satisfaction in submitting to the Assembly the Fifth Committee's report on penal and penitentiary questions. Unanimous solutions have been found for all the problems referred to the Fifth Committee for its decision, and I shall draw your attention to the more important points which formed the subject of that Committee's discussions.

In its resolution of 1931, the Assembly considered certain aspects of the complex problem of crime, and in particular the questions of the gradual unification of penal law, the co-operation of States in the campaign against crime and, lastly, the improvement of the rules governing the execution of penalties and of measures of security involving loss of liberty.

As regards this last question, the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission — which is still awaiting the observations of certain Governments on the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, the time-limit for submission being January 1st, 1933 — will be able to communicate its proposal for the revision of these Minimum Rules some time next year.

In order to enable Governments to decide whether the League should or should not lend its assistance in the solution of other questions, the Assembly, by its resolution of 1931 instructed the Secretary-General to consult certain technical organisations

specially qualified in the matter. The seven Organisations consulted, which are enumerated in the 1931 resolution, met at Geneva in May 1932, and a resolution was, on that occasion, unanimously adopted by the representatives of those organisations, each of which indeed separately discussed and ratified the resolution. The substance of the organisations' reply was not discussed by the Fifth Committee.

As regards the question of the gradual unification of penal law, some delegations recommended a policy of prudence, urging that measures of repression must often depend on climate, customs, opinions and beliefs. Moreover, in certain important countries, the penal institutions present peculiarities which will have to be taken into consideration. Those institutions are deeply rooted in the past, in a body of tradition which enhances the force of penal law and thus contributes to its development.

Many other delegations, however, pointed out that the criminal law of all countries contains rules which can be uniformly applied. The incorporation of those rules did not, they maintained, depend on certain peculiar conditions, but corresponded purely and simply to necessities of social defence which are common to all civilised nations.

Again, as was duly noted, account must be taken of that sense of unity which is assuredly one of the deepest and most fundamental characteristics of the history of most nations. The work of bringing penal systems into line with one another must be approached, at the present juncture from the angle of offences affecting the interests of the various nations, whether by reason of the nature of the interests thus injured or by reason of the method by which such acts are perpetrated.

In the view of certain delegations, therefore, this must be the criterion in considering the bearing of the reply of the technical organisations consulted by the League of Nations. Those organisations merely propose a programme of work in fields, in most of which the League has already been active.

As regards the questions included in that programme, the League must, as in the past, be guided in the choice of each of those questions, exclusively by considerations of practical utility.

The Fifth Committee decided accordingly to submit the organisations' reply to the States Members, in conformity with point 5 of the Assembly resolution of 1931. In view, however, of the importance of that opinion, drafted by very distinguished experts, whose names are mentioned in the report, the Fifth Committee unanimously adopted the following resolution, which it begs to submit to the Assembly :

The Assembly calls the very special attention of the Governments to the joint reply made by the seven technical organisations consulted by the League of Nations on the questions of the progressive unification of penal law and the co-operation of States in the prevention and punishment of crime.

Finally, twelve delegations have, up to the present, signified their acceptance of the formulas contained in the joint reply of the technical organisations.

Before concluding, I should like to inform the Assembly of the satisfaction expressed by numerous delegations with regard to the work of *rapprochement* and co-operation between the seven organisations referred to in the 1931 Assembly resolution and the reorganisation of the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law.

With the exception of the Bureau, the organisation of which is of a special character, the independence of the organisations, both in their relations with one another and their relations with the League,

should be maintained, in order to ensure the most complete liberty for their scientific work. Nevertheless, every encouragement should be given to those organisations, including the Bureau, as in many cases the results of their work may be of use to the League. For those reasons, the Fifth Committee unanimously adopted the conclusions of Point VII of the report.

I do not doubt that, on the basis of the observations made by the various Governments, it will be possible at the next Assembly, while paying due regard to the counsels of prudence and to the limits imposed by the legislative individuality of certain States, to formulate minimum solutions, which can be accepted by all States without difficulty. These solutions will, I hope, be an earnest of progress in future ; and such progress will ensure more effective common action for the repression of crime — in other words, co-operation between all countries based on the only consideration which can be allowed to weigh in this field — that of common defence against crime.

In conclusion, I suggest the adoption also of the following draft resolution :

The Assembly adopts the report of the Fifth Committee.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the draft resolutions adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

44. — TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on the question of traffic in women and children (document A.55.1932.IV, Annex 10).

(On the invitation of the President, Mlle. Henni Forchhammer, Rapporteur, took her place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Mlle. Henni Forchhammer will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Forchhammer (Denmark), Rapporteur. — As the report of the Fifth Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children is in your hands, I shall not read it, but will merely emphasise a few important points.

The report contains a short historical outline of the unquestionable progress made since the League of Nations came into being. This progress may to a great extent be attributed to the continuity in League methods. The question is dealt with every year by the Assembly, the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and, not least, by the Social Section of the Secretariat. This continuity has had a great influence in stimulating Government action, as well as public opinion, in the various countries.

During these years, it has been more and more generally acknowledged that there is an intimate connection between traffic in women and the system of licensed houses and the regulation of prostitution — a fact which was very strongly stressed by the report of the Special Body of Experts. It is therefore extremely gratifying to note that, during the last ten years, an increasing number of countries have abandoned this system.

It is a matter of great importance that a considerable number of countries are now parties to the Conventions of 1910 and 1921, and send in annual reports. There are, however, still too many Governments which are not parties to the Conventions and do not send in reports. May I appeal on behalf of the Fifth Committee to the representatives of these countries to use their influence to achieve progress in this direction?

The Fifth Committee studied with great interest the report on the work of the eleventh session of the Committee. The chief item on its agenda this year was the proposed revision of the Conventions with regard to the abolition of the age-limit and the repression of the activities of *souteneurs*. The study of the way in which the revision may be brought about is not completed, but the Fifth Committee hopes it will be possible for Governments to make the necessary modifications in their own legislation as soon as possible.

On behalf of the Fifth Committee, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly for approval the following draft resolutions:

I. The Assembly,

Having taken note with great interest and satisfaction of the work carried on during the past year by the Traffic in Women and Children Committee;

Sharing the Committee's opinion that the traffic in women is always and in all circumstances a profoundly immoral and anti-social act and that this traffic should be punished even if the victims are over age and consent:

Requests the Governments to introduce as soon as possible the necessary modifications on this subject in their national legislations;

Decides to seek a revision of the international Conventions on the Traffic in Women and Children of 1910 and 1921 by abolishing the age-limit contained in the said Conventions; and

Asks the Traffic in Women and Children Committee to study, with the advice of its Legal Sub-Committee, the means by which the above-mentioned Conventions may be revised with regard to the age-limit simultaneously with the amendments proposed for the punishment of *souteneurs*.

II. The Assembly,

Noting that the reports of the 1932 sessions of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and the Child Welfare Committee lay special stress on the need of increased publicity for their work;

(1) Recognising gratefully the efforts of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies to educate public opinion in all countries in support of the League of Nations:

Requests it especially to consider, and to apply as urgently as possible, methods of giving wider publicity to the reports of the League of Nations on the subject of the traffic in women and children and of child welfare;

(2) Recognising the great value of the services which have been rendered in each of the two Committees which compose the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People by international organisations represented on them by assessors;

Urgently appeals to those private organisations to give, by all the means which lie in their power or which they are able to put into action, more publicity to the work of the two Committees in which they collaborate with so much competence and efficiency.

You will note that the second resolution deals, not only with women and children, but also with child welfare.

The annual reports of Governments laid before the last meeting of the Committee mentioned over a thousand cases connected with the traffic, which shows the necessity for continued efforts on the part of the League, of the Governments and of private organisations in the campaign against the traffic in women and children.

Twelve years ago I appealed to the members of the first Assembly to do their utmost to combat this vicious traffic. May I repeat this appeal? May I ask you all, men and women, to help to stamp out this evil which, as long as it exists — and it does exist — is a blot on civilisation?

The draft resolutions were adopted.

45. — CHILD WELFARE: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on child welfare (document A.48.1932.IV, Annex 11).

(On the invitation of the President, Mme. Františka Plamínková, Rapporteur, took her place on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: Mme. Plamínková, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Mme. Plamínková (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur, read her report and submitted to the Assembly the following two draft resolutions:

I. Profoundly moved by the sufferings imposed on millions of children in all countries as a result of persistent and widespread unemployment;

Alarmed by the physical and moral harm done to these children, which recalls the disastrous conditions prevailing in several countries during the first years after the war;

Struck by the gravity of the consequences which may result from the point of view of the future of the human race;

Fully conscious of the obligations arising out of the Geneva Declaration approved by the League at its fifth Assembly:

The Assembly strongly urges all States Members of the League to redouble their efforts to assist, both through their public authorities and through private associations, those children who are suffering most from the effects of the economic crisis.

II. The Assembly ratifies the conclusions of the Fifth Committee in regard to Child Welfare.

Mme. Plamínková added that a further resolution appeared in the report which had already been adopted by the Assembly in connection with the previous question.

That resolution read as follows:

"The Assembly,

"Noting that the reports of the 1932 sessions of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and the Child Welfare Committee lay special stress on the need of increased publicity for their work;

"(1) Recognising gratefully the efforts of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies to educate public opinion in all countries in support of the League of Nations:

"Requests it especially to consider, and to apply, as urgently as possible, methods of giving wider publicity to the reports of the League of Nations on the subject of the traffic in women and children and of child welfare ;

"(2) Recognising the great value of the services which have been rendered in each of the two Committees which compose the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People by international organisations represented on them by assessors :

"Urgently appeals to those private organisations to give, by all the means which lie in their power or which they are able to put into action, more publicity to the work of the two Committees in which they collaborate with so much competence and efficiency."

The President :

Translation : Dr. Ethel Osborne, delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Osborne (Australia). — As I have now listened to the deliberations of several Committees which have made fragmentary additions to a theme to which I particularly desire to make a contribution, I feel that perhaps it was providential that, at an early stage of this meeting, I had to withhold my remarks intended for one Committee, for I believe they may have added significance in the Assembly where we should not only view the records of isolated Sections, but should surely endeavour to correlate in a general and constructive way the activities and findings of the different Committees, Commissions and special enquiries.

The discussion of important questions such as the nationality of married women prevented me from occupying my appointed place for the full time in the Second Committee when the health work of the League of Nations was being discussed.

The report of that work during the last year appeared to me so extensive and embraced such a field of activity that it was difficult to realise that the discussion on it would be concluded in the brief space of time which it eventually occupied. The work of the Health Organisation is one which causes little comment either in the Committee to which it is referred or in the Assembly itself or even in the world at large, and yet it is a field in which there is a very definite record of achievement and where international work has been conceived, developed and stabilised in such a way that it must be continued permanently, whatever might be the fate of the international organisation under which it has had its being.

In reviewing the activities of the Health Organisation, a fact which should be borne in mind is the very high contribution made to its activities by the Rockefeller Foundation. Last year, the League grant was 1,178,463 gold francs and the Rockefeller Foundation gave 670,928 francs for this work. I am particularly anxious to direct attention to the large sum contributed from a private source for such a great humanitarian purpose under the League, and that is why I make reference to the health work.

It would be out of place here for me to dwell on the work of the Health Organisation, but may I, as an expert, pay my tribute to its great record of accomplishment ?

At the Assembly last year, in the Fifth Committee, I directed attention to what appeared to me to be one of the most vital problems of the moment, that of the increased social dangers to the child and the adolescent brought about by the world economic crisis and present unemployment

conditions. I made reference to the recommendations of the International Labour Office report of last year, and asked the Committee to place on record its appreciation of the special danger in which boys and girls are placed from the points of view of employment, education, nutrition and health, and urged that the Child Welfare Committee should direct attention to these problems. No definite resolution or recommendation was passed in regard to this problem, but the question was incorporated in the report to the Assembly. I find that the very interesting brochure which has just been published by the Health Section, "The Economic Depression and Public Health", contains many references to this urgent problem. The social developments of the last year have in no wise diminished the acuteness of this world problem of the school child and the child about to leave school. Its education, its nutrition, its outlook on life, possibilities for employment for it, are still problems just as pressing, or rather I should say, more pressing, than twelve months ago.

I am basing my remarks on my own observations — on which, of course, time forbids me to dwell here — in many diverse countries of the world, and my desire is to bring before this Assembly the urgent peril in which the mass of normal children throughout the world stand at this present juncture. These millions, the real asset of the world, are scarcely coming under the consideration of the League of Nations in any way. This body has given expert attention to various small outstanding groups, such as the blind, the illegitimate, delinquents, etc., while the needs of the mass of normal children have been left untouched. I consider they constitute the urgent problem of the moment, and it is for this reason that I venture to bring this matter before the Assembly for the purpose of asking for a constructive contribution and close co-ordination of relevant League activities.

In many regions, I see a quite definite tendency in modern industry towards the exploitation of child labour and especially girl labour. With the intense specialisation, based on small repetition processes, which is the key-note of efficiency in many modern industries, the most useful and profitable source of labour is recognisedly the young girl. During the last few months, in great industrial areas I have seen the utilisation of these young children on long hours of work in engineering, textile, printing, etc. While the older members of the family, fathers, adolescent brothers and sisters, etc., remained idle at home for want of work, these little girls were in ready demand to make their contribution to the industrial machine. Every year of age increases the rate of pay, and does not necessarily, in such processes as those to which I have referred, mean increased production — in fact, much of this production is dominated by the rate of the machine and not by the actual personal rate of the operator. It stands to reason, then, that these girls are early turned out of employment, especially when further responsibilities, in addition to the higher pay, are placed on the employer, such as payment of insurance, etc. The hopeless, reckless depression which is taking possession of the unemployed adolescent, the over-fatigue of the young child, who also knows only too well its future doom, are among serious factors to be considered.

In this connection, the Section on Traffic in Women and Children has, in the present economic situation, its contribution to make in the relations between the traffic and unemployment.

It has also been evident during recent years that in many countries there has been a definite tendency to reduce education grants. I pressed this point last year — and we know quite well that it is not in connection with primary education that retrench-

ments are first carried out, but in connection with the secondary and early secondary or post-primary education. It may be that retrenchments are necessary, but these, I verily believe, could, in many education departments throughout the world, be effected, not by impairing the functions for which these departments exist, but by the introduction of efficiency in administration and a careful deletion of unnecessary expenditure. The Health Section report, to which I have already referred, points out, on page 37, the present dangers :

"In a large part of the country, the general state of the schoolchildren has grown worse The aggravation of the economic situation is bearing hardly on our school youth. Those who suffer particularly are the children of the unemployed and destitute, small farmers, subordinate officials, employees with only small earnings, persons in receipt of social insurance benefit, etc. The often meagre income naturally serves in the first place to buy food, and there is generally nothing left over for clothes and personal hygiene The state of health and nutrition of our schoolchildren, which is closely bound up with the economic situation, slowly improved after the post-war and inflation years until the autumn of 1931. Since then, there has been a rapid deterioration in all respects."

On page 43 of the same document, definite examples are given of retrenchments which have taken place in regard to dental services, medical services, school feeding, etc. This contribution alone of the Health Section should be enough to arouse and rivet our attention on this matter. To what end are all the health and social efforts which have been made and are being made now in the realms, "ante-natal", "post-natal", "infant welfare", "pre-school child" and "early-school child"? At the most critical period of children's lives—the transition period from childhood to maturity, with its special health demands, its psychological problems, the need for most careful but unostentatious guidance, with judicious choosing of occupations, amusements, associates and surroundings—there is suddenly to be this neglect of all the vital factors. Again, there arises the question of nutrition which has also been mentioned in the report of the Health Section. It is merely a platitude for me to say that by neglect of this one factor alone we are endangering the future of our people. On the health aspect of the problem I need not enlarge.

I come next to what is perhaps the most serious and unprecedented problem of all. What is to become of all these children as, year after year, they surge out into the world to find a life's work? Normally, they are filled with ambition, anxious to take their active part in life, and keen on the struggle. We all know that, at the present time, for a large proportion of them, there is nothing but soul-destroying enforced idleness. It is not only amongst those who expect normally to swell the ranks of labourers, but in every grade of society, that there is no available occupation for masses of young people. Has it not even been said that many young adults are seeking solace for their lack of occupation in drug addiction? No doubt we are up against one of the biggest psychological problems of the times.

In an extremely interesting report which was placed before the Child Welfare Committee by the International Labour Office—not in regard to child welfare, but in regard to penal administration—information is given concerning an important investigation into the problem of prison labour. In this connection work is acknowledged to be a means of treatment; we are considering occupational therapy for those guilty of offences against

society. On the other hand, we are calmly neglecting the importance of occupation for their normal development and in order to prevent them from swelling the ranks of criminals of some category or another; we are neglecting this treatment, this "occupational therapy", in respect of millions of normal children. This position is surely a direct challenge to the Intellectual Co-operation Section. Every member of the Assembly, which represents nearly the whole world, need only turn his or her thoughts for a moment to the conditions existing in the region from which he or she comes to acknowledge with me that the situation in regard to the child, the early adolescent generally, is a challenge to the humanitarian work of the League.

At an early stage in the deliberations of the Fifth Committee, the representative of a country which has recently joined the League—I refer to Turkey—brought forward this problem and as a result a resolution has been submitted to the Assembly. In view of the financial situation, it was not possible, at this juncture, to undertake or recommend to the Assembly any direct plan of action involving new work for the Child Welfare Committee.

Reorganisation of the Child Welfare Committee of the League is shortly to be effected and the matter is at present before a Sub-Committee; further action is to be taken early next year. This is perhaps a matter which might be borne in mind by the delegates on their return to their own countries, so that national opinions regarding it may be forwarded to the Secretariat.

I visualise, and I wish to present it to the Assembly, the idea of a reorganised Child Welfare Section with a great purpose, revitalised immediately to tackle this world problem. In such a scheme, I see the Child Welfare Committee with a definite plan of action—a campaign—but eager to receive and co-ordinate the expert help of other sections of the League's activity. I see the Child Welfare Committee determining its plan of action whereby to carry out the aims with which it has been entrusted. It would get into close touch with all international and national organisations for the care and protection of children. Wherever health questions arise, the expert activities of the Health Organisation will be available. As regards educational matters, both primary and secondary, the urgent problem of occupation for leisure and the question of amusements, the Intellectual Co-operation Section would be asked to assist. For every phase of the industrial problem and for the very vital problem of industrial health, the expert services of the International Labour Office would be available.

At this session of the Assembly, in particular, we have given much time to the question of the nationality of women and one of the potent reasons laid before us for consideration of this question has been the "protection of the family". But what is to become of the family under the present social chaos? The question of the "collaboration of women in the organisation of peace" has also been discussed and reports regarding it laid before this Assembly. Surely, in this question of the adolescents, there is a direct challenge to those who have been in the forefront of the struggle in regard to these two questions of nationality of women and the collaboration of women. We have also discussed elaborate plans for teaching children to be interested in, and to support, the League of Nations. Surely it is time the League directed its attention, in a co-ordinated manner, towards the normal children of the world whose need is great. Among the children whose welfare is at present at stake there are many whose fathers laid down their lives for us in the war; in addition, there are multitudes of others.

My one motive is to stress the need for immediate co-ordinated international effort, so that a mass attack should be made on this worldwide problem of the welfare of children in relation to the economic crisis which may be as fundamental as that of disarmament.

The President :

Translation : As no one else wishes to speak, I shall regard the Fifth Committee's report and the draft resolutions accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

46. — AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY. PROPOSAL OF THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT FOR THE AMENDMENT OF RULES 4 AND 17: 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 Norwegian Government's proposal for the amendment of Rules 4 and 17 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly (document A.47.1932.V, Annex 12).

(In the absence of the Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee, and on the invitation of the President, Dr. Limburg, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Dr. Limburg, Vice-Chairman of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Limburg (Netherlands), Vice-Chairman of the First Committee, submitted the report of the Committee and the draft resolution, worded as follows :

The Assembly decides to amend its Rules of Procedure by inserting the following provisions :

Rule 4, New Paragraph 4 bis.

No proposal for the placing of a new question on the agenda of the Assembly may be signed by more than 15 (fifteen) Members of the League.

Rule 17, New Paragraph 1 bis.

No resolution, amendment or motion may be signed by more than 15 (fifteen) Members of the League.

The President :

Translation : As no one wishes to speak, I shall regard the First Committee's report and the accompanying resolution as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

47. — QUESTION OF SUPPRESSING THE ASSEMBLY ATTENDANCE LISTS: DELETION OF RULE 12 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY: 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 deletion of Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly (document A.44.1932.V, Annex 13).

(The Committee not having appointed a Rapporteur, the President requested Dr. Limburg, Vice-Chairman of the First Committee, to be good enough to submit the report.)

Dr. Limburg (Netherlands), Vice-Chairman of the First Committee, submitted the report and the draft resolution, worded as follows :

The Assembly decides that Rule 12 of its Rules of Procedure shall be deleted.

The President :

Translation : As no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the First Committee's report and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

48. — CO-OPERATION 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 discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on the co-operation of the Press in the organisation of peace (document A.59.1932, Annex 14).

(On the invitation of the President, Dr. Lange, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (United Kingdom), Rapporteur. — The subject that I have to bring before the Assembly is one, I think, which will be recognised to be of considerable importance — the co-operation of the Press in the organisation of peace. It is a very old observation in these Assemblies that public opinion is the life-blood of the League of Nations, and if that is so, it is of the greatest possible importance that that life-blood should be kept pure and abundant. The co-operation of the Press is absolutely essential if that object is to be secured.

I do not think that the Sixth Committee was of opinion that the danger of actual false news being disseminated by the Press was, in practice, a serious one. That it may sometimes have happened is no doubt true, but the general sentiment expressed in the Committee was that, if it did happen, it happened very rarely, and that it was not the chief danger to be feared. What was felt was that, quite apart from actually false news, there was a danger of news being distorted; perhaps an even greater danger — as was pointed out by one of the members of the Committee, a member of the French delegation — was the suppression of news. He pointed out, and I think we all agreed with him, that the suppression of news might be just as harmful to the object we have in view — the formation of a sound and vigorous public opinion on these questions — and just as disastrous as the distortion or even the invention of news. That was our sentiment, and we felt the matter to be one of considerable gravity; but we also felt that the remedy was not to be found in some measure of coercion.

In the first place, it was felt that it would be almost impossible to devise any measure of coercion against the suppression of news, and there was a very general feeling that any encouragement to Governments to interfere with the freedom of the Press, even with the best intentions, was probably a grave mistake. There was absolute unanimity amongst those associations which had been consulted — associations of journalists and those connected with the Press — that any interference

by Governments was certain to do more harm than good. It is, of course, quite a different matter if journalists themselves choose to take measures for raising the tone or suppressing the evils that may arise in the exercise of their calling, and in that connection we had before us a very interesting experiment — the creation of a Journalists' Court of Honour; but on that matter the Committee did not feel that it was either desirable or practicable for it to express an opinion. In its view, this was entirely a matter which must be left in the hands of the journalists themselves.

The Committee felt that journalism might be and should be, as far as possible, freed from outside control, whether that control was exercised commercially or officially. It considered very strongly that freedom in the exercise of their calling was both desirable from the point of view of the journalists and still more desirable from the point of view of their co-operation in the cause of peace.

The Committee believed that this was likely, not only to promote a free and good supply of news, but also to assist journalists to raise the status of their profession to the height which it ought certainly to occupy as one of the great professions of the world.

Further, the Committee thought that the measure of freeing the Press from outside control was one which should be carried out partly by the Press itself and partly by the nations, if there was an opportunity for national intervention. This is not a matter in regard to which the League itself could usefully take any action, but in another sphere it was thought that the League might do something to help. The Sixth Committee felt very strongly that the great remedy for any evils that might threaten journalism, and consequently journalistic co-operation, was a free and full supply of news. It believed that that was the best remedy for all these difficulties, whether the dangers to be fought were distortion or suppression. It believed that the freeing of news, making good and true news more easily available, would itself combat the less pure sources of news that might exist. The Committee therefore recommends very strongly the increase of publicity in every way. The League should take pains to hold all its meetings in public, not only the meetings of the Assembly, the Council, and the principal Committees, but also all other meetings. The Committee considered that the greater the publicity the greater would be the purity of the news flowing from those meetings.

It was also felt that, where possible, documents relating to those meetings should be distributed as early and as fully as possible, and the Committee recommends strongly that the Secretariat, through its Information Section, should continue to do its utmost to make all League news readily and easily available to the Press.

Again, the Committee thought that something might perhaps be done — as regards the method, it expressed no very definite opinion, in the absence of further information — towards cheapening the supply of news. Some of those who were consulted by the Committee emphasised very strongly that one of the great difficulties of the Press was that the price of the newspaper by no means compensated for the cost of obtaining its contents and that anything that could be done to cheapen the cost of output of the paper would be an advantage, not only from the point of view of the Press, but also from that of the purity of the news, since it would diminish the necessity of obtaining financial resources from other directions. The Committee therefore recommends that everything possible should be done to cheapen news, though, so far as the League was concerned, it could only suggest that the matter should be examined. The League has

recently established a great wireless station; the Committee therefore thought it might be worth while to examine — and it urged the Secretariat to do so — whether through the machinery of that wireless station the output of news could be cheapened.

It further recommended that consultations should, if possible, continue on this subject and it finally requested the Secretary-General to keep in touch with all the movements in this field and to report to the next Assembly on any further developments.

I will now read the resolution which is to be found at the end of the report.

The Assembly :

1. *Expresses its gratitude to the international and national Press organisations for their views upon the problem of preventing "the spread of false information which may threaten the peace of the world and the good understanding between nations";*

2. *Expresses its thanks to the Danish Government for summoning in January 1932 at Copenhagen a Conference of Governmental Press Bureaux and representatives of the Press, and notes with great interest the resolutions adopted by that Conference ;*

3. *Trusts that, at a further conference organised on similar lines to the Copenhagen Conference, definite proposals may be made to give effect to some of the principal suggestions already made regarding, in particular, the necessity of a greater abundance of accurate information, of true freedom of the Press, and of co-operation between the Press organisations of various countries ;*

4. *Advocates the fullest possible publicity for League meetings ;*

5. *Commends to the sympathetic consideration of the Chairmen of all Committees of the League of Nations the earlier and more complete distribution of documents ;*

6. *Desires that the Secretariat should continue to devote its attention to the development by all the means at its disposal of the swift supply to the Press of the fullest possible information concerning the work of the League of Nations ;*

7. *Invites the Council to consider the possibilities of affording to journalists cheap facilities for communicating to their newspapers information through the League wireless station, due regard being paid to interests affected ;*

8. *Requests the Secretary-General to communicate to the Press organisations consulted and to the Disarmament Conference this resolution, together with the Minutes of the Sixth Committee, and to report to the next Assembly on any further developments which may arise.*

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall regard the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

49. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on

the protection of minorities (document A.60.1932.I, Annex 15).

(On the invitation of the President, Dr. Guani, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Dr. Guani, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Guani (Uruguay), Rapporteur :

Translation : The report which I have the honour to submit to you on behalf of the Sixth Committee is merely a summary of the important statements

made by various delegations on the protection of minorities.

I desire to note here the great importance of that discussion. Having myself been a member of various Committees of Three, and having thus been able to follow the development of the procedure in this matter, I can appreciate the efforts which have been made in the execution of the task of conciliation developing upon the League in regard to minority claims.

Dr. Guani then read his report.

The Assembly took note of the report of the Sixth Committee.

(The Assembly rose at 12.40 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TENTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12TH, 1932, AT 3.30 P.M.

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President : M. POLITIS

50. — ORGANISATION OF THE SESSIONS OF THE ASSEMBLY : REPORTS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE AND OF THE COMMITTEE OF FIVE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : I have a communication to make to the Assembly on behalf of the General Committee

concerning the report of the Committee of Five which has just been circulated in document A.63.1932 (Annex 16). That report, which contains important suggestions, was examined and endorsed by the General Committee of the Assembly at its meeting on Tuesday. On the General Committee's behalf, I have the honour to ask you to approve it and to accept the text of the resolution which has been circulated to you and which reads as follows :

The Assembly approves the report, dated September 30th, 1932 (document A.63.1932), of the Committee of Five on Assembly Arrangements, and thanks the Committee of Five for the work which it has accomplished since its institution in 1929.

If no one has any observation to offer, I shall take it that the Assembly accepts this proposal and wishes to join me in expressing its grateful thanks to the members of the Committee of Five.

The draft resolution was adopted.

51. — ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS : MONETARY AND ECONOMIC CONFERENCE : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the Second Committee's report on the work of the Economic and Financial Organisation (document A.56.1932.II, Annex 17).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Zaunius, Vice-Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Giuseppe Bianchini, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Bianchini (Italy), Rapporteur :

Translation : I need not discuss the contents of the Second Committee's report on financial and economic questions, with which, no doubt, you are already familiar.

Before reading the draft resolutions, I should like to make a few general remarks.

In the matter of financial and economic questions, the Second Committee found itself this year in a somewhat peculiar position, which naturally limited it to a certain extent, if not as regards discussion, at least as regards any initiative it might take.

The Lausanne and Stresa Conferences are barely over ; work is already begun in preparation for the great Monetary and Economic Conference, all the decisions relating to it having been taken. The Second Committee felt that it ought not to intervene by taking any other decisions which, however sound in themselves, might mean a duplication of work or lead to complications.

I feel bound to say, however, that, in the course of the lengthy discussions which took place in the Second Committee, important considerations were advanced regarding the particular situation of the individual countries. Naturally, conditions are not the same in one country as in another, and, consequently, the views expressed were very different. The data and the information supplied are of very great interest and will furnish useful documentary material, to which the Preparatory Committee of the Conference will have to give due consideration.

The discussions also elicited certain general ideas, of which I will give a brief account.

In the first place, current events reaffirm one truth which should always be borne in mind, even at Geneva — namely, that all peoples are united by solidarity, by close interdependence, in time of misfortune, perhaps even more than in prosperity. Possibly, at the beginning of the crisis, some countries may have thought themselves in a privileged position ; but they quickly found that whatever advantages they might possess through their natural conditions or through circumstances, the misfortune of others reacted on their own situation. The agricultural countries were the first to be affected by the fall in prices, but the atrophy from which they suffered was not long in extending to the industrial countries ; and the countries in which home production and consumption seemed best balanced are suffering in the same way as those which lived mainly by their foreign trade.

From this, it is clear that national remedies are to-day absolutely inadequate since, even if they were effective, they could never cure more than part of the ill. In many cases, however, the local and partial solutions applied have completely failed and have even proved harmful — such as the system of restrictions imposed in many countries upon foreign exchange transactions and commerce in general. As is stated in the Stresa report, such a policy " might have produced results if it had been pursued by one country alone and if the others had accepted the situation. But, as each country was taking identical measures on a national basis, these measures neutralised one another. The result was — experience on this matter is conclusive — not only nil, but negative ; it seriously increased the difficulties which it was desired to remove. In no case was the individual problem solved ".

Current difficulties go far beyond national limits, and a final solution will be found only in corporate action in the international field.

In this corporate action, technical measures certainly play an essential part ; but it is important not to neglect the moral and psychological factors, without which even the best of measures might prove ineffective. The world is sick, but not merely from the material point of view ; its future is clouded

with general mistrust. If the political horizon were to clear, if the clash of arms that echoes in our ears were to die away, if progress were achieved in material and moral disarmament, the technical factors making for improvement would without doubt be greatly strengthened.

Lastly, it is not enough merely to draw up schemes of restoration ; we must be firmly resolved to put them into effect. The interdependence of peoples calls for co-operation. As interests cannot always coincide on all points, as indeed they are often conflicting, co-operation requires that each country should be ready to sacrifice some of its interests for the sake of the common weal. It also requires that we should be prepared to defend before public opinion in our own countries, and before the interested parties themselves, the sacrifices that may have seemed necessary.

We have an example of this indispensable spirit of co-operation in the committees collaborating in the economic and financial work of the League. I refer particularly to the Economic and Financial Committees.

In the course of the past year, the Financial Committee has done work which is noteworthy alike for the thoroughness and minuteness with which the hard problems constantly set before the Committee have been studied, and for the breadth of view with which the Committee has mastered those problems, without allowing its judgment to be affected by matters of detail. The distinguished persons of whom that Committee is composed, though often closely associated in their own countries with day-to-day developments in the economic and financial sphere, never fail to show, in their study of the questions entrusted to them, the most complete independence and the highest impartiality. Despite their many occupations, they have devoted a large part of their time to the work of the Committee. I think the Assembly will be unanimous in desiring to express its gratitude to them.

I trust that the Assembly will approve the Second Committee's report and the draft resolutions which conclude it.

These draft resolutions read as follows :

The Assembly,

1. Approves the report submitted to it by the Second Committee (document A.56.1932.II) ;

2. Asserts its conviction that the grave problems of the hour raised by the crisis can only find a solution in the effective and immediate co-operation of all countries, both in the sphere of trade and in that of finance ;

Considers that the most urgent task of the coming Monetary and Economic Conference must be to seek all practical means of eliminating as speedily as possible the impediments of every kind that are paralysing international trade, and to facilitate the adjustments necessary for monetary stability and the restoration of credit ;

Urgently and solemnly appeals to all the Governments that will be represented at the Conference to make every contribution in their power to the solution of the present difficulties, and to enlighten public opinion as to the necessity of making the concessions indispensable to an international economic understanding, that being the sole means of restoring a normal situation ;

Calls the attention of the Monetary and Economic Conference and of those who are responsible for the preparation of that Conference to the resolution passed on April 30th, 1932, by the International Labour Conference and transmitted by the Council to the Assembly, and to the results of the Stresa Conference ;

3. Thanks the Financial Committee for the great labour it has devoted to the difficult and arduous task that has fallen to it during the past year;

Notes with satisfaction that the Gold Delegation of the Financial Committee has completed its work and published its final report, to which it desires again to draw the attention of all authorities responsible for monetary policy;

4. Calls the attention of the Governments of all countries to the new procedure established by the Council with a view to the amicable settlement of disputes of an economic nature between States, to which it will be permissible for them to have recourse as from January 1st next;

5. (a) Being informed that the three draft veterinary Conventions prepared by the Economic Committee are regarded by many Governments as suitable to serve as a basis of discussion at an international diplomatic conference, expresses the desire that this diplomatic Conference may be convened during 1933;

(b) Being informed that the Economic Committee is actively conducting enquiries into the veterinary problems raised by the trade in live cattle and meat, hopes that the States concerned will be kept informed of the progress of this work, the ultimate aim of which is the preparation of one or more conventions relating to the import of live cattle and meat;

6. Expresses the hope that the countries on which the entry into force of the three Conventions concerning bills of exchange and promissory notes depends will make a point of contributing, by their speedy adhesion, to the progressive unification of this important section of private international law;

7. Expresses the wish that the Economic Organisation of the League of Nations should continue to follow closely and support the work of the International Committee on Inter-co-operative Relations, and that it should endeavour, in collaboration with the International Labour Office, to find the best means of making available to those concerned the information collected for this Committee concerning the progress of co-operation in the different countries;

8. Notes with satisfaction the resolution adopted by the Council of the League of Nations to submit the question of large-scale public works to the Preparatory Commission of the coming Monetary and Economic Conference.

The President:

Translation: If no one wishes to speak, I shall regard the report and the draft resolutions submitted by the Second Committee as adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

52.— DRAFT CONVENTION FOR FACILITATING THE INTERNATIONAL CIRCULATION OF FILMS OF AN EDUCATIONAL CHARACTER: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report submitted by the Second Committee on the draft Convention for facilitating the international circulation of films of an

educational character (document A.62.1932.II.B, Annex 18).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Pella, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: M. Pella, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Pella (Roumania), Rapporteur:

Translation: In 1928, the International Educational Cinematographic Institute undertook an investigation with a view to the conclusion of an international agreement designed to ensure the production and distribution of films of an educational character by means of exemption from Customs duties.

Towards the end of 1929, a draft was prepared. That draft, having been revised by a Committee of Experts and by the Permanent Executive Committee of the Rome Institute, was sent, together with a recommendation of the Economic Committee of the League of Nations, in May 1930, in virtue of a decision of the Council, to the Members of the League and to certain non-member States.

A large majority of the Governments consulted — taking into account the replies received up to May 1932 — declared themselves in agreement with the objects which the Convention had in view. A small Committee of Experts revised the draft, taking those replies into consideration. The revised draft, which was included in the agenda of the present Assembly, was also communicated in good time to the Governments.

In order to eliminate a certain divergence of views which existed, not as regards the objects of the Convention, but as regards the procedure to be contemplated for ensuring the international distribution of educational films, the Second Committee appointed a Sub-Committee. All those delegations which felt it their duty to submit observations on the draft text were invited to develop their views.

The Sub-Committee succeeded, after very careful work and with due reference to the majority of observations made, in revising the draft; and that revision, according to the views expressed by certain delegations in the Second Committee, is calculated to facilitate acceptance of the Convention.

The Second Committee, having been called upon to discuss the revised draft, thought it better not to enter upon discussion on the substance of the questions which had formed the subject of revision. Indeed, as the Second Committee was concluding its work when the revised draft was submitted to it and the Assembly was approaching the close of its present session, it was difficult for certain delegations to obtain instructions from their Governments regarding the important amendments suggested by the Sub-Committee to the draft text as originally included in the agenda. The Second Committee accordingly thought it best to submit to the Assembly the following resolution, with a request that the Assembly adopt it:

The Assembly,

Notes with satisfaction the result of the work accomplished by the Sub-Committee which it had appointed to examine the draft Convention for facilitating the international circulation of films of an educational character;

Is of opinion that the changes proposed by the Sub-Committee are calculated to facilitate the accession of several of the States to this Convention, which, in its broad outline, has received the approval of numerous delegations, but considers that these

changes call for a fresh examination on the part of the Governments concerned ;

And, having regard to the importance that attaches to a speedy settlement of the question, requests the Council to convene a meeting of Government delegates at whatever time it considers most suitable, but if possible at the time of the forthcoming special session of the Assembly, provided always that all the Governments have been able to examine the new draft Convention. At this meeting, the delegates, being in possession of full powers, would be called upon to decide whether the proposed Convention, with or without amendment, is to be opened for signature by any Member of the League or any State non-member. In the meantime, the Governments concerned might send their observations to the Secretary-General.

May I direct your attention to one essential point in this resolution — a point which was stressed by a large number of delegations in the Second Committee — namely, the urgent necessity of reaching an international agreement in the matter? Emphasis was laid, with due reference to the objects of the Convention, on the fact that the problem had been discussed since 1928 and, since 1930, had formed the subject of several consultations with Governments.

Moreover, according to the views expressed, Customs duties undoubtedly constitute a serious obstacle to the international distribution of educational films, and they constitute at the same time an obstacle to the production of such films.

Lastly, the serious drawback arising out of those obstacles is not even set off by any appreciable financial advantage to States from Customs duties on educational films. There is obviously no need to dwell further on the necessity of doing away with the obstacles in question.

Emphasis has repeatedly been laid in this Assembly on the importance of educational films in the international work of mutual comprehension. Nothing is more international than the film — that most powerful means of visual instruction — of persuading the masses, which by its very nature disregards linguistic frontiers. Again, representations were repeatedly made at the Disarmament Conference that the film constituted a most efficacious means of promoting moral disarmament, and the Committee on Moral Disarmament declared itself unanimously agreed on that point.

Lastly, if, as is admitted, it is so highly desirable that the League's work of peace should be known and understood by the great masses of the population, the film incontestably represents a powerful contribution towards the realisation of such desiderata. One of the chief conditions for arriving at that result is to encourage the development of educational cinematography by every possible means. Efforts, therefore, should be made to remove obstacles to the production and distribution of such films. Exemption from Customs duties facilitates production and distribution, and it is primarily in relation to those higher moral and intellectual interests which so closely affect the League's work that we should envisage the International Convention, the conclusion of which was recognised by the Second Committee to be of such urgent necessity.

The President :

Translation : Mr. Alexander, delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Alexander (Australia). — It is, in the first place, my pleasant duty to give the support of the Australian delegation to the resolution proposed by the Rapporteur, Professor Pella. Australia follows with keen interest all proposals for improving

educational facilities, among which, I am convinced, the film is destined in the future to play a very important rôle. The Government of the Commonwealth of Australia is thus in full accord with the basic principles of the draft Convention for facilitating the International Circulation of Films of an Educational Character, and its delegation to this Assembly warmly commends the proposed recommendation to the Council for the earliest possible consideration of the amended Protocol.

While saying this, however, I should like very briefly to direct attention to the saving clause in the first sentence of the closing paragraph of the resolution before us. The Australian delegation wishes to thank the Rapporteur, the Italian delegate and others especially interested in pressing on with the draft Convention, for the inclusion of this proviso which, if I understand it aright, ensures that further consideration of the draft Convention shall not take place until all Governments, non-European as well as European, shall have had before them the full text of the new draft. Australia would gladly welcome such further discussion at the time of the forthcoming session of the Assembly, provided that it should have proved possible for the Council to make arrangements ensuring that the full text of the amended Protocol would previously have reached the Australian Government and enabled it to formulate definite instructions for its representatives at the special Assembly. I would repeat that, while insisting, along with the representatives of other non-European States in the Second Committee, upon the insertion of some such proviso in the resolution now before us, the Australian delegation has had no desire to delay unnecessarily the further discussion upon a project with the principles of which it is in full sympathy. We wish merely that the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia should be permitted to give to the new draft the same careful consideration as will be extended to it by the Governments of less distant Members of the League.

In directing attention to this matter, I must confess that I am not concerned solely with the particular project now before us. If you will permit me to say so, the question which I have raised is of more general importance, upon the significance of which I would briefly touch.

For European Governments, the distance of which from the headquarters of the League can be measured in terms of a comparatively few hours, it cannot be altogether easy to appreciate the serious and onerous responsibilities falling upon the overseas Governments of distant countries in keeping public opinion abreast of the activities, and firm in its support, of the League of Nations.

Among peoples remote from the field of European controversies and unreminded by frontier conditions of the pressing necessity for international machinery, there is a not altogether unintelligible tendency to regard the League of Nations as primarily a European organisation. That is a view which the Australian Government has at all times vigorously combated and a view to which the more responsible sections of Australian public opinion have never subscribed.

The more frequently European Governments utilise the machinery of the League for the improvement of their relations *inter se*, the greater must be the benefit for the rest of the world. But the fact remains that a section of Australian public opinion stands uneasy on this score. I speak in the matter with the feelings and convictions born of eight years' experience in endeavouring to state the case for the League to the Australian public of all classes and of all ages. This criticism is the one which I have most frequently encountered on the public platform.

In view of this personal experience, I may perhaps be pardoned for speaking on the subject at this, my first Assembly, in the presence of many who have laboured long in the service of the League. I would, in all earnestness, submit that, if the work of the League's protagonists in far off countries is not to be seriously endangered, every precaution should be taken here lest, in justifiable anxiety to press on with the conclusion of important business, action should be taken which might be misinterpreted overseas — which might be read as an indication of deliberate disregard for non-European countries. In a word, I would urge that nothing be done which might in any way tend to deprive the League of what in the long run must be its greatest bulwark — the firm support of an enlightened public opinion in all countries, great and small alike, in every corner of the civilised world.

The President :

Translation : I have listened with the greatest interest to the observations submitted by the delegate of Australia. I note his desire that due account should be taken of the great distance which separates certain countries from the League's centre. That desire will, I feel sure, be examined with the attention it deserves when the Council of the League comes to deal with the question.

As no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall regard the Second Committee's report and the draft resolution accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

53. — NATIONALITY OF WOMEN: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the First Committee's report on the question of the nationality of women (document A.61.1932.V, Annex 19).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Limburg, Vice-Chairman of the First Committee, and M. René Cassin, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Cassin, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Cassin (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : I shall confine myself to making a few special observations and putting before you a few reflections suggested to me by the discussion on this question.

The twelfth Assembly, like the thirteenth, was asked to decide whether in its opinion it is desirable to convene a fresh Conference to revise the Hague Convention of April 12th, 1930, on nationality, and more particularly Articles 8 to 11, which concern women, or whether the results achieved by the Hague Conference, while inadequate, represent all the progress that can be achieved on international lines at the present date.

This question formed the subject of several proposals and, in particular, of a proposal by the Chilean and Colombian delegations in favour of the first solution — the immediate revision of the articles to which exception is taken — and of a proposal by the Canadian delegation which expressed the hope that Governments would, as soon as they were able, put the Hague Convention into force, without prejudice to any subsequent action in the

matter. The Committee expressed itself in favour of the second solution, though not until very important discussions had taken place, an account of which you will find in the report. The voting was not unanimous: twenty-three delegations voted in favour of the Canadian resolution and four against it, while there were two abstentions.

Before adopting the resolution, the Committee had examined a solution proposed by the Belgian delegation — namely, that, instead of convening a new Conference, a more rapid procedure should be adopted, the actual substance of the Convention being left untouched and only such clauses being amended as might appear to justify the suspicion of "discrimination" between the sexes from the standpoint of nationality.

This proposal was found to be impracticable in the absence of unanimity, after very attentive — and I may say very sympathetic — examination by the Committee. Unanimity was an absolutely necessary condition for giving effect to it.

The Committee, having decided in favour of the Canadian proposal, felt it essential to supplement this first basis by emphasising its continued interest in the problem. Without attempting to give a legal interpretation binding upon the States or the Courts, it made a point of declaring that, in its opinion, the Hague Conference had not intended to sanction a principle at variance with independence of nationality in the case of married women, since it had in fact, in one of its recommendations, asked the States to consider the problem, taking duly into account the equality of the sexes from the standpoint of nationality. Not only did the Committee endeavour to dispel this misunderstanding; it submitted certain requests, for example, directing the attention of States to the question of the framing of laws from the standpoint of the equality of the sexes. It also instructed the Secretary-General from time to time to ask the Governments to give him information as to the effect which they have found it possible to give to Recommendation No. VI of the Codification Conference.

Again, the draft resolution concludes as follows :

"The Assembly, . . .

"Requests the Council, on the basis of the information so obtained, to follow the development of public opinion on this important question, in order to determine when such development has reached a point at which further concerted international action would be justified."

There you have the reminder which constitutes the essential feature of the discussions in the First Committee. I should like, however, to supplement these special observations with a few general reflections. The discussion brought out — if this was necessary — the great importance of the problem of nationality in general, and, first and foremost, the sad plight of persons who have been deprived of their nationality without their consent.

In their memorandum, the women's organisations stressed the point that, during this present period of economic distress, a large number of women have been deprived by marriage of their national link of origin and that it is thus impossible for them to obtain work in their country of origin because they are aliens, or that they are deprived of certain rights, such as the right to obtain a passport or to draw a retiring pension which they may have earned either by their service as officials or through having lost a member of their family, or again that it is impossible for them to obtain treatment in public hospitals.

This problem is a very important one, and I would add that the trials referred to here do not affect only women changing their nationality by

marriage. They affect in a more general way all stateless persons, and I myself, I am sorry to say, could — though such is not my intention — tell of the misery of many disabled ex-servicemen or families of combatants fallen in the service of one of the European countries, who have no pension from any State because States prefer to recruit nationals among those who can work and be productive, rather than among those who may become a burden. There are, unhappily, in Central Europe men who have lost one or more limbs, or families who have lost their breadwinner, and are rejected by all the States.

The Hague Convention already constitutes a palliative to this situation for married women. It is not the Convention that is the cause of their misfortunes: it is, on the contrary, the divergence in national laws. The problem, however, deserves to be viewed from a much wider angle.

We come now to the second observation suggested by our discussions. What the women's organisations had in mind was to ask the League to enunciate certain general principles which might be embodied in a general codification Convention.

Obviously, at the present juncture, the League cannot impose any modification in the domestic legislation of States; and that is true more particularly in the sphere of nationality, which — the Permanent Court has so proclaimed it — with some exceptions, forms part of what is described as the sphere reserved by international law for the exclusive legislation of States.

Nor again is it possible for the League to impose on States a policy consisting, for example, in a collective refusal to ratify a Convention which was concluded — and it is the first one — at the Hague under the League's auspices. The Convention in question was framed by the first Codification Conference.

But, even when States are in a position to plead reserved competence, they cannot escape what I will call the main currents of ideas prevailing in the world, and it is clear that the problem of nationality is intimately bound up with those main currents.

For upwards of a hundred years, it was not only the fashion but indeed the rule that a woman should always lose her own nationality on marriage and acquire that of her husband. There were only one or two countries in the world that had not adopted that rule. Since the end of the war a reverse movement has set in and has led, in some forty States, to a more or less complete change in the law.

Even if the League has no power to impose an attitude on States, it cannot avoid taking into consideration these main currents of ideas. I would even say that the reason for which it was set up was that the representatives of States might, at any given moment, concert together, follow up the evolution of ideas and decide that, at a given moment, it might be expedient to convene a Conference to examine a specific subject. The League, then, cannot wash its hands of certain big problems. Apart from what comes within its legal competence, there is what I might call a kind of human competence; it cannot refuse to concern itself with certain important questions which dominate our social existence.

But here we touch on a third problem, no longer that of the relations between the League and the States, but that of the relations between the League and the big private organisations, and in particular the big international organisations. Obviously the statute of the League did not make those international organisations a constitutional organ of the League. The League is composed solely of States represented by their Governments, and when an international association which reflects, or believes it is reflecting, a general opinion desires to

lay a problem before the League, it is through a Government — either in the Council or in the Assembly — that it brings the question to the notice of our deliberative bodies for the purpose of discussion.

But, is it possible to argue that, because these private organisations are not constitutional organs of the League, they are not spiritual supports essential to the life of the League? For my part, I believe they are. I am convinced that the League will not attain the solidity we desire it to possess unless it is recognised to be based essentially on the approval and support of the masses, organised according to groups which are in no way territorial in character but which aim at fulfilling an economic, moral and social purpose. The collaboration of private bodies with the League is essential for the League's development.

Such being the case, it is obvious that, when we follow the present discussion, when we find that the Committee had to decide against a claim submitted by large women's organisations representing millions of women, we might be tempted to conclude that there is a contradiction and to say: If you deprive the League of the confidence of the women of the world, you will be depriving it of one of its sources of life.

I do not share that fear. I would say, on the contrary, that collaboration between the League and the large private organisations presupposes mutual esteem, and there would be no evidence of esteem on the part of the League if the latter confined itself to exhibiting its regard for the large private organisations by hollow words of sympathy. The League's regard for those organisations may manifest itself even in the form of contradiction, when it appears that certain ideas are not yet ripe. The attachment of the masses to the League and their esteem for it will be greater if the League has the courage to face its responsibilities than if it discreetly manœuvres so as to avoid openly rejecting certain claims.

In our discussions, it may thus have been painful to some who regard the women's claim to equality of rights from the standpoint of nationality as justified not to associate themselves with the resolution of Chile and Colombia; but it is better to state, in all good faith, that it is not possible at the present juncture to give effect to that claim on international lines, rather than to shake the credit of the League and the credit of codification itself by any attempt at revision which might be premature and void of efficacy in practice.

When, on the other hand, it appeared that the question was ripe — and that was what happened in a neighbouring Committee which was discussing the problem of the collaboration of women in the work of the League — you passed a resolution reproduced in the report of Mme. Hesselgren, delegate of Sweden, which led you to adopt a different attitude. There is no contradiction; we find, on the contrary, an affirmation of the seriousness with which you are dealing with these problems.

Moreover, if this were necessary, our courage would appear already to have reaped its reward. As Rapporteur for the question, I have received, from the large women's organisations which took the chief part in the preparation of our discussions, a communication which I have been requested to read to the Assembly. It is as follows:

"The resolution does not contain all the desiderata of the large international women's associations or of women in general, who would have preferred that the ratification of the Convention should not be recommended, their object being to obtain complete legal equality

between men and women in regard to nationality. The present circumstances not having permitted of a more favourable solution, the large international women's associations have decided to pursue their activities within the several States and in collaboration with the League of Nations, until they have obtained full satisfaction."

"Such a communication cannot surprise us as regards the regrets it expresses. These private organisations obviously still have the right to state their point of view and to maintain it. But the contents of the resolution are a credit to the groups which are its authors, and, in saying this, I think I am interpreting the views of everyone here. Those groups, in deciding to pursue their activities within the States and in collaboration with the League, have given proof of their wisdom and political maturity; they have proved also that any fear of a rupture between the League and the private organisations was really unfounded, because sympathetic and serious consideration has been given to the claims of the women's organisations and they have not been disdainfully rejected in flowery terms.

In consequence, as a result of this discussion, which was somewhat delicate and in which the opposing views were scrupulously weighed, I think the Assembly can unanimously pass the resolution submitted to it by the First Committee, and can also associate itself unanimously with the thanks to the women's organisations which already appear in the report, and, further, can associate itself with the desire for collaboration which those associations have themselves just conveyed to us.

I think that by means of such collaboration, which can be established not only with the associations in question but with any other associations that may have similar problems to submit to the League, the latter will be able to strengthen that moral authority of which some who were not its friends would like to deprive it, and it will at the same time be fulfilling its normal purpose, which, besides the ensuring of international peace, is to reduce the misery and injustice that fall to the lot of so many human beings and, as you know, are the causes of wars.

The President :

Translation : Mme. Ingeborg Aas, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Mme. Ingeborg Aas (Norway). — Though a representative of a country which has ratified the Hague Convention, I wish, on this occasion, to say that, in Norway, we do not consider the stipulations of that Convention as an expression of what I might call an ideal status. Our Government has been of the opinion, and I think rightly, that the ratification of the Hague Convention is a step forward towards the final aim — equality between women and men as to nationality; the opinion prevailing in the Norwegian women's organisations interested is agreement in the matter of equality between the sexes. Not only is this opinion held in the women's circles concerned, but also in circles which I might perhaps call "men's circles" — that is, in Government and, I believe, in Parliamentary circles — which have the last word to say as regards legislation. I know the same opinion prevails in Sweden and Denmark, at least as far as the women are concerned, and I also speak on behalf of all the Scandinavian countries when I say that we are all prepared to do what can be done to bring influence to bear on the legislative powers in a direction that may make our national legislation — though very much advanced — still more advanced, and to bring it as far as possible into conformity with

the views that have been expressed here at Geneva on so many occasions and by so many of the women's organisations.

In accordance with what I have stated above, I can fully support the resolution laid before the Assembly, since both the resolution and the discussion in the First Committee have made it clear that the Hague Convention in no way prejudices further progress in the direction women wish. This Convention is an attempt to solve a difficult practical problem, and is not meant to be a model for international legislation on nationality. The Norwegian delegation has expressed its interest in a revision of the Convention, but has found that there is no possibility at present of immediate action. I think it is evident, after the Conference at The Hague in 1930, that the existing Convention represents for the time being the maximum of agreement in this respect. This is a very deplorable state of things, but, in view of the fact that the legislation on this matter is so widely different in the various countries, it might even be useful to have the present Convention as a basis on which to work towards the achievement of our great common aim. The draft resolution before the Assembly leaves the way open for a revision at any time when it might be considered that the moment has come for a successful advance.

In conclusion, I will express my heartiest thanks to the Rapporteur for his broadminded and excellent work.

The President :

Translation : Mme Vergara, delegate of Chile, will address the Assembly.

Mme. Vergara (Chile) :

Translation : At the moment when we are about to vote on the resolution drawn up by the First Committee, after long and difficult discussions — I refer to the resolution relating to the Hague Nationality Convention — I consider it my duty to give the Assembly the reasons why my delegation, and with it the women's organisations, opposed in the First Committee the adoption of such a text.

You are aware that, immediately after the Hague Conference, and even during that Conference, women protested vehemently against an international instrument which placed them in a position of inferiority as compared with men in the matter of nationality, in the case of marriage between nationals of different countries or of a subsequent change of nationality on the part of the man during married life.

Our attitude is based on deep-lying considerations of justice and equality. We firmly believe that, in the matter of nationality, women should be placed on the same footing as men, and that the fact of belonging to one sex or the other should not be allowed to involve differential treatment to the prejudice of women.

Unhappily, this is exactly what Articles 8 to 11 of the Hague Convention do, and, for this reason, women have asked for the revision of those articles before the Assembly of the League recommends the States Members to ratify the Convention.

In acting thus, we were guided by numerous precedents and had particularly in mind the principle that, when legislating on the rights of woman, account should be taken of her aspirations and of her just and legitimate desires.

Legislators, whether national or international, must legislate in accordance with the will of the persons or Governments to whom the legal provisions in question will apply, and we are very sorry

to have to say that most of the States which signed the Hague Convention have declared in favour of its prompt ratification, pleading motives which, I must say, have not impressed women very much.

The resolution submitted by the Rapporteur is based on that attitude of mind, and serves mainly to show that there is nothing in the Hague Convention which can be regarded as harmful to the interests of women, and that, in any case, that was not the intention of the legislator. It also states that the moment has not yet come to consider the revision of the articles to which objection has been taken.

It is difficult for us women to persuade ourselves that there is nothing in the Hague Convention harmful to our interests, when we have been vehemently asserting the contrary in every language since 1930. It is true that we have become used, since the days of the gynæceum, to being told by men that we are in the best of positions.

As regards the desirability of revision at the present time, it was for the Governments signatory to the Convention to decide, and they have decided against it by a large majority. We are grievously disappointed; once more our sincerest aspirations have been rejected.

But, to be fair, I must say that the resolution before us contains some glimmer of hope for our cause: the periodical enquiries to be made by the Secretariat, the maintenance of the Advisory Committee on Nationality, the usefulness of which has been emphasised by the Rapporteur with great wisdom and insight, and also the passage in which the Assembly associates itself with Recommendation No. VI inserted in the Final Act of the Hague Conference.

The Chilean delegation, here, as at the Hague Conference, has fought tenaciously to achieve the triumph of our cause, has fought for an idea that has for long years been embodied in my country's laws. It has done so, conscious that it is serving, not only its own convictions, but those of a large proportion of world opinion. It voted against the draft resolution in the Sub-Committee and in the First Committee. But it is now, in the Assembly, brought face to face with the principle of unanimity in the adoption of resolutions, a principle that is at once the guardian and the pledge of the sovereignty of the States represented here.

We are animated by a broad spirit of democracy and of reconciliation, and we do not intend in the present case to avail ourselves of the right accorded us by the Covenant; we are willing that the majority shall lay down the law. On the other hand, you will, I am sure, not find it unnatural that my delegation should abstain from voting, as it could not accept the principles upon which the resolution is based. According to the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, countries which abstain from voting are regarded as absent. We attach great importance to that so-called absence, as it exactly represents our doctrinal position in this discussion. That absence will not, however, be very prolonged, at least as far as we women are concerned, as we will never give up what we regard as our right.

The President :

Translation : Mme. Oyarzabal de Palencia, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

Mme. Oyarzabal de Palencia (Spain). — During the meetings of the First Committee, the Spanish delegation indicated the attitude which it would adopt in this matter. Spain, which has given women every satisfaction in the matter of nationality, could not support the proposal of the Chilean

and Colombian delegations, because she foresaw the difficulties in the way of a revision of the Hague Convention. Notwithstanding this, and because she has been able to draw up her national law in a way that has given complete satisfaction to the feminine organisations in the country, she would like to express to the Assembly — and especially to those colleagues to whom she is so fraternally attached — sorrow that there should have been any disillusionment and comprehension of the disappointment felt that the long struggle should not have achieved all that was expected. At the same time, she would express her assurance that the goodwill brought by everyone to the discussions, the splendid work done by the Rapporteur and his desire to find means of satisfying everybody, will bear good fruit.

The Spanish delegation is very pleased to note the adoption of a spirit of conciliation by the Chilean delegation. This is the best answer that can be given to our Rapporteur's appeal that feminine organisations should continue to co-operate with the League, as they will do and as they have been asked to do in another report adopted by the Assembly. In that spirit, we feel that, if the Chilean delegation is now obliged to abstain from voting — an attitude it has maintained throughout — it will nevertheless continue to work for the cause of women within the League.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall put the following draft resolution to the vote :

The Assembly,

Having considered with the greatest interest the report of the Secretary-General containing the observations submitted by Governments on the subject of the nationality of women in accordance with the resolution of the twelfth Assembly (documents A.15, A.15(a) and A.15(b).1932.V), together with the observations of the Committee of Representatives of Women's International Organisations (document A.23.1932.V) and the petitions of the " Catholic Women and Catholic Men " (document A.33.1932.V) ;

Considering that the Hague Codification Conference did not intend to embody in the provisions of the Convention on Certain Questions relating to the Conflict of Nationality Laws any principle in contradiction with the independence of the nationality of married women, but rather to put an end to certain difficulties which arise from existing divergencies between the law governing the matter in different countries (Articles 8, 9 and 11), and that Article 10 even contains a formal application of the principle of independence ; and that the Hague Codification Conference, by its recommendation No. VI, requested States " to examine whether it would not be possible :

" (1) To introduce into their law the principle of the equality of the sexes in matters of nationality, taking particularly into consideration the interests of the children,

" (2) And especially to decide that, in principle, the nationality of the wife shall henceforth not be affected without her consent either by the mere fact of marriage or by any change in the nationality of her husband " ;

Noting that, in their observations, a large number of Governments express the opinion that Articles 8 to 11 of the Hague Convention represent the degree of progress which can at present be obtained by way of general international agreement

in regard to the question of the nationality of women ;

Considering that any amendment outside the normal procedure for revision would prove impracticable and, therefore, that it is not possible even to eliminate from the text the words that seem to have created a misconception as to a discrimination of sexes in regard to nationality ;

Being satisfied, therefore, that the coming into force of Articles 8 to 11 would in no way prejudice further concerted international action, when such action becomes practicable ;

Recognising that their coming into force would not, in the meantime, place any restriction upon the freedom of action of any State that may desire to give further effect in its nationality laws to the principle of equality of the sexes ;

Considering, finally, the question of the nationality of women to be in process of evolution and connected with the change of women's position in social, economic and political life :

Expresses the hope that the States which have already signed the Hague Nationality Convention will introduce such legislation as may be necessary to give effect thereto, and will deposit their ratifications at an early date ;

Draws the attention of the States that have not yet passed the necessary legislative measures to give effect to the Convention to the possibility of enacting their internal legislative measures in a form more appropriate to meet the wishes of the women's organisations ;

Instructs the Secretary-General from time to time to ask the Governments to give him information as to the effect which they have found it possible to give to the Recommendation No. VI of the Codification Conference ;

Requests the Council, on the basis of the information so obtained, to follow the development of public opinion on this important question, in order to determine when such development has reached a point at which further concerted international action would be justified.

As certain delegations have asked that the conclusions of the First Committee's report should be submitted to the vote of the Assembly, I would ask you to proceed, in accordance with Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure, which provides that the voting shall be by *appel nominal*, and lays down two alternative methods of voting to be adopted at the discretion of the Assembly — a public vote and a secret ballot. I do not think there is any reason to adopt the secret method, and I am sure the Assembly will agree with me in preferring a public vote. The clause applicable in this case provides that : " The name of each delegation shall be called, and one of its members shall reply 'Yes', 'No', or 'Not voting'. The result of the vote shall be recorded and announced to the Assembly."

If no one has any objection, the voting will be carried out in that manner.

Those delegations which accept the conclusions of the report will reply "Yes", those which do not accept them will reply "No", and those which are not satisfied with the draft resolution, but do not wish to reject it, will reply "Not voting".

(The vote was then taken by roll-call.)

The President :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

States voting in favour of the resolution : Australia, Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Irish Free State, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Roumania, Siam, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

States abstaining : Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Guatemala, Mexico, Poland and Turkey.

States voting against the resolution : None.

The Assembly has therefore adopted by thirty votes to none, with nine abstentions, the draft resolution proposed by the First Committee.

The draft resolution was adopted.

54. — SLAVERY : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the Sixth Committee's report on slavery (document A.57.1932.VI, Annex 20).

(On the invitation of the President, Dr. Lange, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and M. Loudon, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Loudon, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Loudon (Netherlands), Rapporteur :

Translation : As you no doubt remember, the Assembly, in its resolution of September 25th, 1931, requested the Council to appoint for one year a small Committee of Experts to examine the material upon slavery which had been supplied or transmitted by Governments since the signature of the Convention of 1926 and to submit suggestions with a view to recommending to the present Assembly the measures of assistance which the League of Nations could render to those countries which have agreed to abolish slavery and which request such assistance.

The Council, in its resolution of September 29th, 1931, gave effect to the Assembly resolution by instructing a Committee of Experts to examine the material in question and to submit a report stating the extent to which the Convention of 1926 had achieved its object, the obstacles that existed to further progress in that direction, and the methods to be adopted for rendering assistance to countries desirous of abolishing slavery in their territory.

To that task, defined in the terms of the Assembly resolution, the Council resolution added a new one — namely, that the Committee of Experts should be asked to say whether, with that object in view, any modifications of the existing machinery of the League would be desirable, and if so, which.

Finally, the Committee of Experts was requested to express an opinion as regards possible measures for inducing States which were behind-hand to ratify the Convention of 1926 or to accede to it, in conformity with a general recommendation addressed to all the Advisory Committees by a Council resolution dated January 25th, 1932.

The Committee of Experts, which consisted of eight highly qualified persons appointed by the Council, held two sessions at Geneva, in May and August last, under the chairmanship of M. Gohr, the distinguished Chairman of the

Temporary Committee on Slavery. The Committee's report, which was prepared by M. Gohr himself, was referred by the Council to your Sixth Committee, which, in its turn, referred it to a Sub-Committee, in order to prepare for the plenary discussion. This report of the Committee of Experts is a most praiseworthy document. It contains an excellent statement of the position in all those countries where slavery and the slave trade unfortunately still exist. To each of the chapters of the report is appended a number of suggestions. Finally, in the last chapter, the report proposes the creation of a new bureau and of a Permanent Advisory Committee.

The Sub-Committee appointed by the Sixth Committee, after long discussion, slightly modified the Committee of Experts' proposals on one important point — namely, in regard to the method of work of the Advisory Committee, which would not be at liberty — as had been recommended by the Experts — to consult, on its own initiative, organisations or persons, even those enjoying the confidence of their Governments, but would have to base its studies exclusively on the material supplied by the Governments to the Secretariat or transmitted through those Governments.

Furthermore, if a communication regarding a country is sent to the Committee by the Government of another State, the Committee will have to transmit it through the Council to the Government of the country in question for its observations.

Finally, the Committee will not be competent to hear depositions, being strictly advisory and having no powers of supervision.

Contrary to the opinion of the Experts, the Sub-Committee considered that it was not desirable to set up a new bureau at the Secretariat, but that it would be sufficient if one official were attached to one of the existing offices.

The Committee, consisting of seven members of different nationalities, would be appointed by the Council for an undefined term, but its composition could be renewed every six years. The Committee would meet once every two years, if necessary, which would not prevent it continuing its work without a break in the meantime.

As the Experts stated, this Committee would, by the mere fact of its existence, keep public opinion alive and at the same time encourage States, where the evil still exists, to put an end to it.

The Sixth Committee, which, like its Sub-Committee, was unanimously in favour of setting up the Permanent Committee in question, was surprised and disappointed to observe that the same unanimity was lacking within most of the delegations. The Fourth Committee, which was called upon, in accordance with the opinion of the Supervisory Commission, to decide whether the Sixth Committee's proposal, as involving further expenditure for which provision had not been made in the budget already submitted for 1933, could or could not be examined by the present Assembly, was very far from yielding the two-thirds majority required in such cases under the terms of the Financial Regulations.

In consequence, since, owing to that vote of the Fourth Committee, the funds for the execution of the scheme provided for in the Sixth Committee's proposal are not available, the Sixth Committee has been obliged to discard its draft resolution and to replace it by a new text providing merely that the Assembly requests the Secretary-General to include the necessary credit in his draft budget for 1934, and requests the Council to take, in the interval, all measures not involving fresh expenditure which may conduce to the prompt carrying out of the proposal, should the 1934 Assembly — as we hope it may — grant that credit.

M. Loudon then read the resolution, framed as follows :

The Assembly :

Notes the report of the Committee of Experts on Slavery which was transmitted to it by the Council's resolution of September 23rd, 1932 (document A.34.1932.VI) ;

Expresses its appreciation of the excellent work done by the Committee of Experts ;

Draws the attention of the Governments of the Members of the League and of the States parties to the 1926 Convention to the opinions and suggestions contained in the report of the Committee of Experts, and hopes that the organs of the League will be kept informed of the measures which the Governments continue to take for the total abolition of the slave trade and of slavery in its different forms ;

Decides that an Advisory Committee of Experts shall be constituted, whose composition, competence and functions are described in the annex to the present resolution ;

Requests the Secretary-General to include in his draft budget for 1934 the necessary credit for this Committee ; and

Requests the Council to take, in the interval, all measures not requiring budgetary credit and which will conduce to the carrying out of the proposals which have been made.

ANNEX.

A. The Committee shall consist of seven members chosen solely for their special knowledge of slavery questions, all the members being of different nationalities. They shall be appointed for an undefined term, the Council retaining the right to renew the composition of the Committee every six years. The duties of the Committee, which will meet once every two years, if necessary, will be strictly advisory and it will have no powers of supervision ; its task will be :

(1) To study and examine the documents supplied or transmitted by Governments to the Secretariat ;

(2) To study, on the basis of such documents and of the special knowledge of its members, the facts and institutions mentioned in Article 1 of the 1926 Slavery Convention and to examine their rôle in the social system ;

(3) To study the means of gradually abolishing these institutions or customs, or of causing them to develop in such a way as to deprive them of any objectionable features ;

(4) If a country where slavery exists asks for financial assistance from the League of Nations in settling questions relating to the abolition of slavery, the Committee will, at the request of the Council, examine the objects for which this financial assistance is requested, the minimum amount necessary and the guarantees offered ;

(5) The Committee shall not deal with questions relating to Article 5 of the 1926 Slavery Convention.

The Committee's proceedings will be confidential. At the termination of each session, the Committee will submit a report to the Council ; and the Council shall decide whether the whole or part of this report should be published.

The Committee will draw up its own rules to regulate its proceedings, and these shall be submitted for the approval of the Council.

In carrying out its duties the Committee is to observe the following rules :

(1) The consultation of organisations or persons on facts concerning slavery is not permitted. These organisations or persons will have to send their complaints or observations through the intermediary of their respective Governments.

(2) If a communication concerning a country is addressed to the Committee by the Government of another State, the Committee shall transmit it, through the intermediary of the Council, to the Government of the country concerned for its observations.

(3) The Committee shall not be competent to hear depositions.

It is understood that, in agreeing to the setting up of this Committee, the Governments parties to the Slavery Convention of 1926 do not assume any obligation of such a nature as to modify those they have entered into in virtue of that Convention.

B. The Secretariat of the Committee will be provided by the Secretariat of the League of Nations. Its task will be :

(1) To receive the documents sent to the League of Nations in virtue of Article 7 of the Slavery Convention and all other documents which the Governments may transmit on subjects concerning slavery ;

(2) To collect, for the use of the members of the Committee, information and surveys published concerning slavery ;

(3) To make a methodical classification of all documents and information.

The President :

Translation : M. Lucien Hubert, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Lucien Hubert (France) :

Translation : Like our distinguished Rapporteur, M. London, I have read with much attention and interest the Experts' report, which has led us to contemplate the setting up of a new Slavery Committee.

That report shows, in the first place, that all the Governments have carried on the campaign against this evil more or less successfully, though by different methods. It also clearly brings out the difficulties involved — political, financial, social and religious — and, further, establishes the need for positive goodwill between all those collaborating in this work. The conflict is indeed a hard one. We cannot be sure, simply because States may have abolished the legal status of slavery, that slaves will necessarily be liberated. Account must be taken of resistance in the form of peculiar conditions, custom, tradition and mentality. I indicated this to the Sixth Committee by the following anecdote. Many years ago my great friend, the explorer Binger, was asked to set up in Senegal what were called "villages of liberty". Having completed that useful piece of work, he returned the following year to see what had become of the slaves thus liberated and, on asking the village headman if he appreciated his liberty and found it a good thing, he received the following reply, the headman being one of those just recently

freed : "Freedom is a good thing, but it means a dearth of slaves".

That anecdote brings out a point which must never be forgotten ; but this is really a question of custom and mentality.

As the report shows, however, custom is not the only factor to be considered in the campaign against slavery. Where are the freed slaves to go if they cannot gain a livelihood ? How are they to become wage-earners if there is no free labour in the country where they live ? Then comes the most urgent question of all : in order to be free, one must eat. Eating was for thousands of years the sole preoccupation of human beings ; the same applies to-day in the case of too many ill-nourished races. If we can ensure a food-supply, we thereby ensure the liberty of the individual and make the success of the anti-slavery campaign a practical possibility. Only when this problem had been solved were human beings truly free and in a position to rise to higher forms of thought and action. To ensure the certainty of daily bread is to ensure freedom of thought and, in backward countries at the present time, the liberty of the individual. No text and no committee will ever possess more effective powers than that. We must obtain for these unhappy peoples who have been the prey of the slave trafficker security — that is to say, an end to their harried nomadism and some possibility of pausing in their exhausting race. That would be the end of slavery properly speaking. Against its survival repressive legislation, legal measures, will be of value only in so far as local conditions can assimilate them. In the last resort, the real attack on slavery is a development of civilisation itself.

You will excuse these general ideas. They are dear to my country, which has played an outstanding part in the struggle against slavery, from the great days of the Revolution until the defeat of Rabah, the great slave merchant, including the abolitionist decrees of 1848. Precisely because the part we have played in the crusade has been such a considerable one, we associate ourselves wholeheartedly in the League's noble struggle against slavery.

There are at present three main forms of slavery. In certain countries, the legal status of slavery has not been abolished, while in others it exists in an attenuated form which is daily yielding to the action of the colonising Powers and to economic and social changes in populations which are still backward. Lastly, certain customs, such as the sale of women and children, and certain labour contracts in which the employer receives the lion's share, may still remain in force. The League has a task to fulfil in all this barbarism. It already possesses a useful weapon — the 1926 Convention — and if it could insist upon the application of the Convention in all countries, an important step would already have been taken.

The Sixth Committee contemplated adding a small body to those League bodies already in existence. Your Rapporteur, our distinguished friend M. London, has told you what the Sixth Committee wished to do. Whatever may be the fate of the committee which it is proposed to call into being, the main thing is that it should meet with general sympathy in its work. The Committee of Experts did not always meet with such general goodwill. Of the fifty-three States consulted, only fifteen have so far replied. In many cases the information was nil, and in other cases the opinions transmitted were entirely contradictory. The proposed committee must be given a better chance, and I sincerely hope this will be the case. Like M. London, I do not think it is likely to inconvenience any Government. In

the first place, it would be purely advisory. Article 7 of the 1926 Convention required the Governments to communicate to the League of Nations any laws or regulations concerning slavery, and the new committee will give them an opportunity of forwarding any other useful documents. As you have been told, it will meet every two years, and its composition may be renewed every six years by the Council. Unless otherwise decided by the Council, its proceedings will be confidential. Finally, all material bearing on the subjects in question must pass through the Governments, as must anything in the nature of consultations with organisations or persons.

It is thus to be hoped that, despite its small size, the Committee will meet with the success it deserves. Events, moreover, will assist it in its task. The pressure of public opinion, combined with progress in the education of the masses, who are still ignorant, are its most effective weapons. The history of the successes in this field since 1925 is proof enough of this. No committee or new Convention was needed to induce the Sovereign of Abyssinia to undertake the noble anti-slavery campaign to which the Sixth Committee paid a well-merited tribute.

In conclusion, I would say that the immense service that the League can render here is to create a collective conscience capable of inspiring and furthering national efforts to abolish slavery, the outcome of barbarism and want. We must vie with one another in friendly rivalry. Collective thinking must forge the bonds of cordial collaboration in this work, for it is in the will to joint action that what we confidently call the spirit of Geneva can find its best expression.

The President :

Translation : Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, delegate of the United Kingdom, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil (United Kingdom) : I feel I ought to apologise for speaking at this late hour, and yet I cannot refrain from saying a few words because the motion now before us is the latest step in the effort that the League has made to extirpate slavery from the world. That effort began some ten years ago with a proposal put forward on behalf of the Dominion of New Zealand calling attention to what was believed to be a recrudescence of slavery. As a result of that proposal a committee was appointed — a very important and valuable Committee presided over by the same gentleman who presided over the recent Committee of Experts, M. Gohr, of Belgium. That Committee surveyed the whole world situation with regard to slavery and made a number of recommendations as to what might be done to suppress this evil. On the basis of its findings, a Convention was prepared and put forward by the British delegation in 1925. That Convention gave rise to much discussion throughout the year and, in consequence of the difficulties which some Governments felt, the matter was adjourned until 1926, when it was again debated, and the Convention ultimately passed. That Convention has now been ratified by a considerable number of States, by practically all those States which have an active connection with the subject.

The Convention provided for the supply of information ; those who promoted the Convention desired that the information should be a good deal fuller than was actually permitted by the Convention, but something at any rate was done. Provision was made that the Governments which ratified the Convention should undertake to furnish to the League every year certain information. In actual fact, as the representative of France has just told you, the information furnished proved to be very

meagre in character — very often a mere record of some of the statutes passed. As a consequence, the British delegation felt that something more was needed if the Convention on Slavery was to be a really effective instrument. It therefore pressed, on several occasions, for the nomination of a permanent committee which should watch over the execution of that Convention. Unfortunately, it was unsuccessful in persuading the Assembly on two occasions, but last year it was more fortunate. It succeeded in getting the Assembly to agree to the nomination of a Committee of Experts and, at its suggestion, one of the points on which the Committee was asked to report was whether any change in the machinery of the League was necessary in order to complete the extirpation of slavery.

The Committee was an extremely competent body, its members drawn from seven different countries. The names recorded on the first page of the Committee's report show, to anyone who knows anything about this particular subject, that we had the services of some of the greatest experts in the world. They made most valuable recommendations and suggestions on the general topic of slavery and concluded their report by recommending the appointment of this new Committee which the Assembly is now asked to sanction.

The object of this permanent Committee, as has been pointed out, is to increase the flow of information on the subject, to concentrate public attention more and more on the necessity of getting rid of this scourge, and to suggest various methods by which that can be done. The Committee of Experts was extremely prudent in its recommendations ; it suggested that the permanent Committee should only have very restricted powers — quite rightly I think — and that it should not be, in any sense, a Committee to supervise the work of Governments. Nevertheless, the Sixth Committee of the Assembly was still more prudent and reduced the powers of the proposed Committee in two or three respects. I need not elaborate them here, as they have been mentioned by the Rapporteur. I would, however, say that I personally regret very much that it was found necessary to declare that the proceedings of the Committee should be confidential. I would far rather have left it to the Committee to say when their work should be confidential and when not. However, that was the decision and my Government has accepted it.

Thus the Sixth Committee agreed upon a unanimous recommendation, but even then our difficulties were not at an end. It was necessary to get the assent of the Fourth Committee because some expense was involved. The Fourth Committee, taking a very strict view as it seems to me — perhaps quite wrongly — of the necessities of the case, was unable to authorise the consideration of that expense, though a very small sum was involved, because the formal demand for insertion in the budget had not been made a month before the present session of the Assembly. Quite true, but, at least three weeks before the Assembly, the Committee of Experts had presented its report and thenceforward it was perfectly clear that such a demand would necessarily be made. Unfortunately, however, it was not made within the month and on that ground, and on that ground only, the Fourth Committee was unable to sanction the expenditure of this very small sum.

It would not be right for me to criticise the action of the Fourth Committee but I must say that those who said, in that Committee, that there was no urgency in this matter took, it seems to me, a very strange view of urgency, and I doubt whether it would be shared by some of the slaves still in the condition of slavery. This is the recommendation of a committee of experts, the members

of which are all intimately acquainted with the subject, and they have declared the proposal for this permanent Committee to be essential for the conduct of the work, and I myself, if I had not been differently instructed by the Fourth Committee, should have thought it a matter of the greatest possible urgency when once that advice had been given.

It is, however, no use to return to that matter. The decision was taken and the Sixth Committee was bound to abide by it. This latter Committee did its best to recast its report, and it asks the Assembly to authorise the establishment of the permanent Committee and suggests that the money should be asked for next year instead of this year. Further, if the Assembly accepts our proposal, the Secretary-General will be asked to do what he can, without incurring expense, to ensure that the preliminary work necessary to set on foot this new proposal may be started. Even so, I am afraid it means a loss of at least six months, and perhaps more, in starting this new piece of machinery. Nevertheless, we have made a step forward, a definite advance, one more blow has been struck in a great cause, and I must say we have every reason to feel encouraged at the results of the efforts made during the last ten years.

I read, as no doubt we all did, the report of the Committee of Experts. On the whole, it is an encouraging document and shows that in a good many countries during the last few years slavery has declined and that there has been a growing movement against it. Further, although there are always strong influences in certain countries on the other side and though, as the last speaker said, "slavery is only one of the evils to which man is heir", in my view it is the foundation of many other evils of which he spoke. Nevertheless, it is the general view that we are gradually getting a sound public opinion everywhere against this scourge.

I was very glad to hear my predecessor at this tribune pay a word of tribute to the Emperor of Abyssinia, who, if I may be permitted, without impertinence, to say so, is doing a most admirable work. He has done much in his country by creating machinery to get rid of slavery. He has created, amongst other things, a Slavery Department, an Advisory Council, and an Anti-Slavery Society. Further, he quite recently decreed the liberation of a large number of slaves belonging to one of the more important chiefs, and I should like to read to you a few extracts from the proclamation he made on the subject, because they are vivid and impressive. This is the proclamation made in the name of the King of Kings of Abyssinia :

" We hereby manumit you, all you slaves who were in the possession of Ras Hailu.

" And you, the Judge appointed for the emancipation of slaves, are hereby ordered, when the slaves of Ras Hailu are produced before you, to register their names as well as their countries and give them their manumission papers.

" And you, children of slaves, who are under the age of ten years, We have arranged for you to be supplied with food and clothing and to be educated in the schools of the churches.

" You, the Judge appointed for the emancipation of slaves, are further directed to hand over to the schoolmaster against his receipt the slave children, and to enquire into their condition of health and the progress of their education every six months and send your report on the subject every year to the Slavery Department which We have established at Addis Ababa. With regard to the slaves who cannot work and earn their living . . . "

The Emperor is not oblivious to the difficulties which M. Lucien Hubert has recently pointed out —

" . . . owing to old age and other infirmities, you are hereby ordered to arrange that each of them is granted a pension to live on."

This is, to me, a most encouraging document and represents, in one of the most important countries as regards this matter, the first fruits of the collaboration between the League of Nations and the Emperor of Abyssinia in the matter of slavery. We should, I think, look upon this as an encouragement, not only to ourselves, but to humanity at large.

The President :

Translation : Count de Penha Garcia, delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

Count de Penha Garcia (Portugal) :

Translation : I will only detain you for a moment to say a few words in support of the admirable report which M. Loudon has submitted. I fully agree with its conclusions. My sole purpose in addressing you is to point out that it has taken four years to reach those conclusions, and yet we all feel sure that the delegations which for three years opposed the constitution of the Committee of Experts were as anxious as the rest to combat slavery and were determined to do what they could to reduce that scourge and indeed to abolish it as quickly as possible. Agreement was for long prevented by important legal questions, to which some reference should be made now. They were questions of a constitutional nature, questions of procedure and, above all, there was one question of very definite importance to the League of Nations — namely, the principle of the sovereignty of the State. I know that many people, even theorists, believe State sovereignty to be an evil; they believe that an attempt is being made to restrict it and even to eliminate it altogether. In my opinion, however, we shall not get as far as that for a long time to come.

State sovereignty, moreover, is understood here in a very broad sense. For example, my own delegation protested on many occasions against the original form contemplated for this Committee, for the very reason that it affected to some extent the principle of the sovereignty of the State; yet the Portuguese delegation helped to bring about the agreement in the Sixth Committee, and even went further and voted the necessary credits in the Fourth Committee.

Fortunately, we have been able to reach agreement, and that is a noteworthy achievement, to which the Rapporteur and the Chairman contributed not a little. It is always difficult to reach agreement when opinions differ on points of law. We were, however, able to meet the views of the British delegation, and of Viscount Cecil in particular. As you know, Viscount Cecil is a great protagonist of the League. He has this question very much at heart, and we were all ready to do what we could to meet his views.

The agreement is a compromise, and as such will have to be maintained in its entirety; otherwise, the legal problems would arise again.

I trust that the Permanent Committee will yield the results we expect of it. I myself think it will prove very useful in the field marked out for it by the Sixth Committee; I am glad that that Committee was able to achieve unanimity, which, as you know, is the secret of the League's strength.

The President :

Translation : As no other delegate has asked to speak, I shall consider the Sixth Committee's

report on slavery and the draft resolution accompanying it adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

55. — APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE OF NINETEEN SET UP BY THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : I have just received from M. Hymans, as President of the Special Session of the Assembly, the following letter, dated October 12th, 1932 :

"You are aware that, at the beginning of its special session devoted to the examination of the Chinese Government's appeal under Article 15 of the Covenant, the Assembly decided, on March 11th, 1932, to 'set up a Committee of nineteen Members—namely, the President of the Assembly . . . the Members of the Council, other than the parties to the dispute, and six other Members to be elected by secret ballot'.

"As a result of the last elections to the Council, two Members of the Committee of Nineteen who were sitting as Members of the Council have ceased to form part of this Committee. Furthermore, one of the two new Members of the Council, Czechoslovakia, was already represented on this Committee as a Member elected by the Assembly.

"The Committee accordingly consists at present of eighteen Members, since, apart from the President, it now only comprises five Members of the League not represented on the Council.

"I therefore venture to suggest that the present Assembly should proceed to the election of one of its Members not represented on the Council, so that the composition of the Special Committee of the Assembly should once more be as provided for in the resolution of March 11th.

(Signed) Paul HYMANS,

"President of the Committee of Nineteen."

In accordance with precedent, this letter will be printed and distributed. At the next meeting of the Bureau, to-morrow afternoon, I will ask it to decide when and by what procedure the Assembly can proceed to the election of one of its Members not represented on the Council.

(The Assembly rose at 7 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14TH, 1932, AT 4.30 P.M.

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56. — APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE OF NINETEEN SET UP BY THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: PROPOSAL OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that, at its last meeting, I had the honour to bring to its notice a letter from M. Hymans, Chairman of the Committee of Nineteen which was set up by the Assembly at its special session convened to deal with the Sino-Japanese conflict. M. Hymans informed us in his letter that as a result of the recent elections to the Council a seat had become vacant on the Committee, and he suggested that the Assembly at its present session should fill the vacancy. I decided that I must lay this request before the Bureau of the Assembly, which met yesterday evening, in order to consult it as to the procedure to be followed. The Bureau

was of opinion that the Assembly should place the question on its agenda immediately, and, if it saw no objection, proceed without delay to elect a member to complete the Committee of Nineteen.

I am instructed by the Bureau of the Assembly to submit to you its report (document A.67.1932, Annex 21) and the following draft resolution :

The Assembly,

Having in view the request made by the Chairman of the Committee of Nineteen set up by the Assembly at its special session in regard to the appointment of a member of that Committee,

Considers that effect should be given to that request so as to conform to the intention of the Assembly which, by its resolution of March 11th, 1932, fixed the number of members which the Committee should comprise,

And therefore decides, in application of Rule 4, paragraph 4, and Rule 14, paragraph 2, of its Rules of Procedure, to insert this question in the agenda of its thirteenth ordinary session, and to proceed without other formalities or delay to the appointment of a member of the Committee.

If there are no observations, I shall consider that the Assembly accepts this draft resolution.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The President :

Translation : I conclude that the Assembly's wish is to proceed immediately to elect a member to complete the Committee of Nineteen.

In order to help the Assembly to make its choice, the Bureau attached to the draft resolution which has been distributed, and which you have just adopted, a list of the States hitherto represented on the Committee of Nineteen, either *ex officio* as members of the Council or through their election at the special session of the Assembly.

A vote will now be taken. In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, it will be held by secret ballot. A member of each delegation, when its name is called, will place its voting paper in the box. The voting papers must contain only one name, since there is only one seat to be filled, and it must be the name of a State and not of a representative of a State; otherwise the paper will be invalid.

I will ask Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, delegate of the United Kingdom, and Baron Aloisi, delegate of Italy, to be so good as to come to the platform and act as tellers.

Before taking the roll-call, I have to inform the Assembly of a letter I have just received from M. Nagaoka, first delegate of Japan, which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to inform you that I shall refrain from taking part in the Assembly's discussion on the appointment of a member of the Committee of Nineteen, in view of the reservation which the Japanese delegation made when the resolution of the Assembly was adopted on March 11th last."

(The vote was taken by secret ballot.)

The President:

Translation: The results of the vote are as follows:

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of votes cast | 39 |
| Voting papers blank or invalid. | 1 |
| Voting papers valid | 38 |
| Absolute majority | 20 |

The votes obtained were as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Turkey | 24 |
| Yugoslavia | 6 |
| Union of South Africa | 5 |
| Netherlands. | 1 |
| Belgium | 1 |
| Persia | 1 |

As Turkey has obtained the requisite majority, I have the honour to declare her a member of the Committee of Nineteen. I shall duly inform the Chairman of the Committee of Nineteen of the result of the vote which has just been taken. I beg to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

57. — TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on opium and other dangerous drugs (document A.64.1932.XI, Annex 22).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Paul Bastid, Rapporteur, alone took his place on the platform, the Chairman of the Committee being absent.)

The President:

Translation: M. Paul Bastid, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Paul Bastid (France), Rapporteur:

Translation: The Fifth Committee's proceedings on the subject of opium and other dangerous drugs were extremely animated. It is an absorbing subject; it brings face to face doctrines which are in themselves divergent, and in appearance, at all events, incapable of reconciliation.

Like any system of human ideas, this particular system sometimes cloaks specific interests and indeed antagonistic interests. To conciliate them in the light of the higher principles embodied in the Covenant is anything but an easy task. That explains why the report submitted to you represents the collective work of all the delegations desirous of leaving their mark on the debate. The form of the document has suffered somewhat in the process, but the responsibility for this is divided, and remains anonymous. The essential point is that the substance has remained untouched and that, even though the language is not always pure — for which we offer our apologies — there should be clearly manifested the deep interest we take in the crusade against the abuse of drugs.

On two points we could not fail to be in agreement. We first had to record with satisfaction the progress made in various countries in passing laws and regulations with a view to the stricter application of existing international agreements.

Again, we were unanimous as to the necessity of ratifying the 1931 Convention at the earliest possible date. The entry into force of that Convention is, in fact, impatiently awaited. It supplements and strengthens, as you are aware, the measures of supervision laid down in the 1925 Convention, and there is no need for me to-day to sing its praises; they were adequately voiced at the last Assembly.

Fortunately, a number of countries, with the United States of America at their head, have traced out a way for us. Others have defined their attitude before the Committee, giving details which are duly recorded in the report, so that we may look forward to the Convention coming into operation next year. The Fifth Committee was therefore aghast to learn that the Supervisory Commission had proposed to delete in the 1933 budget the credits considered necessary. We accordingly passed a resolution requesting the competent Committee — the Fourth Committee — to restore that item, and are gratified to note that our voice has been heard. The Assembly, we feel convinced, will confirm the Fourth Committee's decisions on this point.

As regards propaganda with a view to ratification properly so-called, we have adopted a text based on a proposal of the Canadian delegation and framed as follows:

"Whereas, at the Conference held at Geneva in May, June and July 1931, a Convention was concluded by which it was sought to render effective by international agreement the limitation of the manufacture of narcotic drugs to the world's legitimate requirements for medical and scientific purposes, and the regulation of their distribution;

"Whereas the said Convention was signed in the names of their respective Governments, before December 31st, 1931, by plenipotentiaries duly authorised to that effect by forty-two of the fifty-four States represented at the said Conference;

"Whereas it is provided by Article 30 of the said Convention that it shall come into force ninety days after the Secretary-General of the League of Nations has received the ratifications or accessions of twenty-five Members of the League of Nations or non-member States, including four of the following: France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America;

"Whereas, to this date, no more than six States — namely, United States of America, Persia, Peru, Portugal, Sudan and Sweden — have ratified or acceded to the said Convention;

"Whereas, by the terms of its Protocol of Signature, it is expedient that the said Convention shall be ratified on or before July 13th, 1933 :

"The Assembly welcomes the statements made during the present session regarding ratification, and specially requests those countries which have not signified their intentions in regard to ratification to make earnest efforts to complete their respective ratifications of the Convention, or accessions thereto, with the least possible delay, and in any event not later than April 13th, 1933."

The Secretary-General, it may be noted, has sent the Governments a circular note urging the immediate ratification of the Convention. It seems unnecessary, then, to communicate the resolution I have just read to the Governments by means of a new circular letter. It is, however, the earnest desire of the Fifth Committee that every delegation representing in this Assembly a country which has not yet ratified should take steps to direct his Government's attention to the urgent necessity of ratifying the Convention at the earliest possible date.

Again, no serious difficulty has presented itself as regards the preparatory work for a Conference on the limitation of raw materials. The Fifth Committee expressed its satisfaction at the efforts of the Advisory Committee with a view to the convening of such an international gathering. It was gratified that a questionnaire on the poppy and opium and another on the coca leaf had been framed by the Advisory Committee.

Further, the Fifth Committee felt it its duty to emphasise the expediency of giving the requisite publicity to the work of the Advisory Committee.

In order to indicate its satisfaction, it decided to offer to that body and to the Permanent Central Opium Board its unanimous congratulations.

On the other hand, there were subjects on which the views maintained by the various delegations could not be reduced to unanimity. It is the Rapporteur's duty to make an objective statement of the facts, and to take sides would be to exceed the powers conferred on him by the Committee. The points to which I refer are fundamental issues relating to the Bangkok Conference and illicit traffic in the Far East. While the extent of the illicit traffic is diminishing in Europe, despite the fact that the quantities placed on the market still considerably exceed legitimate requirements — that is, medical and scientific requirements — the situation as regards the Far East appears to be notably more serious. To meet that situation, two alternative systems are possible: the Chinese system of absolute prohibition, and that of gradual abolition on the basis of a State monopoly, this being the method employed by the European Governments with territories in the Far East.

The Chinese Government maintains that the evil must be attacked at the root and that the only means of abolishing the supply — that is, contraband — is to abolish the demand; in other words, the monopoly through which supplies, according to it, remain available. It thinks, as do certain other delegations, that the results of the Bangkok Conference aim simply at improving the monopoly system. The countries concerned declare, in reply to that contention, that in such matters, as in others, prohibition — experience affords the proof — cannot, at the present juncture, be decreed except on paper. Far from doing away with the abuses in question, it would tend to encourage them, for vast propaganda would be carried on. The Governments concerned see, on the contrary, in the application of a monopoly carried on not for fiscal but for humanitarian purposes, the only

weapon, the best weapon and the surest weapon, with a view to the gradual limitation of smuggling.

The controversy is still proceeding. The Fifth Committee, be it noted, made a special point of not adopting a definite view. It felt, on the contrary, that, the supporters of these two conflicting theses being called upon under the terms of the Covenant to collaborate, their antagonism must be envisaged simply as emulation in the common interests of humanity, and that, we would proclaim, without any exception as to continent or race.

Whatever be the situation, Article 23(c) of the Covenant entrusts the League with supervision over measures relating to the campaign against drugs. There devolves upon the League a task it cannot shirk, since the health and life of millions of human beings depend upon it and, moreover, it is one of the activities in which the Geneva institution has proved most successful. The idea of international supervision, which in other spheres is still ill-defined, has in this particular case been given concrete form.

Such is the spirit in which the Fifth Committee invites this Assembly to endorse the terms of its report.

The President :

Translation : Mrs. Edgar Dugdale, delegate of the United Kingdom, will address the Assembly.

Mrs. Edgar Dugdale (United Kingdom). — I want to allude for a few moments to one or two of the points which have been developed in the report so ably presented to us by our distinguished Rapporteur. I make no apology for taking up the time of the Assembly in some brief discussion of this report. I feel quite sure that everyone here is in agreement about the importance of the subject. I think, therefore, that everyone here will agree that it is only right and proper that we should take advantage of the unique opportunities for publicity which are afforded to all words spoken from the tribune of this Assembly of the League of Nations; and that we should use this opportunity, not only to make known to the world what the League of Nations has done in respect of the work entrusted to it under the Covenant in this matter, but also, what is no less necessary, to make known what still remains to be done. It is, I think, essential that it should be fully understood that the League of Nations is determined not to slacken its efforts until the traffic and the manufacture which is bringing untold misery and degradation to millions of our fellow-creatures is entirely stamped out. I think that this determination can hardly be properly shown by merely a silent acquiescence in the report of the Fifth Committee which has just been laid before you.

I should like now to say a word or two on the subject of the 1931 Convention. The debate in the Fifth Committee on this matter was exceedingly encouraging. As the discussion proceeded, the delegates of one State after another rose and announced the promise of their Governments to ratify the Convention. As a result of these pledges — I may say, I think, as a direct result of these pledges — your Fifth Committee was able to send to the Fourth Committee a resolution which has had the almost unique good fortune of softening the heart of that body and of causing it to replace in the budget of 1933 the credit which had previously been struck out on the assumption, I believe, that sufficient ratifications would not be forthcoming to bring the Convention into operation that year. This was an exceedingly happy and successful result of our discussion.

I do not want, however, to give way to what is perhaps a rather feminine impulse, that of triumphing in having already, to a certain extent, got our own way. I think it would be more expedient to go on and say what is our next object; and that brings me to the very important question of the early ratifications of this Convention.

I am glad to have the privilege of saying here what I have already said in the Fifth Committee, namely, that my Government has passed all the domestic legislation which is necessary before the ratification of Great Britain can be deposited. If, therefore, there is any delay or any weakening of the Convention owing to the backwardness of Governments in ratifying, it will not be the responsibility of the Government I have the honour to represent.

It became evident, however, in the discussions in the Committee that the preparations of the States which pledged themselves to ratify were not all in an equally advanced state. In some cases, the domestic legislation required had not yet been laid before their respective Parliaments; in other cases, the Parliaments had not yet passed it. I would like to make a very special plea to the States whose legislation is in process of being made perfect, and still more to those States which have not yet given any pledges with regard to ratification of the Convention, that their ratifications should be as many and as early as possible.

The Assembly may ask why so much stress is laid in this case on early ratification. It is true that the Convention will come into force when a minimum of twenty-five States have ratified. It is also true that there seems to be little or no doubt that the minimum of twenty-five will be attained. But in the case of this Convention the minimum which will bring it into force is not sufficient to bring it into effective force. The 1931 Convention will set up a new procedure. It will set up a procedure which is in some respects complicated, and will introduce factors which have hitherto been unfamiliar in the Conventions and in the work which has been done by the League in this matter.

There is another point. Every State which is not applying the Convention leaves a gap in the operation of the Convention — a gap in the control of manufacture, a gap in the control of consumption. Every gap which is left diminishes, in more than ordinary proportion, the efficiency of the work undertaken by those States already bound by the Convention.

It is an old saying that "the strength of a chain is its weakest link". It is very particularly true in regard to this Convention, and I hope that we shall see to it that the weak links of this chain are few, or, if possible, that there may be none at all. I say this for more than one reason, but very especially because we all know what a very formidable task we have undertaken in attempting to limit the activities of the drug traffickers, the illicit manufacture and the smuggling that goes on in the world with respect to these drugs and derivatives of opium and of opium itself. We know that the gangs and the persons who are engaged in this terrible traffic are organised in a world-wide manner. We know, in fact, that their activities really girdle the earth.

Everyone will remember that there are certain cases that have come to our knowledge since the League first began its work, showing how widespread and deep-seated this evil of the illicit manufacture is. I will only allude in passing to the Müller-Rauch case which was heard in Basle last year, and to that great seizure of drugs which took place more recently at Hamburg, the circumstances of which are still under investigation.

Perhaps also, in speaking of the Convention, it may not be considered irrelevant if, at this moment, I refer to some of the difficulties which confront those who are trying to control the smuggling of opium itself. Everyone will probably remember the case of the so-called "mystery ship", which put into the port of Bushire in the Persian Gulf under cover of night and anchored far out beyond the harbour, the greatest care being taken to remove every trace of her name and every mark of identification from her sides, boats and lifebuoys, so that she bore no indication of what she was or from whence she came. When night fell, she came into the outer harbour, and there it has since been ascertained that no fewer than 1,700 chests of opium were put on board under cover of the night — 1,700 chests representing no less than 126 tons of opium. She left Bushire and disappeared — going eastwards. Her exact course has never been traced, but there is no doubt whatever that those 126 tons of opium have been landed at different ports in the Far East and have gone to swell the profits of the illicit traffickers.

Unfortunately, it is not only ships which are implicated in this traffic. I was horrified — I may say ashamed for my sex — to read in yesterday's *Times*, which reached Geneva this morning, of the case of a woman who had landed at Singapore and in whose personal luggage the Customs officers discovered opium to the value of no less than £1,200.

These are merely instances to show what it is that the League and those who work for the League are up against.

There is only one remedy: we must have greater international co-operation. We must draw the net over the whole world. The activities of the traffickers are world-wide; the activities of the League must be world-wide also, for, as things stand, see with what a handicap our work is confronted. We know of cases where the illicit manufacturers, driven out of Western Europe, have gone eastwards, have taken up their quarters in Istanbul and from there have carried on their nefarious and profitable business. When the most praiseworthy activities of the Turkish Government made things too difficult for them in Istanbul, they went eastwards again, eastwards into those huge Asiatic territories where there is no control, where they know well enough that they can work as they please, practically unhindered; those huge Asiatic territories where, moreover, the raw material necessary for their trade is ready to their hand. It is sad to say that it is in those beautiful fields of lovely flowers and poppies, in the areas covered by those exquisite colours, that we really have to look for the root of the difficulties which are confronting us to-day.

I only want to say one or two things more. In the first place, the international co-operation of the authorities must be strengthened. I would like to give one word of warning about the Convention of which I have been speaking. It does undoubtedly represent a great step in advance, but we must not be under the illusion that when the Governments have signed and ratified it the task is done. It is absolutely impossible that the League's work could become really effective until not only this Convention, but the Convention of 1925 has been put into effective force in every country in the world.

There is yet one other point of great importance — I refer to the necessity for strengthening the national law as regards the penalties imposed on the traffickers and the illicit manufacturers. As long as, in some countries, the penalties are — as your Advisory Committee has repeatedly pointed out is the case — absolutely derisory in their

lightness, amounting very often only to a small fine or a few months' imprisonment, there can be no hope that the persons who make vast profits out of this illicit trade will come to the conclusion that their gain is not worth the candle.

I come to this Assembly for the first time as a delegate. For the first time I have had an opportunity of seeing what the work of your Committees and your Assembly — but more especially the work of the Committees — really is. I see that it consists — and rightly and legitimately consists — very largely in drafting Conventions, drawing up agreements, thinking carefully over the wording of this and that phrase, of balancing and harmonising the national interests of each country with the international interests of the whole. All that is absolutely right, essentially important, and requires to be done.

I find, also, that the interest of that kind of work is extremely absorbing and that, after a few hours of discussion in Committee, when perhaps compromises have been made and a wording has been found with which everybody is satisfied, we are apt to feel that all has been done that need be done and that can be done. It seems to me that the danger in this is that we sometimes forget the reasons why the League ever undertook this work of drafting agreements and conventions, and I do hope, in the case at any rate of this opium question, that we shall never forget that the drafting and signing of conventions is only a symbol of the passionate interest which we all ought to take in stamping out the great evils which lie behind the conventions and agreements that we make.

The President :

Translation : M. Pilotti, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

M. Pilotti (Italy) :

Translation : At this juncture, on the eve of the entry into force of the Convention for limiting the Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs, which represents the results of such prodigious common effort, the League, it may truly be said, is once more deserving of the gratitude of humanity. In this particular sphere, the League has unwearingly pursued a work which ranges from the sending of a Commission of Enquiry to the Far East to the convening in the near future of a Conference on the production, cultivation and harvesting of the opium poppy. Let us hope that that Conference will be convened as soon as may be possible.

The Italian delegation, which for some years past has taken an active part in the campaign against the drug scourge, is particularly gratified at the results achieved to date by the League and, endorsing the views just voiced by the Rapporteur and by the United Kingdom delegate, expresses the earnest hope that the Conference may meet with every success.

The President :

Translation : As there are no further speakers on my list, I propose that the Assembly should adopt the following draft resolutions submitted by the Fifth Committee :

I. Whereas, at the Conference held at Geneva in May, June and July 1931, a Convention was concluded by which it was sought to render effective by international agreement the limitation of the manufacture of narcotic drugs to the world's legitimate requirements for medical and scientific purposes, and the regulation of their distribution ;

Whereas the said Convention was signed in the names of their respective Governments, before

December 31st, 1931, by plenipotentiaries duly authorised to that effect by forty-two of the fifty-four States represented at the said Conference ;

Whereas it is provided by Article 30 of the said Convention that it shall come into force ninety days after the Secretary-General of the League of Nations has received the ratifications or accessions of twenty-five Members of the League of Nations or non-member States, including four of the following : France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States of America ;

Whereas, to this date, no more than six States — namely, United States of America, Persia, Peru, Portugal, Sudan and Sweden — have ratified or acceded to the said Convention ;

Whereas, by the terms of its Protocol of Signature, it is expedient that the said Convention shall be ratified on or before July 13th, 1933 :

The Assembly welcomes the statements made during the present session regarding ratification, and specially requests those countries which have not signified their intentions in regard to ratification to make earnest efforts to complete their respective ratifications of the Convention, or accessions thereto, with the least possible delay, and in any event not later than April 13th, 1933.

II. The Assembly adopts the report of the Fifth Committee.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

58. — SITUATION AS REGARDS THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PROTOCOL OF SEPTEMBER 14TH, 1929, CONCERNING THE REVISION OF THE STATUTE OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the First Committee's report on the situation as regards the entry into force of the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, concerning the revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice (document A.45.1932.V, Annex 23).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Pilotti, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Pilotti, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Pilotti (Italy), Rapporteur :

Translation : The question for which I have the honour to be Rapporteur is the entry into force of the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, concerning the revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice. In accordance with the Assembly resolution of September 25th, 1931, the Secretary-General, in document A.27, has informed us of the present position as regards signatures and ratifications of the Protocol of 1929. Since last year's session of the Assembly, the following changes in the situation have taken place :

In the first place, it will be remembered that at our last session the Cuban representative stated that the reservations which his Government had placed upon its ratification of the Protocol of Revision might be withdrawn in the near future. As

the Members of the League have been informed by a letter from the Secretary-General, dated March 24th, 1932, the Cuban Government has withdrawn these reservations, so that the ratification of Cuba has now been obtained. I am sure the Assembly will feel keen satisfaction at this event.

In the second place, Abyssinia, which at the last Assembly had signed and ratified the 1920 Protocol regarding the former Statute (which is still in force) but had not yet ratified the 1929 Protocol, has now signed that instrument.

Thirdly and lastly, Peru, after ratifying the Protocol of December 16th, 1920, is now also one of the signatories of the new Protocol of 1929.

Thus, as already indicated in the Secretary-General's report, the following States, which ratified the 1920 Protocol, have signed the 1929 Protocol but have not yet ratified it: Abyssinia, Brazil, Chile, Lithuania, Panama, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela.

It will be remembered that on May 12th, 1930, the Council requested the Secretary-General to ask the States which had ratified the 1920 Protocol whether they were prepared to acquiesce in the entry into force of the Protocol of Revision, even in the absence of some of the requisite ratifications. In a report submitted to the Council by the representative of my country on September 7th, 1930, a summary was given of the replies to that communication. According to the report, four of the States just mentioned sent a favourable reply. Those States — Chile, Lithuania, Panama and Venezuela — announced that they had no objection to the entry into force of the amendments to the Statute of the Court. It was not possible for the Protocol to come into force on September 1st, 1930, but we venture to hope that the States which did not object will see their way to expediting their formal ratification. Of the four States, Chile appeared to have made her own ratification dependent upon developments regarding the Cuban reservations. Subsequently, however, she stated that the procedure of ratification was being carried out by the competent authorities, in accordance with her municipal law.

Brazil and Uruguay replied that without Parliamentary authorisation they were unable, for constitutional reasons, to acquiesce in the entry into force of the amendments. The Government of Uruguay, however, actually stated last year that it approved the Protocol of Revision and had laid a draft law in favour of it before Parliament.

The letter from the Secretary-General dated May 12th, 1930, to which I referred, was also sent to the Government of the United States of America. In his reply to the Secretary-General, dated May 27th, 1930, the Under-Secretary of State of the United States said that he perceived no reason to object to the coming into force, between such nations as may have become parties thereto, of the amendments to the Statute of the Permanent Court, which had not been ratified by the United States.

The United States are, of course, themselves among the signatories of the Protocol of Revision.

In the unanimous opinion of the First Committee, it is of great importance that the amendments to the Statute of the Court should come into force without delay, and I am instructed to submit to you, on the Committee's behalf, a draft resolution expressing its view.

There is no need to repeat here all the reasons which led the First Committee to this conclusion. For the purposes of the present review, I need only draw attention to the following circumstances:

First, Article 29 of the Statute of the Court at present in force — that is to say, the Statute annexed to the 1920 Protocol — provides for

the annual formation of a chamber of summary procedure composed of three judges. Contrary to the general principle laid down in Article 31, the Statute contains no provision to the effect that judges having the nationality of the contesting parties shall sit on the bench, if, in any given case, the parties have no national among the judges composing that chamber. Hitherto, as we know, the chamber has sat very rarely. The text of the revised Statute supersedes the existing provisions of Article 29 by a clause whereby the chamber of summary procedure will henceforth be composed of five members. Further, Article 31 in its amended form extends to the new chamber of summary procedure the general rule providing for the presence on the bench, where necessary, of judges having the nationality of the contesting parties.

The object of this reform was to provide States with a means which, though rapid, would afford the same guarantees as are applicable in the procedure before the plenary Court for settling disputes not deemed of sufficient importance to warrant proceedings before the Court as ordinarily composed.

The availability of this means of obtaining a judicial award at short notice undeniably affords States a very real advantage as compared with the system at present in force. Further, the reform will help to lighten the plenary Court's work, which is constantly increasing.

Secondly, when the Assembly at its 1920 session adopted the Statute of the Court at present in force, it rejected one of the proposals of the Advisory Committee of Jurists instructed to prepare the draft — namely, the proposal to introduce in the Statute a special article referring expressly to advisory procedure; in other words, the procedure whereby the Court gives the opinions provided for in Article 14 of the Covenant. It was thought then that the Court itself should settle this matter by the application of its powers to lay down rules of court. Such a method was justifiable at a time when there had been no experience at all of such procedure, and when, consequently, it was perhaps inexpedient to lay down rules in an instrument like the Statute, which cannot be amended except by a lengthy procedure difficult to set in motion.

Nevertheless, in the last ten years, the work of the Court has built up, in the matter of advisory procedure, a regular practice — generally approved — very much on the lines of *procédure contentieuse*. Hence, the bodies which in 1929 were revising the Statute thought that the advisory procedure should be given the guarantees of stability attaching to *procédure contentieuse*, by the introduction in the Statute itself of the essential rules governing the Court's preparation of its opinions. Thus the amendments to the Statute adopted in 1929 include the addition of a new chapter on advisory procedure, reproducing the fundamental provisions evolved through the practice of the Court in the matter, that practice being now embodied in the Rules of Court and extending to the procedure in question the general principles of the Statute in contentious cases.

As we are all aware, the Council has in recent years made increasing use of its right to apply to the Court for advisory opinions. It seems to me, therefore, that the stabilisation of the advisory procedure is a really urgent matter.

Thirdly and lastly, I should like to point out that one of the principal objects of the revision of the Statute was to create machinery for filling, in as easy, sure and rapid a manner as possible, any vacancy occurring during the judges' period

of office. Provisions to this effect are included in the revised Statute.

When it became clear that the amendments to the Statute could not come into force before the election of the judges in September 1930, the necessary measures were taken to introduce the reforms which had been considered desirable, in so far as such a step was constitutionally possible, by means of an Assembly resolution or of provisions in the Rules of Court.

The system set up by these methods is necessarily imperfect and lacking in harmony. Thus, according to the revised Statute, it increases the number of titular judges, while at the same time retaining, as a mere empty form, the institution of deputy-judges, which is abolished under the revised Statute.

It is clearly important that this incomplete system, which from the outset was regarded as provisional, should be brought to an end as soon as possible.

Moreover, as you are aware, on the successive occasions on which the Assembly was called upon to examine the question of the Protocol of Revision — in 1929, 1930 and 1931 — it was careful to stress the importance it attached to the entry into force of that Protocol at an early date.

May I be permitted, in this connection, to direct your attention to the following consideration: The Statute of the Court is a multilateral instrument setting up an international collective body. Accordingly, it is not possible for successive editions of that instrument to remain simultaneously in force, one such edition binding certain States *vis-à-vis* a first group of other States, another binding those same States *vis-à-vis* a second group: it is impossible — to take only one example — for judges to find themselves at the same time under two different systems. Hence, by not ratifying, a small minority of the States concerned may prevent a reform which is deemed desirable by the large majority. That is an unsatisfactory situation and one open to such drawbacks that it need perhaps only be indicated for the remedy to be found.

The draft resolution which I have been requested to submit to you requires no lengthy commentary, based as it is on the wishes expressed by the Assembly at previous sessions, as I have just reminded you.

It may, however, be expedient to explain in a few words the last part of the third paragraph of the draft resolution. When studying the question, I came to the conclusion that in certain States difficulties might exist which would prevent ratification, without the League organs having as yet been informed of them. If the League organs, and through them the States signatories to the Statute, are duly informed of the existence and nature of those difficulties, they will perhaps find a means of surmounting them or even of convincing the other States concerned that they are more apparent than real.

As regards the last paragraph of the draft resolution, I need not stress the fact that that clause,

which is based on a similar provision in the Protocol of December 16th, 1920, is not intended to create, and does not have the effect of creating, a fresh condition for the entry into force of the Protocol of Revision. Its purpose is entirely practical. Obviously, the States and the Court itself could not comply with the revised Statute or apply its rules before having been officially informed of its entry into force.

I have the honour then, on behalf of the First Committee, to request the Assembly to approve the draft resolution, which reads as follows:

The Assembly,

Having noted the report of the Secretary-General on the situation as regards ratification of the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, concerning the revision of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice:

Observes with satisfaction that, the Government of Cuba having felt able to withdraw the reservations to which its ratification of the Protocol was subject, the obstacle which last year appeared to lie in the way of the entry into force of the Protocol has been removed;

Addresses an urgent appeal to the States which, having ratified the Protocol of December 16th, 1920, and signed the Protocol of September 14th, 1929, have not yet ratified the latter, that such ratification be effected as soon as possible; and, if they should consider that peremptory reasons prevent them from ratifying the Protocol, requests them to inform the Secretary-General without delay of the nature of those reasons;

Instructs the Secretary-General to inform the Members of the League immediately of the deposit of each new ratification and of any communication as to the causes which prevent a State from ratifying the Protocol;

Instructs the Secretary-General, on the receipt of the last ratification which is necessary for the entry into force of the Protocol, to notify its entry into force to the Governments of the States concerned and to the Registrar of the Permanent Court of International Justice;

Instructs the Secretary-General to send to the States mentioned in paragraph 3 copies of the present resolution and of the statements made by the Rapporteur, M. Massimo Pilotti, and the former President of the Permanent Court of International Justice, M. Max Huber, of the reasons for desiring an early entry into force of the Protocol of 1929.

The President:

Translation: As no delegate has asked to speak, I shall consider the First Committee's report and the accompanying draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

(The Assembly rose at 6.30 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Thirteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TWELFTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 17TH, 1932, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : M. POLITIS

59. — CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESO- LUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fourth Committee's report on contributions in arrears (document A.66.1932.X, Annex 24).

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Vasconcellos, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, and M. Raphaël, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Raphaël will address the Assembly.

M. Raphaël (Greece), Rapporteur :

Translation : I will simply read you the draft resolution which the Fourth Committee, after

having unanimously adopted the confidential report of its Sub-Committee, has the honour to submit to you for approval.

The text of the resolution is as follows :

The Assembly,

Notes with regret and grave concern that a number of States have not fulfilled their financial obligations towards the League of Nations ;

Appeals to all Member States to liquidate their arrears without delay and to demonstrate thereby their attachment to the ideals of the League of Nations ;

Requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts for the recovery of arrears, to report to the Council on the action taken by him before the next ordinary session of the Assembly and to communicate the results to the latter ;

Decides, in pursuance of the resolution taken by the Assembly at its twelfth session, to exempt Nicaragua from the payment of half of its contribution to the budget for the financial year 1933 and to defer the payment of the balance.

The President :

Translation : As no delegate has asked to speak, I shall consider the Fourth Committee's report on contributions in arrears and the draft resolution accompanying it adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

60. — FINANCIAL QUESTIONS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESO- LUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the Fourth Committee's report

on financial questions (document A.69(1).1932.X, Annex 25).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Rappard, Rapporteur, took his seat on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Rappard, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Rappard (Switzerland), Rapporteur :

Translation : We have all, I believe, been impatiently awaiting the report on the budget, and I think I am not wrong in saying that that impatience was due less to curiosity than to a desire to see the termination of our work.

There were good reasons for the delay we have caused the Assembly. It is not the budgetary discussions that have been primarily responsible, but the solution of a problem which had been under consideration by special committees for more than two years and which the Fourth Committee has succeeded in solving : I refer to the problem of the principal officers, with which I need not deal here.

Then, again, our task was particularly difficult, because this year's budget gave rise to more numerous observations than usual, the League being in a more difficult financial situation.

The report has been approved by the Committee, and faithfully reflects all the views expressed on essential points.

I should like to take this opportunity to pay a tribute once again to the admirable Secretary of the Committee, who, from the point of view of the Rapporteur, has been far more than a mere collaborator.

Instead of analysing or summarising the report, I should like to venture upon a few brief general observations.

The budget submitted for your approval amounts to 33,429,132 francs. Is this little, or is it much? Compared with national budgets, it is certainly little. As I had the honour to point out in the Fourth Committee, the Canton of Geneva, with a population of 170,000, pays more in taxes than the States pay in contributions to the League. If a small canton of one of the smallest States in the world can pay more than 40 millions for local services ; if its taxpayers, who, moreover, contribute both to municipal and to national taxation, bear this burden, I will not say joyfully, but with resigned stoicism, is it not astonishing that the representatives of some fifty States should be so fiercely determined to reduce budget estimates totalling 33 millions?

Those 33 millions are little indeed, too, if they are compared — as they often have been — with military expenditure, with the 25 milliards which so-called civilised mankind expends annually to defend itself against itself. Lastly, it is little if we regard it as the cost of the inestimable benefits which the Covenant offers to its signatories. The Covenant means peace, the pacific settlement of all disputes. The Covenant means disarmament, the lightening of the burdens I have just mentioned. The Covenant means international solidarity in economic affairs : it means prosperity. Thirty-three millions — is that much compared with the really inestimable benefits which humanity would enjoy if the States rigorously applied the principles of the Covenant?

On the other hand, when we consult the instructions we have received from our Governments, we learn that 33 millions is much. We even find that, in the opinion of some, it is too much, since one-third of the contributors have not yet paid their debts for 1931 and, at the present time, one-third

of the revenue for the current financial year has not yet been collected.

What is the explanation of this extraordinary contrast, this anomaly?

The Covenant offers inestimable benefits ; yet we haggle over paying the League 33 millions as the price of those benefits. It is here that the discussion of the budget assumes its real character and its real importance. For the budget is the League's health barometer, the manometer for measuring the pressure of its vital pulsations. These two instruments register, if not stormy weather, at all events a subnormal state of affairs.

The point is that there are Governments, Parliaments and even nations that feel that the promises embodied in the Covenant are not being fulfilled. The peaceful settlement of disputes is all very well, they say, but what do we find? The Council and Assembly of the League comment upon the various phases of the warlike operations in the Far East, but cannot stop them. The reduction of armaments: a magnificent programme, but what is the actual position? For the last six months, the delegates of the various countries have been noting, commenting upon and deploring the burden of armaments, but have not yet succeeded in reducing that burden. In the economic sphere, we find the same thing. The crisis persists ; all that has been done is to analyse it and comment upon its developments.

Thirty-three millions is a trifle to pay for acts, but it is a great deal to pay for mere words ; it is too much in a period of depression.

But where does the fault lie? This is where the tragic injustice of it all comes in. The victims are perhaps the only people in the world who are really devoting their whole energy to extracting from the Covenant all that it contains ; and by the victims I mean the services at Geneva and The Hague ; while those responsible are the Governments which we have the honour to represent.

The position is this : we are refusing 33 millions to those who are really trying to make us do our duty, while the guilty parties are incontestably the States, which are engaged in the exclusive cult of their national sovereignty and refuse to make the necessary sacrifices by subordinating the interests of each to those of all.

The League of Nations, like any other human society — like any group of animals even — cannot prosper or, indeed, exist as long as its members refuse to submit to the common law.

That is the profound truth which emerges from the poor figures submitted to you for your decision.

Is the problem of the League budget, then, only a political problem? Is it not a financial problem also? We would not go so far as to say, as Turgot did when he took over the financial administration of France : " Without retrenchment, no reform is possible ", but we can say that financial economy would to some extent facilitate political reforms and, incidentally, such economy has shown itself to be indispensable.

The question is how to effect this economy. There are two possible means — not more. We can reduce or slow down the League's activities, or we can put to better use the sums at our disposal. We can be less ambitious in our aims, or we can be more economical.

Are we to be less ambitious in our aims? Mankind, we are all agreed, is sick. Would any sick man, in his right mind, haggle over the doctor's or chemist's bills? I think it would be a profound mistake to refuse the League services the credits required for carrying out the work envisaged by the authors of the Covenant. But if we are to cut down expenditure — and we must do so, for our " taxpayers ", many of them, are going on strike — it only remains

for us to put to better use the modest funds at our disposal.

Last year, the League, grappling with the same budgetary problem, though in a less acute form, relied almost exclusively on the first of these two methods: it reduced its activities; it adjourned conferences; it cut credits for the carrying out of certain of its tasks.

This year, I am happy to note a measure of real progress. Certain indispensable credits have been restored, and efforts have been made to put the sums available to better use.

What have we been able to do? I am obliged at this juncture to point out that a more economical use of League funds means either reducing the number of officials or reducing their salaries. I will not do more than touch upon the wretched question of salaries. We know how it arose. In this connection I think we owe a debt of gratitude to the Fourth Committee for having managed to clear up a question about which people have for some time past been feeling very doubtful. After consulting the First Committee, it has been established once for all that contracts up to 1931 cannot be touched — that is to say, they can be altered only by the bilateral consent of the League and of its servants. Consequently, those salaries have not been touched.

Nor has any reduction been made in the salaries of those League officials whose contracts contain a clause admitting of a reduction. Here we were confronted not by a legal obstacle, but by quite different obstacles, of which the most serious — indeed, the only serious one — was the desire of a majority of the Fourth Committee not to create inequality at the expense of those whose contracts happened to be subject to renewal or dated only from a year back. Consequently, the salaries of officials now in the service of the League were not reduced, though a saving of the credits on salaries was found possible under three heads.

In the first place — and this again comes within the competence of another Sub-Committee — the salaries of the principal officers of the Secretariat were reduced.

Secondly, it was decided to reduce by 10 per cent all future salaries, in conformity with the proposal of the Supervisory Commission. This reduction is to be applied for a trial period of two years. It will apply also, in the case of promotion, to the salaries to be paid to former officials.

Lastly, the Secretary-General has undertaken, on behalf of the various organisations — that is, the Secretariat and the International Labour Office — to effect a saving of 150,000 francs on salaries out of the credits which you are being asked to vote. The Secretary-General is a very clever man, and I quite expect he will find those 150,000 francs, though he can do so only by reducing the number of officials.

This brings us to a second means: the reduction of effectives. You will find in the credits submitted to you for approval, not a request for a reduction, but a request for an increase.

As every Minister of Finance and his collaborators know, it is a somewhat costly operation to examine the possibility of rationalising the administrative services: we have increased the credits for the Supervisory Commission by 10,000 francs and have included a credit of 45,000 francs for the collaboration of a scientific management organisation. We hope that will be a good investment resulting next year in a real reduction in expenditure on staff.

For the budgetary problem, which, as you have just seen, is essentially a political and psychological problem on the one hand and a financial problem on the other, we must find a solution which will

also be, on the one hand, political and, on the other, financial.

I have just been talking of the financial solution. Efforts will be made at Geneva to spend less. But the financial problem of the League must be solved not at Geneva alone. It must be solved in the capitals of the Member States. Contributions in arrears, to which reference has just been made, are a most painful preoccupation for all friends of the League. The drawbacks attaching to delays in the payment of contributions to the League are not only direct in character; they are also indirect, and those indirect consequences appear to me by far the more serious. These delays to which I refer create in the minds of States which punctually fulfil their financial obligations a very real irritation. They say to themselves: "Why do we pay what we owe, when others refuse to do so?" And they go on to say: "The less the others pay, the more we have to pay".

In the second place, these delays create a state of irritation and demoralisation among the officials. Many of us would have been glad if, in conformity with the Swedish proposal, the officials could have associated themselves with the worldwide distress by agreeing to a reduction of part of their salaries. But what could we say in reply to officials who maintain: We are all doing our duty and you call upon us to make a sacrifice; you are asking us to do more than our duty? Why? Because many States are doing less than theirs. What can we say in answer to such an objection?

In the third place — and this is perhaps a more serious aspect — the delay shown by many States in paying their contributions throws out of gear the ordinary machinery of the budget. The League of Nations has no reserves, and it cannot borrow. Two alternatives then are possible: either it can inflate the budget in order to continue in being, by discounting in advance the deficits in its revenue, or it can try to frame a compact budget, an honest budget, a budget that shall be inelastic in the proper sense of that term, and by so doing it may condemn itself to complete paralysis.

Had our past budgets not admitted of contraction, the League would have had to dismiss its staff. Which of you, I wonder, would recommend the Fourth Committee to approve a budget admitting normally of reduction?

I shall not stress the point further; it is obvious that, if the League is to enjoy sound financial health, there must be an end to the period of default on the part of certain of its Members. But this question, important though it is, is entirely dominated by the political considerations which I have ventured to place before the Assembly.

The League must, by its acts, prove to all its Members that it is worth the very small sacrifice it demands. Acts constitute simply the policy of the Covenant, the policy of staunch fidelity to all the undertakings of the Covenant. May our successors in 1933 record the fact that Governments have enabled the League to remain faithful to its constitutional charter. May we record the triumph of international solidarity, of which the Covenant is the expression, over narrow, blind national egoism.

The Fourth Committee can say to all the Governments of the States Members of the League, paraphrasing thus a famous expression: "See that your politics are sound and we will see that your finances are sound also".

The President:

Translation: The Aga Khan, delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

The Aga Khan (India). — Certain questions of vital importance for the world have this year fallen outside the scope of the Assembly. Nevertheless, one question remained, upon which, if it were to discharge its responsibilities, it was incumbent upon the Assembly to take resolute action. I refer to retrenchment, which the League in common with the rest of the world must face. I do not wish to give countenance to the somewhat alarmist views which have found expression in certain quarters, but the financial position of the League is unquestionably such as to demand its most serious consideration.

I should like to hope that the appeal to those States which are in arrears with their contributions will bear fruit. But, as the delegate for India said in the Fourth Committee, there is no escaping the conclusion that there are only two practicable alternatives before us — either a reduction in salaries on such a scale as to secure really substantial economies, or a curtailment of the activities of the League.

It has now become clear that no decision of the Assembly can secure a reduction of salaries on anything approaching the scale that the situation demands. We must therefore face the alternative, a curtailment of the League's activities. When I use the word "curtailment" I do not mean necessarily an actual cessation of work already undertaken — a desperate expedient to which I do not think we need yet have recourse — but a check in the progressive expansion of the sphere of its undertakings.

I deeply regret that it should be necessary to have recourse to this expedient. Growth is as natural to the League in the early stages of its existence as to the adolescent child, and a check to that development is as unnatural and harmful as is the check to the growth of the child. This all Members of the League will recognise with equal concern.

But there is a special aspect of the question, on which, on behalf of India, I feel I should speak very frankly. I deplore the necessity for any curtailment of the League's activities, but especially do I deplore, from the point of view of India, the failure to secure a reduction of salaries, which would have saved us from that necessity.

I cannot contemplate without anxiety the effect upon opinion in India of the knowledge that, alone of public administrations, the League Secretariat may remain almost unaffected by the universal stringency.

The President :

Translation : As there are no other speakers on my list, I shall put to the vote the draft resolutions proposed by the Fourth Committee, which read as follows :

I. GENERAL QUESTIONS.

1. The Assembly, in virtue of Article 38 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League of Nations, finally passes the audited accounts of the League of Nations for the thirteenth financial period, ending on December 31st, 1931.

2. The Assembly,
In virtue of Article 17 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League of Nations :

Passes for the financial period 1933 the budget of the League of Nations to the total sum of 33,429,132 gold francs ;

And decides that the aforesaid budget shall be published in the Official Journal.

3. The Assembly, in conformity with the recommendation of the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses, fixes at ten the number of units assigned to Turkey in 1933, and at three that assigned to Iraq, in the scale for the allocation of the League's expenditure.

4. The Assembly adopts the conclusions of the various reports of the Supervisory Commission, submitted for its consideration, except in regard to the question referred to in Chapter V of the present report.

5. The Assembly appoints to the Supervisory Commission for the period ending on December 31st, 1935 : as regular member, His Excellency M. C. Parra-Pérez ; and as substitute members, M. G. de Ottlik and His Excellency M. Jean de Modzelewski.

6. The Assembly adopts the present report of the Fourth Committee.

II. RATIONALISATION AND CONCENTRATION OF THE SERVICES OF THE SECRETARIAT AND OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE.

The Assembly, on the basis, among others, of the proposals submitted to it by the Supervisory Commission, requests the latter to proceed to a detailed study of the possibilities of effecting economies in the expenditure of the League of Nations by means of a technical concentration of its activities and by any other means of reorganisation and rationalisation in the services of the Secretariat and of the International Labour Office, on condition, however, that these measures should in no way hamper the essential functions of the League.

The Assembly requests the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, which has already undertaken studies and adopted measures in this direction, to lend its assistance with a view to this study as regards the International Labour Office and its co-operation with the Secretariat.

For the purposes of this examination, the Supervisory Commission may enlist the assistance of special experts.

The Supervisory Commission is requested to submit to the next ordinary session of the Assembly a report on the results of this examination.

It is understood that posts which, as a result of this examination, may be regarded as superfluous may be abolished by the Secretary-General even before the said session.

Nevertheless, in the case of larger readjustments, the Secretary-General should first submit the question to the Council for approval.

The Assembly requests the Secretary-General to examine, in each case in which an existing contract comes to an end or a post becomes vacant for any other reason, whether it is possible to postpone the appointment of new officials in order to permit of a detailed examination of the necessity to the League's activities of the duties in question.

III. REDUCTION OF SALARIES AS REGARDS FUTURE CONTRACTS.

The Assembly decides that, for a period of two years from October 15th, 1932,

(1) All future contracts, whether contracts for the retention of the services of officials of the Secretariat, the International Labour Office or the Registry of the Permanent Court of International Justice whose appointments expire or contracts with new officials, shall be made on the basis of a 10 per cent reduction of the existing salary scales of the

categories of officials in question (such reduction applying also to the increments) and shall provide that the Assembly shall be entitled unilaterally to change the salaries fixed thereby ;

(2) Members of the staff of these organisations, on promotion to a higher grade, shall be placed upon rates or scales of salary lower by 10 per cent than those now payable to the grades in question, except that the initial salary payable after such promotion shall not be less than the salary received prior to promotion ;

(3) It is understood that the above provisions will apply neither to temporary staff engaged on short-term contracts and serving on rates of pay already reduced, nor to officials who receive a salary equal to, or less than, 6,500 francs per annum.

IV. STAFF PENSIONS FUND.

The Assembly,

Takes note of the report of the Administrative Board of the Staff Pensions Fund for the year 1932 ;

Sanctions the admission, in accordance with the recommendation of the Board, of eight officials of the Secretariat whose applications for membership were received after December 31st, 1931 ;

Adopts the report on the valuation of the Fund as submitted by the Fund's consulting actuary ;

And decides :

That the assets of the Provident Fund shall be transferred to the Pensions Fund subject to leaving with the Provident Fund a sum in cash equal to the balances of the accounts of its members and an appropriate share of the Death and Invalidity Fund ;

That any shortage due to the depreciation of the assets taken over from the Provident Fund shall be amortised, if necessary, after the period of thirty years fixed by Article 7 (b) of the Regulations.

That the contribution of the League to the Pensions Fund for 1933 shall be 9 per cent of the pensionable emoluments of the members of the Fund ;

That its contribution in respect of arrears due for service prior to January 1st, 1931, shall be at the same rate of contribution as was fixed for 1931 ;

That no credit shall be inserted in the budget for 1933 to supplement the contributions paid by officials of branch offices in depreciated currencies ;

And that the League's contribution to the amortisation, in accordance with Article 7 (b) of the Regulations, of the deficit in the Pensions Fund due to the application of the Regulations to officials already in the service on January 1st, 1931, shall be 400,000 Swiss francs for 1933.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

61. — GIFTS FOR THE NEW LEAGUE BUILDINGS. COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT :

The President :

Translation : In the report which you have just approved, there is a reference to the new League buildings, and I should like to direct the attention of delegations to a document dating rather far back (document A.89.1929) which was distributed to the delegates to the tenth Assembly.

The note recalls the fact that, when the new buildings of the International Labour Office were erected, many Governments expressed a desire to contribute by means of gifts towards the decoration

or furnishing. The gifts were a concrete expression of the interest taken by Governments in the work of the International Labour Office and were at the same time characteristic examples of the art and industry of the countries presenting them. Governments will, I think, be equally desirous of making their contribution towards the new League buildings, in the same spirit and with the same object.

A number of gifts have already been offered. I might mention, among others, the panelling for the two committee rooms, a gift from the Governments of New Zealand and the Union of South Africa ; the furniture for the Secretary-General's office, the gift of the Netherlands Government ; a gift of 25,000 dollars from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, which it is proposed to expend on the purchase of the big bronze entrance doors of the Assembly Hall ; and the speakers' platform in the Assembly Hall, the gift of the Australian Government.

In addition, various Governments have made a number of offers, and the possibilities in regard to gifts are still numerous. A complete list will be drawn up by the architects and will be communicated to Governments, at their request, by the Secretary-General. It is, of course, understood that any gifts will be subject to the conditions named in the note to which I have just referred — that is, that proposals will be referred to the Building Committee, which will study them with the architects, in order to ensure the proper harmony in the general plan of the building.

Governments will, I feel sure, take advantage of the opportunity given them to assist in the construction of the new buildings, and it is desirable that offers should be submitted as soon as possible, as the work of construction is progressing rapidly and late offers might involve unnecessary expenditure, which the League is anxious to avoid.

62. — QUESTION OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND COGNATE QUESTIONS : RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE FOURTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the resolutions proposed by the Fourth Committee on the question of the principal officers of the Secretariat and cognate questions (document A.68.1932.X).

(On the invitation of the President, Mr. Munro, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Mr. Munro, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Munro (Canada), Rapporteur. — It is with sincere pleasure that I report to the Assembly on the definite agreements reached by the Fourth Committee on the question of the principal officers of the Secretariat.

It will be recalled that successive Assemblies for some years past have been occupied with proposals for the reorganisation of the higher offices of the Secretariat with a view to more adequate representation for all the Members of the League. The exploratory work done by these previous Committees has been extremely valuable and has greatly assisted the Fourth Committee in its deliberations.

Several considerations united to urge a definitive settlement of this question at this Assembly. For one reason, the Secretary-General, who

launched the organisation on uncharted waters and guided it through thirteen formative and critical years, was about to lay down his duties, and it was essential for the Assembly to have the benefit of his unrivalled experience while it was still at its disposal.

Another factor calling for final action this year was the unprecedented economic conditions in which all Members of the League are involved. Naturally, these conditions are reflected in the finances of the League itself, and due account had to be taken of this situation when changes in its various organisations were being considered.

But perhaps the most insistent element in the direction of change was the necessity for further adjustment between the two chief principles underlying the structure of the League. On the one hand, there is the juridical equality of all its Members; on the other, the greater responsibility assumed by certain Members for the successful execution of its purposes. If the League is an evolving organism, however, such adjustment has to be periodically made. This was recognised at the outset in the creation of the Assembly and the Council. It was further recognised when the membership of the Council was enlarged. To-day, another measure of readjustment may be noted in the changes now recommended in the report on administrative matters. Thus the League continues to evolve.

The international regime, of which it is the chief organ, would seem to promise success in proportion as it is based upon satisfied nationality. A co-operative society of nations can realise its perfect work only through the goodwill and common effort of its several parts. When the framers of the Covenant set forth its two chief aims, they put international co-operation in the first place, for the more closely nations learn to work together the more likely are they to achieve international peace.

I submit to the Assembly for adoption the draft resolutions proposed by the Fourth Committee, which read as follows:

I. DECLARATION OF LOYALTY.

The Assembly,

Decides that the Secretary-General and all officials of the rank of Director or above shall in future make the following declaration before the Council in public session:

"I solemnly undertake to exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions that have been entrusted to me as [Secretary-General] of the League of Nations, to discharge my functions and to regulate my conduct with the interests of the League alone in view and not to seek or receive instructions from any Government or other authority external,

"For the Secretary-General: to the League of Nations.

"For the Other Officials: to the Secretariat of the League of Nations."

That officials of Division I below the rank of Director shall make and sign a similar declaration before the Committee on Appointments, and officials of Divisions II and III before the Sub-Committee on Appointments;

That the above shall not, however, apply to officials engaged for a temporary period of less than one year.

It requests the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to lay down that the Director, Deputy Director and Chiefs of Division of the

International Labour Office shall, at a public meeting, make a similar declaration before it and that for officials of lower rank the procedure laid down for the Secretariat shall mutatis mutandis apply to the International Labour Office.

II. PRINCIPAL OFFICERS.

1. *The Assembly once more affirms the principle that the holders of the highest posts of the Secretariat up to that of Secretary-General should, like all the officials of the League of Nations, be chosen for their abilities, their personal qualifications and the contribution they can make to the performance of the tasks of the League of Nations.*

To facilitate the application of this principle and in order to give the Members which are not permanently represented on the Council a larger share in the responsibilities devolving on the principal officers of the Secretariat, it decides that there shall be two posts of Deputy Secretary-General. This would make it possible to assign one of these posts to a national of a Member not permanently represented on the Council in the event of the Secretary-General having been chosen from among the nationals of Members permanently represented on the Council.

In view of the principle of universality of the League of Nations, it would be advisable, when the posts of principal officers in the Secretariat are being filled, to take also into account the chief geographic divisions in conformity with the principles adopted for the composition of other leading bodies of the League of Nations.

2. (a) *There shall be three Under-Secretaries-General.*

(b) *It is undesirable that the title of Legal Adviser be altered, in view of the non-political character of the post. The rank of the Legal Adviser shall, however, be the same as that of an Under-Secretary-General, and he shall be included in the category of the highest officials of the Secretariat.*

3. *The decision obtained on clause 1 was greatly facilitated by agreement that the offices of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretaries-General should not include more than one Member of Section who is a national of the same Member of the League as the holders of these posts.*

4. *The Secretary-General shall be appointed for ten, the Deputy Secretaries-General for eight and the Under-Secretaries-General for seven years. The appointment of the Secretary-General may be renewed for three years, those of the Deputy Secretaries-General for five years and those of the Under-Secretaries-General for a further single period of seven years.*

5. *A further point of agreement was that, in order to give effect to the previous wishes of the Assembly that a more equitable distribution of nationalities be effected, not more than two nationals of any one Member of the League should be included among the high officials of the Secretariat (Secretary-General, Deputy Secretaries-General, Legal Adviser and Under-Secretaries-General, and Directors), and that the principle should be carried into effect at the earliest possible moment, existing contracts remaining unaffected.*

III. PRIVATE SECRETARIATS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, THE DEPUTY SECRETARIES-GENERAL AND THE UNDER-SECRETARIES-GENERAL.

The Assembly decides that only the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretaries-General shall henceforth have a private secretariat, which shall not include more than two Members of Section.

Part of the agreement referred to in the preceding paragraphs was that the Under-Secretaries-General should each be entitled to have among the members of the Section which they direct one collaborator of their own nationality ranking as Member of Section.

IV. SALARIES AND ENTERTAINMENT ALLOWANCES OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, THE DEPUTY SECRETARIES-GENERAL AND THE UNDER-SECRETARIES-GENERAL.

The Assembly decides that the scale of salaries and of entertainment allowances of the principal officers shall be as follows :

| | Salaries | Entertainment Allowance |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| | Swiss francs | |
| Secretary-General | 90,000 | 50,000 |
| Deputy Secretaries-General | 60,000 | 25,000 |
| Under-Secretaries-General | 60,000 | 10,000 |

All future contracts shall be drawn up in Swiss francs.

V. SALARIES OF THE DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE.

A. Whereas there is a close relation between the high officials of the League and it is the Assembly's duty to review the salaries of the Director and Deputy Director of the International Labour Organisation ;

Whereas, on the other hand, while the Assembly is finally competent to settle all budgetary questions, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office should be given the possibility of pronouncing upon the question :

The Assembly decides to enter in the 1933 Budget a lump sum of 105,000 francs, to cover both the salary and the entertainment allowance for that year of the Director of the International Labour Office.

B. Whereas the Governing Body of the International Labour Office has not yet taken a decision as to whether the vacant post of Deputy Director is to be maintained or abolished,

The Assembly,

Is of opinion that, should it be decided to fill the post, the principle should prevail, as before, that the Deputy Director of the International Labour Office should be on the same scale of salary as applies to the Under-Secretaries-General and that the Deputy Director's salary should be 60,000 Swiss francs and his entertainment allowance 10,000 Swiss francs ; and

Decides to enter in the Budget a lump sum of 70,000 Swiss francs.

VI. DIRECTORS' SALARIES.

The Assembly,

Decides that the salaries of the present Directors of the Secretariat shall not be modified ;

That, nevertheless, the general 10 per cent cut which is to be applied during a period of two years to new appointments of League officials shall apply also to Directors appointed during the same period ;

Whereas, moreover, for reasons of equity, the rule should not affect officials who were already in the service of the League on September 15th, 1931 ;

Decides that it will not apply to Directors at present in the service whose contracts may be renewed during that period.

VII. GENERAL ENTERTAINMENT FUND.

A. Whereas the principle of a reduction which applies to the entertainment allowances of the principal officers of the Secretariat should also apply to the general entertainment fund,

The Assembly decides to reduce the figure included in the 1933 Budget for the purpose from 36,620 to 30,000 francs.

B. The Assembly considers that a similar reduction should be made in the general entertainment fund of the International Labour Office and decides that the figure of 30,000 francs included in the 1933 Budget for the purpose should be reduced to 25,000 francs.

C. The Assembly requests the Supervisory Commission to re-examine the rules governing the apportionment of the general entertainment funds.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the draft resolutions adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

63. — CLOSING SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and Gentlemen, — The Assembly has reached the end of its work.

Its thirteenth ordinary session will have been one of the shortest, above all, as regards the number of meetings and, in appearance, one of the least interesting of all those it has held up to the present at this time of the year.

The questions which have been debated, taken as a whole, have not equalled in importance and interest those with which the Assembly has had to deal in the past. As I have already had an opportunity of explaining, the reason for this is that the grave problems which, particularly in the political sphere, are at present keeping the world in a state of tension and anxiety are being discussed before other international organs.

In order to obviate any misunderstanding with regard to the Assembly's attitude towards them, I have made a point of stating, as the spokesman of your unanimous feeling in the matter, that, if these problems have remained outside the scope of our debates, it is not at all because the Governments do not attach to them the exceptional importance which they deserve : it is solely because they had nothing particular to say which they had not already said, or which they were not proposing to say elsewhere.

The present session has, in consequence, assumed the somewhat dull aspect of the statutory meetings of commercial companies when, not having to deal with any exciting question, they merely have to fulfil a task which is a modest one but is none the less necessary to their good administration.

This task the Assembly has accomplished with all due care and in the best possible conditions. It has dealt with all the questions on its agenda and has found for each of them solutions which in every case have been useful and will, in some cases, have far-reaching effects.

I do not propose to give a detailed enumeration of these solutions here. Let it suffice for me to give a very succinct summary, in order to indicate the progress that has been made in the march of ideas and in the regular development of our institution.

In the sphere of constitutional and legal questions, apart from slight amendments introduced in the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and the examination of the present situation from the point of view of the entry into force of the revised Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the only point which has engaged your attention has been that of the nationality of married women. You have decided that it was premature to recommend at present a revision of the provisions contained on this subject in the Convention drawn up barely two years ago by the first Codification Conference at The Hague. But you have desired to reserve your freedom for the future and to signify to the women's organisations the sympathy with which you view their claims.

In the vast domain of social and humanitarian questions, a series of interesting resolutions has been adopted on penal and penitentiary questions, the opium traffic, the progressive abolition of slavery, child welfare and the protection of young people and, lastly, the Nansen International Office for Refugees.

In examining their work you have appreciated and encouraged the efforts of the League's technical organisations.

A study of economic and financial questions has enabled you to arrive at clear and definite conclusions of the greatest importance. They recognise that all countries are at present engaging more or less frantically in an economic armaments race; that, in view of the aggravation of the situation, it is urgent to find a remedy; but that nothing useful can be done without close co-operation between all countries and without each sacrificing some of its interests for the sake of the common weal.

You have thus traced in its main outlines the programme of the future Monetary and Economic Conference and drawn the attention of the Governments to the grave responsibility they will incur in the eyes of the world if they fail to do all in their power to ensure its success. Once more the peoples have been warned by your voice that their fate depends on the way in which those who govern them comply with your advice.

In the sphere of political questions you have examined and accepted, by a vote the unanimity of which emphasised its great significance, the request for admission made by the new State of Iraq.

You have renewed the term of office of your Commission of Enquiry for European Union, which, working within the framework of the League of Nations and in close co-operation with it, is engaged, as circumstances permit, and under the enlightened guidance of its new Chairman, in realising, slowly but surely, the creative idea of its illustrious and deeply regretted founder.

Recognising once more how valuable to the work of peace is the co-operation of women, you have made a point of recommending it to the Governments, reminding them of the use they can make of Article 7 of the Covenant for this purpose. Your recommendation will find a wide echo in all countries when the records of our debates enable them to appreciate the important part which the women we have had the honour and the pleasure to have among us this year have played in our proceedings with the thoroughness, competence and sureness of judgment we have all observed.

From the proceedings of this year two principal questions have stood out with particular clearness — the reorganisation of the Secretariat and the education of public opinion.

The reorganisation of the higher direction of the Secretariat has for three years been in the forefront of the Assembly's preoccupations. It has always aroused keen interest, which in the course of this

session has so far increased that the necessary debates have had to be prolonged beyond all anticipation. Circumstances have added to the difficulties of the problem.

Last year, in the absence of agreement on their abolition or on an increase in their number, the posts of Under-Secretaries-General were maintained provisionally for not more than three years, on the understanding that, if the Secretary-General retired before then, the League would have to consider without delay whether there should be a general readjustment in the higher staff.

To the very keen regret of us all, the eventuality provided for has occurred — the Secretary-General has persisted in his resolution to relinquish his important duties, and the Council has finally had to accept his resignation, on condition that it should not take effect before June 30th, 1933.

This is an event of capital importance for the League, since, with his enlightened devotion, his tireless hard work, his exemplary impartiality, as well as his exquisite courtesy, Sir Eric Drummond, having stood godfather to the League at the baptismal font, has watched over its subsequent growth with the wisest and most paternal solicitude and is now the soul as well as the heart and brain of our Organisation.

One of my predecessors said once that he had become an article of the Covenant. I think it is truer to say to-day that he is placed above the Covenant, the incarnation of an elucidating principle, like those declarations of rights which form the basis of constitutions.

His departure will be a very heavy loss to the League. If it had taken place a few years earlier it might even have been a catastrophe. But to-day our profound regret is mitigated by the thought that Sir Eric Drummond leaves to his successor, whom he will be able to guide in the earlier stages until next summer, an organisation based on solid foundations and endowed with a strong tradition.

The Council has already paid to Sir Eric Drummond the well-deserved tribute to which his remarkable services entitle him. When the time comes, the Assembly will undoubtedly desire to associate itself with this tribute with the same feelings of affectionate admiration. But I am certain that I am faithfully interpreting your unanimous feelings in here and now addressing to our esteemed Secretary-General the heartfelt expression of our deepest thanks. He may rest assured that his memory will remain ever present in our minds in this Assembly, and that his spirit and his methods, from which we have all derived such profit, will continue to inspire our future work.

The Secretary-General's departure will have been preceded by those of two of his principal collaborators, M. Dufour-Feronce and the Marquis Paulucci di Calboli Barone. I will not refer to the departure of M. Sugimura, which has been mentioned occasionally, because fortunately it does not appear at all certain.

M. Dufour-Feronce and the Marquis Paulucci will leave behind them universal regrets due to the esteem, consideration and friendship they have inspired by their devotion, their courtesy and their ability. They too have deserved well of the League. On your behalf and on my own I ask them to accept our heartfelt thanks and our gratitude.

It is in these exceptional circumstances that the question of the reorganisation of the principal officers of the Secretariat has arisen this year and has been given the solution you have just adopted.

A new system has been initiated. Its application at a time when the holders of the posts are also changing might create a legitimate anxiety were it not for the guarantee provided by the strong

traditions which I mentioned just now. We are entitled to hope that the man who will have to succeed Sir Eric Drummond will carry on his great example in the same way as, in the neighbouring organisation, the International Labour Office, the worthy successor of the lamented Albert Thomas is ensuring the continuity of his work.

The other problem which has engaged the Assembly's particular attention is that of the education of public opinion in international affairs. The League rightly attaches exceptional importance to this, for it derives all its strength from the support of public opinion, and it can only expect this support from an enlightened opinion. Clearly conscious of this need, it is redoubling its efforts and is constantly improving its methods.

It has begun to utilise its wireless station for the purpose of broadcasting in several languages, and even to the most distant countries, weekly talks on its work and the results obtained. The work done by the Assembly gives proof of the continuity and value of the League's activities in this domain.

You have desired to pay a tribute and to express your gratitude to the International Federation of League of Nations Societies for what it has done to educate public opinion in all countries.

You have shown the importance you attach to all questions concerning the instruction of youth in the aims of the League and the promotion of the international spirit. You have recommended to the attention of Governments the enquiry now in progress concerning the education of teachers in training colleges with a view to their giving instruction regarding the League. You have accepted the principle of a draft convention on the international circulation of films of an educational character.

Lastly, recognising the important part played by the Press in the education of the peoples, you have requested the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation to study ways and means of enabling the Press to further a better understanding between the nations, and have decided upon the study of the question of the collaboration of the Press in the organisation of peace. The conclusion which clearly emerges from your discussions is that this collaboration is essential.

The Press performs a noble task by enlightening and guiding public opinion. It is the League's natural and indispensable ally. The League should endeavour to facilitate its task by every means in its power, and should be grateful to the Press for the services it has rendered and may render in the future.

The Press serves the League's cause, not merely by spreading a knowledge of its work, but also by drawing attention to the League's defects, weaknesses and imperfections. Only when world opinion has become convinced that our organisation must be consolidated and fortified will it be in a position to insist on the adoption of measures calculated to bring about the necessary improvements. Until world opinion realises that the private interests of every country cannot be satisfactorily and permanently served except within the framework and with the assistance of a strong international organisation, the achievement of the important aims which the League has in view will prove impossible in practice.

Tireless efforts are therefore needed in order to instil these ideas into the minds of the peoples. This work has already been begun by the League; it will be constantly pursued. But the League's efforts will not be crowned with success unless they have the approval of all clear-sighted persons, unless they are encouraged by all Governments

and, lastly, unless they are supported by all men of goodwill.

This, then, is the balance-sheet of our work; but your President's task is not confined at the moment to presenting this balance-sheet. It is also his duty to take note of the currents of opinion formed outside the Assembly in regard to the main problems of the hour and to endeavour to deduce from them the lessons which might be helpful to the League in its future work.

It is, I think, not out of place that I should voice the feeling generally shared by the delegations here assembled on the questions of vital importance to the peace of the world with which the Assembly has not been called upon to deal.

In connection with the conflict in the Far East, one event of the highest importance has taken place during this session — the publication of the report of the Commission of Enquiry set up by the Council. It is a remarkable document, which does honour both to those who have framed it and to the institution in whose service they were engaged.

The report gives a better idea than was previously available of the extreme complexity of the situation that has been created in that part of the world. It embodies some very valuable suggestions for an amicable arrangement, which the Assembly, at its forthcoming special session, will doubtless be happy to be able to propose to the Parties.

In this connection I would refer to the intervention of the League in the dispute between two of its Members, Bolivia and Paraguay, whose representatives have solemnly stated, from this tribune, that their countries intend to respect the undertakings they accepted in acceding to the Covenant of the League.

With regard to the problem of disarmament, the necessity is being increasingly felt of establishing a political substructure, without which it would be impossible to arrive at the far-reaching solutions which world public opinion desires. The idea that seems to emerge from a collation of the different trends of opinion, with a degree of clearness that should facilitate the effort to reach an understanding, is that the problem of disarmament has three main aspects, which, being closely linked, must be examined simultaneously and solved together.

The first is the extent of the possible quantitative and qualitative reductions of armaments on the basis of the ideas drawn from President Hoover's plan and embodied in the resolution passed by the Conference on July 23rd last.

The second is the organisation of peace on bases such as to ensure that the reductions agreed to will be observed in practice, and that the States will find in that organisation an equivalent in general guarantees for the individual guarantees they will have renounced. The legal consequences to be drawn from the Briand-Kellogg Pact, which the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Stimson, indicated quite clearly in a recent speech, should provide the rough outlines of such an organisation.

The third is the principle of legal equality, on which the new military status of all countries without distinction must rest; the extent of this equality and the manner of its application will have to be specifically determined.

Thus, with regard to the gravest and most complex problems, and those with the solution of which the future will be largely occupied, ideas are slowly maturing, thanks to the influence of our environment, and it is now reasonable to hope that the agreements which are to be desired will not be too long delayed.

When we consider that, despite all the difficulties that arise, the work of our organisation is proceeding regularly; that in every sphere with which it is concerned its efforts are being pursued with unshaken continuity; that by the admission of three new Members during the past year, and by the extension of its activities to every continent, it is steadily making good its claim to universality — when we consider these things, we cannot deny its vitality or entertain serious doubts of its future.

None the less, the criticisms that have always been levelled against the League have latterly multiplied to a remarkable extent. The incredulous and the censorious have become innumerable. They talk of the League's congenital weakness; they talk of its bankruptcy; they even go so far as to accuse it of adding malignancy to its impotence.

These criticisms, however, are but the outcome of ignorance, or else of political passion. The League is not a super-State. It has no will of its own that it can impose on the Governments. It is nothing but the assembly of the Governments themselves. It is nothing but the mirror of the world, in which every aspect of life is reflected, but in which the darkest aspects are the most clearly seen. Its sole merit — though an inestimable one — is that it creates a diplomatic atmosphere propitious to negotiations, and offers the Governments a series of procedures by the help of which, with goodwill on both sides, any agreement can be attained.

It is said that, in the struggle that goes on here, as in all living organisms, between static and dynamic tendencies, the active political forces will ultimately overcome the legal ideals of the Covenant.

The session that is now closing will have demonstrated, however, by the example of Iraq and by that of the debate on the reorganisation of the Secretariat, that reason is never wholly defeated, and that our organisation is perfectly capable of effecting the necessary reconciliations and thereby holding the balance between the conflicting elements.

To speak of the decline of the League is to assert that it is weaker than it was. It has not lost a single atom of its strength. Events have merely proved that it is not strong enough. Had those events taken place a few years earlier, we should have been obliged to come to the same conclusion then, and to consider the desirability of strengthening our organisation.

The really curious thing is that those who blame the League most for its weakness are those who most resolutely oppose any effort to strengthen it. Happily, the logic of facts is superior to human passions. Facts are conspiring daily to convince the peoples more and more that they cannot live in peace and secure their prosperity unless they will accept a better organisation of the environment in which they move.

It is because I am persuaded that the peoples will eventually arrive at that conviction that my confidence in the League remains unshakable. Moreover, I am naturally encouraged in this view when I see that it is shared by the most exalted representatives of the religious and philosophical thought of our time.

Last week the Archbishop of Canterbury said that the League of Nations, which is to-day being so unjustly disparaged, is still, despite all, the only bulwark of international peace and solidarity.

In his latest work, the great philosopher Bergson, speaking of the League, says that the results it has achieved already exceed anticipations, and adds, with that perspicacity in analysing human affairs which is the mark of his genius, that the difficulties inherent in the peaceful settlement of international disputes are far from insuperable, provided a sufficient proportion of the human race is determined to overcome them.

Now, as we are about to part, let us send forth from here to the peoples that encouragement which at present they so sorely need. Let us tell them that to uphold the faith they have placed in our institution they can find in their own experience of life a ground for hope which is superior to all reasoning. For them, as for individuals, there can be neither peace nor prosperity except at the cost of mutual concessions, which can be made possible only by a patient apprenticeship to the supreme virtue of civilised man — moderation.

We are incited to practise that virtue by a realisation of our own interests; for, as we are taught by the wisdom of the ancients, the right is constantly shifting; if its possessor abuses it, he sees it pass to his adversary. Let us be sure that we do not forget this lesson.

For my own part, I have often thought of it during this session. In this place of honour, in which you have shown your confidence by setting me, I have been able to give free rein to my reflections. I was deeply impressed when I saw the delegates of the fifty-two States represented here, at the call of their countries, pass gravely and silently by this platform to place their voting-papers in the ballot-box.

Never more than from this chair have I felt the majesty of such a spectacle. As I contemplated it, I had a vision of a future, and I trust a near future, when all peoples will come here, not merely to elect their representatives, but to proclaim in the sight of God and man the completion of the great work in which we have been patient and obscure labourers — the reign of justice and peace on earth.

Upon the expression of this earnest hope, thanking you for your kindness and also expressing my gratitude for their valuable assistance to the members of the Secretariat, especially the Presidential Secretariat, and to all their assistants, interpreters and stenographers, I now have the honour to declare the thirteenth ordinary session of the Assembly closed.

(The Assembly rose at 12.30 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH, 1933, AT 10.30 A. M.

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Chairman : M. MOWINCKEL (Norway)
(President-in-Office of the Council).

1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

M. Mowinkel, delegate of Norway, President-in-Office of the Council, took the Chair.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen, — In my capacity as President of the Council, I have the honour to declare open the fourteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

2. — ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE TO REPORT ON THE CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES.

The Chairman :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the election of the Committee to report on the credentials of the delegates.

According to the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, this Committee should be elected by secret ballot. There have, however, been frequent exceptions to this rule ; and, in view of the precedents, and in accordance with established usage, I feel that the Assembly will have no objection to my endeavouring to facilitate its decision without in any way attempting to influence its choice.

I therefore feel that I shall only be anticipating the wishes of the delegations in submitting a list consisting of eight names as follows :

His Excellency Mirza Abol-Hassan Khan FOROUGH (Persia) ;
M. Gaston DIDERICH (Luxemburg) ;
Mlle. Kerstin HESSELGREN (Sweden) ;
M. CHACÍN ITRIAGO (Venezuela) ;
M. Arturo PANI (Mexico) ;
His Excellency M. QUO TAI-CHI (China) ;
His Excellency M. SALNAIS (Latvia) ;
Mr. H. J. SHEEHAN (Australia).

As no objection has been raised, I think I may conclude that the Assembly has decided that the Committee on Credentials shall consist of the delegates whose names I have just read.

The list proposed by the Chairman was adopted.

The Chairman :

Translation : My intention in proposing that the Assembly should proceed immediately to constitute the Committee on Credentials was to expedite

the proceedings and to allow the Committee to accomplish its work in the most favourable conditions possible. The members of the Committee on Credentials will therefore be good enough to meet at once in order that they may submit their report at the earliest possible moment.

3. — OPENING SPEECH BY M. MOWINCKEL, PRESIDENT-IN-OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL.

The Chairman :

Translation : Since the last session of the Assembly there has been a great change in the Secretariat of the League of Nations. Sir Eric Drummond, amid general tributes of regret, has retired from the position of Secretary-General.

His place has been taken by M. Avenol ; and I desire to avail myself of this opportunity of extending to him a warm greeting and every good wish for the fulfilment of the great and weighty task he has in hand. M. Avenol is not a newcomer to the League. He is known to us all ; and I feel sure I am expressing the sentiments of all Governments here represented when I tell him that it is with the greatest satisfaction that we welcome him as Secretary-General, looking forward as we do with confidence to the contribution he will assuredly make to the development of the League's great work in the world.

The Report which the Secretary-General has submitted gives us a vivid impression of the extensive and varied work done by the League in the year that has elapsed since the last session of the Assembly. Those of us who have followed this work at close quarters are aware of its importance and of the great influence it exercises on international relations.

In his opening address last year, the President of the Council, Mr. de Valera, laid much stress on the importance attaching to the attitude of public opinion towards the League, and he very properly took the view that it was of the utmost consequence that that attitude should be favourable.

If we ask ourselves what is the present prestige of the League, what weight it carries with public opinion, it is impossible not to feel that its position has unhappily not improved since this time a year ago. We who have faith in the great mission of the League can only regret that this should be so, and recognise it as our primary duty to do all that in us lies to improve and strengthen the League's credit in the eyes of the world.

The reason for this regrettable situation is not far to seek. What interests the public and commands its attention is not the day-to-day work of the League (and, in particular, of the Secretariat), admirable and important though that is, but the League's power to establish a better understanding between nations and to consolidate and safeguard that peace, and that will to peace, which the peoples of the world are anxious, despite every obstacle, to preserve. In other words, it is the big events within the compass of the League's activities that attract the attention of the general public.

The fact, therefore, that the League, notwithstanding the manifold and genuine attempts it has made, has not succeeded in improving the situation in the Far East was not calculated to strengthen its position in the eyes of the world ; and the effect of the disillusionments to which the situation in Europe itself has given rise is perhaps even worse. Fifteen years after the close of that fratricidal crime, the world war, we find to our shame that we have made little progress towards securing a better understanding, a purer atmosphere and a healthier mentality among peoples. On the contrary, the

thought of war and the possibility of war are ever present, looming over the future as a constant menace. The consequence, unfair, indeed, but none the less natural, is that the peoples of the world blame the League, in which they had reposed such great hopes. They had looked to it as the instrument which would create a new and a better Europe in which war would be inconceivable and impossible.

It was on the strength of this conception that great things were expected both of the Disarmament Conference and of the London Economic Conference, which, it was anticipated, would mark important stages in the consolidation of peace and of the future of the world. Now that the results of these great efforts, inaugurated with such high hopes, are seen to be negative rather than positive, the spread of disillusionment and discouragement is easy to understand. One after another, nations are asking if the forces which should collaborate for peace and better relations between countries are really so feeble, if the men in whose hands the direction of national destinies lie have not learnt their lesson from the misfortunes of the past.

It is, indeed, becoming more and more evident to the public in every country that the possibility of keeping the peace depends as much on economic as on military disarmament. Many persons there assuredly are who no longer believe in military disarmament properly so-called — and that despite the obligations, moral as well as legal, which bind countries to carry out such disarmament — until the conditions of the world's economic system and international trade have been placed on a sound basis. Undeniably the distress and unemployment which prevail everywhere, as a result of the economic and commercial crisis are helping to increase the political dissensions between nations.

If, on the other hand, the economic atmosphere were to become more tolerable, a happier and more optimistic political mentality would follow, and would have favourable effects on international relations in general. It is for this very reason that the negative result of the London Conference is so regrettable. The disappointment to which it has given rise has made public opinion throughout the world increasingly pessimistic ; and that in its turn has inevitably had an adverse effect on the League.

True, some hope may be founded on the fact that the past year has, after all, shown certain symptoms of economic progress and of a less depressing atmosphere in the realm of commercial policy. For example, according to the Secretariat's estimates, world industry increased its production by nearly 30 per cent during the year June 1932 to June 1933. International trade is also showing signs of improvement and there is greater activity in shipping. All this has brought a certain relief, and, if this evolution could be followed up by a more liberal commercial policy, we might look forward to the future without too much apprehension.

To revert to the matter of the organisation of large international conferences, the question surely arises whether a mistake has not been made in the preparation of these conferences, which were awaited with so much hope, so that the lack of result was doubly disappointing. Everything seemed so well prepared from the technical point of view : the different questions had been previously discussed by the experts, the programme was carefully drawn up, solutions were proposed and — what was the result ?

The explanation is perhaps to be found in the fact that it will always be difficult to reach an agreement when so many States are gathered together to discuss matters freely at conferences of this nature. New light may be thrown on many

questions and a solid basis may be provided for a solution; but the positive result which is expected of the conference itself is not achieved. The reason is that it has not been possible to establish in advance a basis of co-operation between those States which, through their importance and their power, exercise a decisive influence in the world. When even those States — or perhaps particularly those States — come to big conferences with views that are difficult to reconcile, it may be said in advance that it will not be possible — even if all the others are agreed — to arrive at fruitful results. To quote one concrete example: if the group consisting of the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy had come to an agreement beforehand on the stabilisation of the dollar and sterling and on the values of the other currencies in relation to these, this would have provided so solid a basis for the restoration of the world economic system and for the revival of international trade that that measure alone would have sufficed to make the Economic Conference a success. As various conditions necessary to the realisation of such a plan were not yet present, we may well ask whether it would not have been better to postpone the Conference. Such a postponement would certainly have had a less depressing influence on world opinion and on its attitude to the League. No doubt there are also other economic and commercial questions which are of great importance for peace, especially those relating to the restoration of world trade itself, to the exchange of goods between countries and to the problem of debts. If no better results have been achieved with these questions either, the reason once more is to be found in the absence of previous agreement and in the fact that it had not proved possible to reach an international monetary understanding.

The remarks which I have felt it my duty to make with regard to the World Economic Conference also apply to the Disarmament Conference. The latter has been in session for a year and a-half, and the impression created among the peoples of the world by the fact that this vast enterprise has not yet yielded any concrete results is so discouraging that it may well be asked whether the Conference — if it should close without having accomplished at least some part of its task — will not have done more harm than good to the prestige of the League. We must, of course, still cherish the ardent hope that the Conference will bring a positive and happy result. But, once again, it would undoubtedly have been better for all concerned if the group of States called upon to take the lead had been able to agree beforehand on a positive and definite programme. Everyone knows that if those States had been able to reach agreement, no proposal relating to disarmament would have failed for lack of support from other countries.

It is on the basis of these considerations, closely related as they are to the views which led to the conclusion of the so-called Four-Power Pact, that in my country — in spite of apprehensions as to the form of the Pact — we welcomed its conclusion within the framework of the League of Nations. It is not necessary to have much knowledge of international affairs to see that the whole world will feel the effects of such results as these four Powers are able to achieve in the development of co-operation and of economic and political *rapprochement*. It has often been said that the differences between Germany and France are the cause of all our troubles. For that reason we have known no happier days in the existence of the League of Nations than those in which Stresemann and Briand came together. And for the same reason

we place great hopes in the Four-Power Pact as a means of appeasing differences and of bringing about understanding and perhaps even friendship.

This Pact, inspired by goodwill and a spirit of justice — the goodwill and spirit of Locarno — can contribute enormously to bringing back mutual understanding and co-operation in our torn and divided Europe, where the words *equality* and *fraternity* are relics of a bygone day and where even the most sacred rights of liberty — liberty of thought and personal liberty — are not everywhere secure.

It is with the ardent wish to see the League of Nations become stronger and its influence and authority greater that I have made these few remarks.

Fortunately, there are not only dark spots in the picture which I have to put before you, even in the political sphere. Do not the Council's efforts allow us to hope for a solution of the conflict which at one time threatened to lead to strife between Colombia and Peru? Should we not congratulate ourselves on the perseverance displayed by the Council in its numerous endeavours to settle another conflict which threatens to divide two other countries of Latin America — Bolivia and Paraguay — and to expose the maintenance of peace in that continent to grave dangers? Is it not also to the Council's intervention that we owe the procedure enabling the dispute which arose during the year between the United Kingdom and Persia to be settled?

I cannot conclude these remarks on the political situation without expressing my gratification at the co-operation which the United States of America has given us in the course of the year. This co-operation has never been so important, so close and so varied, and I am sure that you will all agree with me when I express the hope that it will continue to be even closer in the future.

The constant progress in the development and reinforcement of international justice is also a cause for great satisfaction. The League's work in this sphere and the results obtained do not always attract much public attention; but by the tradition they establish these results nevertheless represent an important step towards the replacement of force by justice in the settlement of international disputes. As regards the Northern countries, we may recall with satisfaction that the award of the Permanent Court of International Justice in the case of Eastern Greenland was accepted without question as the best method of settling a dispute between two countries.

Are not these examples which deserve to be followed in the wider field of bigger and more serious disputes? More energetic and deliberate efforts in this sphere, where progress seems possible, would greatly promote a sense of security and would thus render military disarmament more easily conceivable. The strengthening of the system of international justice and the creation of machinery for the execution of its decisions will lead in the international field, by a natural process of evolution, to conditions similar to those which arise as a matter of course in individual States as their judicial organs are progressively perfected, gaining thereby in strength and authority and providing that complete assurance of the firm and reliable protection of the law which alone can induce the individual to forgo taking the law in his own hands.

It is the growing application of law and justice, and confidence in their power to settle international, as well as national, differences which keep our faith in the League ardent and alive. In spite of disillusionments, in spite of the general disappointment that prevails, every responsible person

knows that we have in the League a marvellous instrument, and must feel that we are bound to continue to do all that lies in our power to keep it strong and effective. We who hope and believe in a future where peace and understanding will rule, we who know that our civilisation and our happiness depend on this peace and understanding, are in duty bound to put all our strength and energy at the service of this task in order to carry it through to success. On us assembled here to-day devolves, as on no one else, the duty of fostering this work.

As Gustav Stresemann said, speaking for the last time in the Assembly on September 9th, 1929 :

"It is our prosaic duty to bring the peoples nearer together and bridge over their differences."

We know too that he was right when he said :

"It is work that will not be done at once nor by empty enthusiasm alone."

As the foundation for such work, it is above all necessary to develop the spirit of peace and understanding among all peoples ; and this foundation has to be laid, not only in the schools, but also in every home. Aristide Briand, in his warm appeal to women and mothers at the 1929 Assembly, said :

"When children are taught to love peace, to respect other nations and to look for what men have in common rather than for their points of difference, we shall no longer need to apportion guarantees or to apply Article 8 of the Covenant. Peace will already be enthroned among the nations."

(The Assembly adjourned from 11.5 to 11.50 a.m.)

4. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES : REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The Chairman :

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

I call upon the Chairman of the Committee M. Salnais, to read his report.

M. Salnais (Latvia), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials. — The Committee appointed by the Assembly to report on the credentials of delegates met to-day at 10.45 a.m. in the President's office. I was elected Chairman and was entrusted with the duty of drawing up the report.

After examining the documents transmitted to it by the Secretary-General, the Committee found that the following States Members are represented by delegates duly appointed in virtue of the full powers accorded to them by the heads of their respective States :

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Irish Free State, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Siam, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.

The Committee also found that the following States Members have accredited their delegates either by a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, a telegram from the same source, or else from permanent delegates accredited to the League of Nations :

Abyssinia, Union of South Africa, Albania, United Kingdom, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iraq, Italy,

Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Peru, Portugal, Roumania, Salvador, Turkey, Venezuela.

The Committee considers that the representatives of these States Members of the League are fully accredited to take part in the work of the fourteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

The following States Members have not as yet accredited delegates to the Assembly :

The Argentine Republic, Honduras and Japan.

The Committee is glad to note that a large number of delegations are accredited by full powers granted by the Heads of States.

The Committee further remarked that certain delegates to the Assembly have been accredited by letters signed by themselves both now and in the past. The Committee desires to draw the attention of the Assembly to this practice and ventures to hope that in future all delegates will present full powers or credentials issued by their respective Governments.

The Chairman :

Translation : I beg to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report.

Does anyone wish to speak on the conclusions of the report?

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

5. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE FOURTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the fourteenth ordinary session of the Assembly. In conformity with the Rules of Procedure, voting will be by secret ballot.

May I call upon M. Hymans, first delegate of Belgium, and M. Politis, first delegate of Greece, as former Presidents of the Assembly, to be good enough to act as tellers?

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

The Chairman :

Translation : In the first place I wish to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 53 |
| Valid votes | 53 |
| Absolute majority | 27 |

Mr. te Water, first delegate of South Africa, obtained 30 votes.

M. Castillo Najera, first delegate of the United States of Mexico, obtained 20 votes.

Other votes : 3.

I have the honour, therefore, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, to declare that Mr. te Water, delegate of South Africa, is elected President of the Assembly.

I congratulate the delegate of South Africa on his election. I am sure that, under his direction, the Assembly will achieve valuable results.

I call upon Mr. te Water to take the Chair as President of the Assembly.

(Mr. te Water took the Presidential Chair.)

6. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The President. — It would hardly be right of me to say that I arrived in Geneva this morning prepared for this very great honour that has been done to my country and to myself. Therefore, I wish to warn you at once that I come to this Chair ill prepared for the duties which are about to be placed upon my shoulders. But at the same time, if these are your President's disadvantages, may I say I will make every endeavour to carry out my duties as President without fear, favour or prejudice.

If, in the past, the voice of my country in your deliberations has been a small one, that is not due to any desire on its part not to take the closest interest in the affairs of the League of Nations. Moreover, South Africa is a country which has known war. It has experienced all the bitterness that war brings to a people, but it has experienced something greater than that. In its latter days, it has experienced a peace which has obliterated the past, and, in that sense, may I offer the present situation in my country as an example to many of the greater countries which have not been able to settle their disputes with one another?

I shall bring to my task the experience, not of a European country, but of one of those countries beyond the seas which form in themselves a small League of Nations. I refer to that group of young countries which comprise the British Commonwealth of Nations. May I say this, that there is no group of nations which is more determined to keep before themselves and before the world the peaceful outlook than those peoples. My own country is one of the smallest of this group of nations, but I again say that it is not one of those which, on that account, is least interested in the maintenance of peace.

Finally, may I also say this (I do not wish to delay the proceedings of this Assembly) that though I can ill follow in the steps of the President who carried out his duties so ably from this seat last year, I would wish to offer him our congratulations on the splendid way in which he performed those duties.

With these few words and the expression again of my determination to do my duty here to the best of my ability, and with my renewed thanks to you for the great and signal honour you have done to my country, I propose to resume my seat and the ordinary business of the Assembly.

7. — TRIBUTE TO THE LATE M. DE AGÜERO Y BETHANCOURT, FORMER DELEGATE OF CUBA.

The President. — Before we adjourn our deliberations for ten minutes, I wish to call upon M. de Madariaga, delegate of Spain, to say a few words with regard to the loss by death of our late colleague, M. de Agüero y Bethancourt, delegate of Cuba.

M. de Madariaga (Spain):

Translation: Since the last Assembly we have suffered the loss of one of our oldest and most faithful colleagues. The figure and the personality of His Excellency Aristides de Agüero y Bethancourt, delegate of Cuba, Minister in Berlin, and representative of the Republic of Cuba to the League of Nations from its beginning, were so well known to you, and you have all been such loyal friends of this valued fellow-worker of ours, who brought such life into our meetings, that I need not speak of him at length from this platform to-day.

I will therefore merely express on behalf of my country — I am sure I shall be interpreting the feelings of you all — our sorrow at the loss of our great friend. I trust you will all agree with me that our sympathy should be conveyed to his family and to his country.

The President. — His Excellency M. Carlos de Armenteros, delegate of Cuba, will address the Assembly.

M. de Armenteros (Cuba):

Translation: I am so deeply moved by M. de Madariaga's words, which have affected me more than I can say, that I have the greatest difficulty in replying to the tribute he has paid.

His words moved me for two reasons — in the first place, they renew the sorrow I feel not only as a Cuban but also because I was M. de Agüero y Bethancourt's pupil, and afterwards his colleague for some years; and, secondly, it was M. de Madariaga, the Ambassador of Spain, who spoke of our late friend. It is quite natural that it should have fallen to the Spanish representative to speak of M. de Agüero y Bethancourt, for Spain is our mother-country and has always evinced a great interest in us.

I should like to thank M. de Madariaga and the Assembly on whose behalf he has spoken. I thank him on behalf of the Cuban people, of the Cuban Government, of M. de Agüero y Bethancourt's family, and in particular on behalf of his wife, whose grief is commensurate with her admiration for her husband. I would also like to thank M. de Madariaga on my own behalf, as the pupil, friend and colleague of M. de Agüero y Bethancourt for fourteen years.

8. — TRIBUTE TO THE LATE COUNT APPONYI, FORMER DELEGATE OF HUNGARY.

The President. — I now call upon M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, to say a few words about Count Apponyi.

M. Motta (Switzerland):

Translation: It is with keen emotion that I come to this platform. We have just evoked the memory of a fine and noble figure, a man who was one of the most devoted and faithful servants of the cause we all serve. I know, from what was told me, that, on his death-bed, he urged one of his most intimate friends never to forget the cause of the League of Nations, to which his country would always remain faithful, whatever difficulties might arise.

But I should also like to call up before you another great and noble figure: that of Count Apponyi, of whom patriotism and love of humanity were blended in perfect harmony.

Count Apponyi died during the Disarmament Conference, at which he represented his country. I have never forgotten how, a few days before his death, he made a speech at Vienna in which he affirmed with singular brilliance and profound sincerity his devotion to the League of Nations. He told the young people whom he was addressing that, despite all the difficulties and distresses of the times, they must retain their faith in that great organ of international collaboration.

I venture to tender from this platform — and I am sure I am voicing the feelings of you all — our respectful tribute and the expression of our deep sympathy to Countess Apponyi, who is carrying on her husband's work among us.

The President. — General Tánzos, delegate of Hungary, will address the Assembly.

General Táneczos (Hungary):

Translation: M. Motta's words went straight to my heart. The man whose memory he has once more evoked was a great patriot and a great Hungarian; but he was also a great servant of peace and a tireless worker in the cause of the League of Nations. He has bequeathed to us all that he believed and felt, and of that we hold ourselves trustees for all time.

I should like to convey to President Motta the personal thanks of Countess Albert Apponyi.

The President — Gentlemen, as a mark of our respect for the memory of these two most valued colleagues, M. de Agüero y Bethancourt and Count Apponyi, I would ask you to rise in your places for a moment.

(The members of the Assembly rose from their seats in token of respect.)

(The Assembly adjourned from 12.40 p.m. to 1 p.m.)

9. — AGENDA: EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION.

The President. — In accordance with precedents, I have just approved a note which will be communicated to the delegations. Its object is to give some idea of the proposals which I intend to submit to them with regard to the various questions on the agenda of the present session.

Since the members of the Assembly have before them the note which has been circulated, I will ask them to take a decision on the first question on that list, namely, the adoption of the agenda (document A.2(1).1933, Annex 1).

In view of one of the measures taken at the beginning of the thirteenth session relating to the withdrawal of a question from the agenda, I would propose that the Assembly, for the same reasons as those given by my predecessor in 1932, should withdraw from the agenda of this session and refer to the next ordinary session question No. 5 of the list which has been given to the delegations — namely, "Amendment of the Covenant of the League of Nations in order to bring it into Harmony with the Pact of Paris."

It has not been possible to carry out the preparatory study for the discussion of this question by the Assembly. In these circumstances, if the Assembly shares this view, it might decide, without any other formalities, to adjourn this question to its next ordinary session.

If there are no observations, I shall take it that the delegations agree to this suggestion.

The President's proposal was adopted.

The President. — In order to save time, and unless a delegation asks that they should be taken separately, I would request the Assembly to decide *en bloc* on the list of questions on the agenda — namely, Items 1 to 22, with the exception, naturally, of the question withdrawn.

We should add the supplementary list of questions which has been circulated in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 4 of the Rules of Procedure. There is only one question of that kind mentioned in document A.2(1): "The Chilean Government's proposal concerning the Nationality of Women" (Item 23).

If there is no objection, I shall regard the agenda of the fourteenth ordinary session of the Assembly as just proposed, as adopted.

The agenda as amended was adopted.

10. — CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEES.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the constitution of Committees.

The procedure established at previous Assemblies is to set up six Committees; but, for reasons of expediency, the President of the thirteenth ordinary Assembly proposed only to set up five. The circumstances which gave rise to this decision are the same to-day. The questions relating to the reduction of armaments are still the subject of studies and negotiations in the various bodies set up by the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments. In these circumstances, it seems to me, at first sight at all events, that the Assembly will not consider it desirable to appoint a Committee to discuss the same subjects.

M. Lange (Norway):

Translation: I have no objection to the immediate adoption of the President's proposal, but it seems to me that it would be premature to decide definitely not to set up a Third Committee. In my view, this question should be left open. Under the Rules of Procedure, the Assembly has the right at any time to set up Committees, and I venture to suggest that the question of setting up new permanent committees should be left open until the end of the general discussion, which may bring up matters necessitating the appointment of a Third Committee.

The President. — I would explain to M. Lange that the proposal made by me a few moments ago is not a definite decision. I would not, however, like to have any debate on the subject at the present moment; it might definitely be raised later.

The proposal is that we should do as was done last year and not constitute a Third Committee. If it subsequently proves desirable to constitute this Committee, I shall immediately put to the Assembly proposals to that effect.

Thus, if there is no objection, I propose that the Assembly should immediately set up five Committees, which will keep the same numbering with reference to their work as at previous sessions — the first to deal with constitutional and legal questions; the second, with the work of the technical organisations; the fourth with the organisation of the Secretariat and of the League's finances; the fifth, with social and humanitarian questions, and the sixth, with political questions.

In order to depart as little as possible from the procedure adopted at previous sessions, I propose that the Assembly should arrange for the meetings of the Committees to alternate as follows: the First, Second and Sixth Committees would meet at the same time, and so would the Fourth and Fifth Committees.

If there is no objection, I shall consider these proposals adopted.

The President's proposals were adopted.

The President. — The delegations have doubtless already been requested to send to the Secretariat the forms on which they have entered the names of their representatives and substitutes on each Committee. The lists of members of Committees will be drawn up as quickly as possible, and the Committees will meet in this hall this afternoon to elect their respective Chairmen.

11. — AGENDA COMMITTEE: APPOINTMENT.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the constitution of the Agenda Committee. Following the practice of my predecessors, I propose

that a small Committee of seven members be set up to formulate proposals for the procedure to be followed as regards the placing of new questions on the Assembly's agenda.

If the Assembly is agreed, and if no delegation desires to suggest names for this Committee, I will, in accordance with precedent, venture to propose a list of names as follows :

M. BOURQUIN (Belgium);
M. BRACHE (Dominican Republic);
M. GAUS (Germany);
M. MIKOFF (Bulgaria);
M. MASSIGLI (France);
Mr. Philippe ROY (Canada);
M. HOLSTI (Finland).

The proposed list was adopted.

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

The President. — At its last six sessions, the Assembly has decided that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should sit as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly, together with the Chairmen of the six ordinary Committees of the Assembly and the six Vice-Presidents elected by it. I would ask the Assembly whether it agrees, in accordance with precedent, that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should, at the present session, also sit as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly.

The President's proposal was adopted.

13. — APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President. — The Assembly has always desired that as many delegations as possible should

be represented on its General Committee, and that those eminent persons who have taken an active part in its procedure should take part in the discussions of the General Committee.

It seems to me that, as this year the General Committee will have one member less by reason of the absence of the Third Committee, the Assembly might desire, as an exceptional measure, to call on the Chairman of the Credentials Committee, who has already given us very valuable assistance, to serve on the General Committee. The Committee on Credentials would certainly regard such a decision as a mark of our gratitude and of our appreciation of the delicate work which it has carried out so effectively.

If there are no objections, I take it that the Assembly agrees to this proposal, and that M. Salnais, who has already been elected Chairman of the Committee on Credentials, is to be a member of the General Committee of the Assembly when it is set up.

The President's proposal was adopted.

14. — ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President. — I would like to remind delegations of the programme of work for this afternoon. The Committees will meet successively at intervals of twenty minutes, in this hall, to elect their Chairmen.

First Committee at 3.30 p.m.,
Second Committee at 3.50 p.m.,
Fourth Committee at 4.10 p.m.,
Fifth Committee at 4.30 p.m.,
Sixth Committee at 4.50 p.m.,
Agenda Committee at 5.10 p.m.

The Assembly rose at 1.20 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD.

OF THE

Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH, 1933, AT 5.30 P. M.

CONTENTS :

15. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NAMES OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.
16. ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.
17. COMPOSITION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.
18. AGENDA : DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.
19. PROTECTION OF MINORITIES.
Draft Resolution submitted by the German Delegation.

President: Mr. C. T. TE WATER
(Union of South Africa)

15. — ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NAMES OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The President. — In pursuance of the programme which I submitted to the Assembly this morning, and which it approved, the five Committees and the Agenda Committee met in turn this afternoon and elected their Chairmen.

The results of those elections were as follows :

| Committee | Chairman |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| First | M. MOTTA (Switzerland). |
| Second | Count CARTON DE WIART (Belgium). |
| Fourth | M. FOTITCH (Yugoslavia). |
| Fifth | Mlle. HESSELGREN (Sweden). |
| Sixth | M. DE MADARIAGA (Spain). |

The Agenda Committee has elected as its Chairman M. MIKOFF (Bulgaria).

16. — ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President. — In application of Rule 7, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the

Assembly, the next item on the agenda will be 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 Count Carton de Wiart, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. de Madariaga, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, to be good enough to act as tellers.

The secret ballot will be by roll-call.

May I remind you that the voting papers should contain the names of six persons, and that names of countries should not be mentioned.

The vote will now be taken.

The President. — The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting . . | 51 |
| Voting papers valid | 49 |
| Absolute majority | 25 |

The analysis of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|---|----|
| M. Daladier (France) | 42 |
| Baron von Neurath (Germany) | 40 |
| Sir John Simon (United Kingdom) . . | 43 |
| Baron Aloisi (Italy) | 44 |
| M. Castillo Najera (Mexico) | 41 |
| His Highness Ali Khan Foroughi (Persia) | 39 |

I should mention that M. Paul-Boncour had six votes.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, therefore, I have the honour to declare the following delegates are elected Vice-Presidents of the Assembly : M. DALADIER, Baron VON NEURATH, Sir John SIMON, Baron ALOISI, M. CASTILLO NAJERA, His Highness Ali Khan FOROUGHI.

I wish to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

17. — COMPOSITION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President. — The General Committee of the Assembly is therefore composed as follows :

Vice-Presidents of the Assembly :

M. DALADIER (France) ;

Baron VON NEURATH (Germany) ;

Sir John SIMON (United Kingdom) ;

Baron ALOISI (Italy) ;

M. CASTILLO NAJERA (Mexico) ;

His Highness Ali Khan FOROUGH (Persia) ;

Chairmen of the five Committees of the Assembly :

M. MOTTA (Switzerland) ;

Count CARTON DE WIART (Belgium) ;

M. FOTITCH (Yugoslavia) ;

Mlle. HESSELGREN (Sweden) ;

M. DE MADARIAGA (Spain) ;

Chairman of the Agenda Committee :

M. MIKOFF (Bulgaria) ;

And the Chairman of the Credentials Committee :

M. SALNAIS (Latvia) ;

whom the Assembly decided this morning to include in its General Committee.

18. — AGENDA : DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.

The President. — I will now invite the Assembly to proceed with certain questions which were on the agenda of this morning's meeting and which, because of the short time at our disposal, were delayed until this afternoon.

The first question which the Assembly has to decide is the distribution of the various items on the agenda among the different committees which have just been set up.

In the note which has been communicated, the members of the Assembly will have seen the proposals that I intend to make on this matter.

The various questions might be distributed as follows :

First Committee : Items 4, 6(b), and 23.

Second Committee : Items 15, 16 (I), 16 (II), 17 and 18.

Fourth Committee : Items 8, 9, 10, 11 and 22.

Fifth Committee : Items 6 (a), 19 and 20.

Sixth Committee : Items 7, 13, 14 and 21.

The above proposals were adopted.

The President. — There is one question on the agenda which I have not proposed for reference by the Assembly to a Committee. I refer to the report of the commission of Enquiry for European Union (Item 12). This Commission has not yet been able to meet, and certain questions of procedure may yet arise.

I think, therefore, that the Assembly will agree with me that it might be well for this question to be first considered by the General Committee.

The proposal was adopted.

The President. — The next question to which I wish to refer is the Election of three non-permanent Members of the Council (Item 3).

It is the practice that the Assembly should carry out this election on the Monday after the opening of the session. I would point out, however, that this year we have on our agenda the report of a special Committee to study the system of election to the Council, and that this report has been referred to the First Committee.

It seems to me that the Assembly would not desire to prejudge in any way the conclusions at which the First Committee might arrive, and that the Assembly might think it desirable to take account of the special situation arising from the fact that certain questions of principle connected with the system of election to the Council are being raised.

I would therefore propose that the Assembly should ask the General Committee to examine the various questions of procedure which may arise in view of the situation to which I have referred. The General Committee might thus later submit to the Assembly suggestions with regard to measures which might be taken in respect of elections of non-permanent Members of the Council.

If there are no objections, I shall assume that the Assembly agrees to this procedure.

Sir John Simon (United Kingdom). — May I ask, Mr. President, whether the suggestion that you make is to be regarded in any way as indicating that the election which ordinarily takes place next Monday to fill the three places on the Council which are in the regular course vacated, is not to take place ? I would say at once that I do not appreciate how the carrying out of the ordinary constitution of the League could possibly be prejudiced if the election took place in the ordinary course. Of course, if the matter is referred to the General Committee entirely without prejudice, there is no need to discuss it here ; but I should like to be quite clear that what you propose is no indication whatever, either on your part or on the part of the Assembly, that we are indicating a view against the election to fill the three places next Monday.

The President. — The procedure which I have suggested to the Assembly is not in any way intended to prejudge the issue as to whether the election should take place next Monday. I am merely exercising my right as President to consult the General Committee on this question and to consult it without prejudice to the situation. In due course, the matter will be reported back to the Assembly.

If there is no objection, these questions of procedure will be referred to the General Committee for examination.

The President's proposal was adopted.

19. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES : DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE GERMAN DELEGATION.

The President. — I beg to inform the Assembly that I have received a draft resolution from the German delegation, which reads as follows :

"The part of the report on the work of the League of Nations since the thirteenth session of the Assembly and its introduction (pages XXI to XXIII and 63 to 67), dealing with the question of the protection of minorities, are referred to the Sixth Committee."

This draft resolution will be printed and communicated to all the delegations, and I shall make suggestions to the Assembly, at one of its subsequent meetings, as to the action to be taken upon it.

The Assembly rose at 6.35 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1933, AT 4.30 P.M.

CONTENTS:

20. **DEFINITIVE ACCESSION OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.**
21. **ELECTION OF THE THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.**
Communication by the President in the Name of the General Committee.
22. **SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION OF SPEECHES AT PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY.**
Communication by the President in the Name of the General Committee.
23. **COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION.**
Draft Resolution proposed by the General Committee.
24. **PROTECTION OF MINORITIES.**
Draft Resolution submitted by the German Delegation.
25. **MANDATES.**
Draft Resolution submitted by the Norwegian Delegation.
26. **REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.**
Opening of the General Discussion.
Speeches by Sir John Simon (United Kingdom), Dr. Dollfuss (Austria) and the Hon. R. J. Manion (Canada).

President: Mr. TE WATER.

20. — DEFINITIVE ACCESSION OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The President. — Before directing the Assembly to the questions on this afternoon's agenda, I desire to refer to the message from the Government of the Argentine Republic, which I am sure has caused you all, as indeed it has caused me, the most cordial satisfaction.

The advice of the definitive accession of the Argentine Republic to the League conveyed in the telegram from M. Carlos Saavedra Lamas is indeed most satisfactory news, and this Assembly will, I am sure, gratefully accept and cordially reciprocate the message of goodwill which we have received from the Government and people of the Argentine.

Such, I am confident, are the feelings of this Assembly, and I feel sure that to the supporters of the League throughout the whole world the assumption of active membership of this great country will bring a new strength and hope.

I wish to give my colleagues the opportunity of expressing on this platform their feelings on this important event. I trust, however, you will agree with me that it will be best that this should take place when the delegates of the Argentine take their seats among us, which will be at a later date.

Finally, I propose to send, in the name of the Assembly, a telegram to the Argentine Government conveying the Assembly's deep satisfaction and friendly welcome. I am sure that, in doing so, I am interpreting aright the feeling of the Assembly.

21. — ELECTION OF THE THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT IN THE NAME OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

The President. — At its meeting on the afternoon of September 25th, the Assembly decided, on my proposal, to refer to its General Committee, for examination of the procedure, questions concerning the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

The General Committee, at its meeting yesterday morning (September 26th), decided to propose that the Assembly should follow the practice adopted in 1927 with regard to the date of the elections. In accordance with this practice, the election of the three non-permanent Members of the Council should take place on the Monday

following the opening of the session of the Assembly. Therefore, if the Assembly agrees with the suggestions of the General Committee on this point, the election of the three non-permanent Members of the Council to replace those whose turn of office ends this year will take place on Monday afternoon, October 2nd, at 4 o'clock.

The proposal was adopted.

22. — SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION OF SPEECHES AT PLENARY MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT IN THE NAME OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

The President. — The General Committee, at its meeting yesterday morning (September 26th), had to consider measures for the practical application of a recommendation made last year by the Committee of Five constituted by the Assembly, with regard to telephonic interpretation of speeches delivered at plenary meetings.

The proposal was that, in order to save time and to shorten the procedure, the system of telephonic interpretation should, when possible, be employed. The Committee of Five emphasised how much time would be saved by the simultaneous translation of speeches prepared by delegates in advance, the text of which could be communicated to the Secretariat on the previous day.

The General Committee charged the President to inform the delegations that they have the option of communicating in advance the text of their speech in writing, in order that the translation may be prepared and delivered by telephone.

The General Committee recommends this system to delegations as a means of shortening the plenary meetings.

23. — COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

The President. — The Assembly, at its meeting on Monday afternoon, September 25th, decided to refer to the General Committee, for suggestions on points of procedure, the question under Item 12 of the Assembly agenda — namely, Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

At its meeting yesterday morning (September 26th), the General Committee decided to submit a draft resolution for the approval of the Assembly. This resolution has been circulated to the delegations, and reads as follows:

The Assembly,

After consulting its General Committee as to the procedure to be followed in connection with Item 12 of the agenda of this session (Commission of Enquiry for European Union):

Notes that circumstances have made it impossible for this Commission to meet since the last session;

Decides, under these conditions, to renew for twelve months the term of office of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union and to include forthwith the report of this Commission in the agenda of its next session."

In view of the terms of the above resolution, I do not think that the Assembly will see any objection to proceeding with it immediately.

If there are no observations, I will take the silence of the Assembly as a sign of assent and

consider that the Assembly has decided to adopt the draft resolution which I have just read.

The draft resolution was adopted.

24. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES: DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE GERMAN DELEGATION.

The President. — The Assembly will remember a draft resolution submitted to it by the German delegation at its meeting of September 25th (afternoon).

This draft resolution proposes that that part of the report on the work of the League since the thirteenth session of the Assembly and its introduction (pages XXI to XXIII and 63 to 67), dealing with the question of the protection of minorities, be referred to the Sixth Committee.

In accordance with precedent, I propose that the Assembly immediately adopt this draft resolution, and decide, without further procedure, to refer the parts of the report in question to the Sixth Committee.

The draft resolution was adopted.

25. — MANDATES: DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION.

The President. — The Norwegian delegation has asked me, in accordance with the usual custom, to submit the following draft resolution to the Assembly:

"The Assembly,

"Following the precedents already established for several 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 documents dealing with the question of mandates which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the last session of the Assembly."

This proposal will be printed and distributed, and I reserve the right to offer, at a later date, suggestions on the procedure to be followed.

26. — OPENING OF THE GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President. — I will now open the general discussion of the report on the work of the League of Nations since the thirteenth session of the Assembly.

The Right Hon. Sir John Simon, first delegate of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, will address the Assembly.

Sir John Simon (United Kingdom). — This is the occasion when the League of Nations in its annual Assembly surveys the work of the past twelve months and reflects upon its position and prospects. It is more than usually necessary that we should, on this occasion, make this calm, reasoned survey, both because the present position and influence of the League are matters of close consideration and discussion by our friends and our critics throughout the world, and because we have been during the year, in one form or other, in such constant session that it is difficult to form a balanced judgment on what we have done.

There is indeed one feature of the unusually frequent visits to Geneva which some of us have recently had occasion to pay on which I would venture a word of comment. The periodic meetings of the Council of the League are events of the very greatest importance. I inherit from my predecessors in the office which I hold in the United Kingdom the tradition, which I have done my utmost to follow, that it is one of the important duties of the Foreign Secretary to attend the meetings of the Council, and I see before me colleagues of mine from other countries who follow the same course.

Owing very largely to the fact that there have been constant gatherings during this last year at Geneva connected with disarmament and other special matters, the Council has been called together on supplementary occasions, not only at frequent, but at irregular, intervals, sometimes at short notice. Now, I greatly question whether this is a very desirable practice. Those States which are represented at Geneva by a resident delegate can, of course, attend these supplementary meetings without great difficulty, but if these meetings of the Council are to continue to be, as I think they ought to be, occasions when the Foreign Ministers of the Powers there represented can meet together, not only to deal with the actual agenda of the Council, but to make personal contact and smooth over incipient difficulties which may otherwise develop into diplomatic controversy, it is important that, as far as possible, Council meetings should be at prescribed intervals for which we can all make arrangements beforehand. I venture to make that comment on the work of the past year and would invite my colleagues to consider it in due course.

The annual report furnishes us with a connected account of the efforts and activities of the League during the past year which I need not review, but there is one feature which I would wish to dwell on for a moment which gives us all a great sense of satisfaction. We who are Members of the League of Nations rejoice to feel that, in many of the efforts of general world concern which we have been making, notably in the Disarmament Conference, we have had, and continue to have, the friendly co-operation and help of the United States of America.

I propose with your permission to say a few words on the disarmament side of our work during the year. I bear in mind that the Assembly has unanimously decided not to set up the Third Committee because this all-important question is in the hands of the Disarmament Conference; but no Assembly of the League of Nations could possibly make its full survey if it did not consider the present position. I would present the importance of the disarmament problem to you in this form.

The past year, notwithstanding many gloomy features, undoubtedly furnishes some signs, in more directions than one, of the beginning of economic recovery. The accomplished statisticians of the League would certainly confirm this; and many of us, without knowing all the details, feel it is so. But the economic recovery of the world cannot make great strides without accompanying political appeasement and amelioration. Trade and international confidence are close allies, and the want of confidence between neighbours is clogging economic recovery. How can we help to give an impetus to the beginnings of economic recovery? No contribution, I believe, would be of such value as a disarmament convention promptly arrived at. It would be at once the index and the stimulus for greater confidence, for it would be a proof that anxieties were being relieved and that we were

firmly preparing to live as friends in a peaceful world. No doubt it is true that armaments are a symptom and do not in themselves constitute the root of the disease, but the Covenant was right when it put the limitation and reduction of armaments as an integral part of the structure of world peace.

The spirit of mutual concession and co-operation which a convention for the regulation and control of armaments would embody is at this moment the greatest need of the world, for it would set the seal upon the movement towards world economic recovery and transform the prospect of its early realisation.

In this connection, I should like to say a word, in general terms, here in the Assembly, about the part which is played from time to time by some of the greater States in consultation between themselves for the purpose of trying to promote the wider agreement at which we are all aiming and to which we all have a contribution to make. In this matter, the greater States are sometimes exposed to two reproaches which appear to me to be quite inconsistent with one another. On the one hand, there is sometimes a tendency for those who have not been present at their conclaves to regard them as a sort of junta or caucus or cabal, taking upon themselves work which properly belongs to the full Assembly and even aiming at results which might be to the prejudice of the mass of smaller States. On the other hand, the criticism is sometimes heard that progress here at Geneva is delayed because these great States which are expected to take the lead do not more effectively agree beforehand on the common line which others would then be prepared to follow. There are two criticisms, and all I say about them is that they are self-contradictory and cannot logically stand together. In these matters, we must not carry our logic too far. It was a wise man who said that a man who was all logic was like a knife that was all blade. You must have a handle to your knife if the sharpest of edges is to cut.

The true view of the relation between the work of the greater Powers and the open work of the whole Assembly is, I think, different. I would point out that the constitution of the League itself recognises, as, for instance, in the composition of the Council—that, while we are all equally members of the organisation, each of us owing an equal allegiance and expressing an equal judgment, many of the problems that face the League are problems the solution of which necessarily depends in a special degree on co-operation and good understanding between those upon whom fall an enlarged responsibility and a special burden.

I will illustrate this by the conversations and consultations which, as you know, have been going on between some of us, and which are still going on, about disarmament and which are an instance in point. What are we endeavouring to do? Not to supplant the activities of the whole body, but to clear away obstacles, to prepare the road, to bring the draft Convention, which has already, please remember, been adopted as the governing scheme by the whole Disarmament Conference, into a form which will be most likely to meet the present situation. And I would like to say—if I may for the moment be so bold as to appoint myself the "Rapporteur" of these conversations—that that work is being pursued with great earnestness and with a conviction which we all share that, however great the difficulties may be, our first and overriding purpose must be to reach agreement and to get a convention.

It may be that by some re-casting of the present draft we shall find that we can work out more effectively the plan, upon which all the members

of the Disarmament Conference are agreed in principle, of reaching disarmament by stages. A first stage duly observed would be an immense contribution to the creation of a condition of greater confidence during which substantial and agreed disarmament, the measure of which, of course, would be defined in the Convention itself, would be realised. Without entering upon the vexed problem of security, it is obvious to us all that, in some form or other, confidence is what is needed — the confidence which arises not only from the pledge but from the proof of neighbourly relations and from the sense that we are really co-operating for the common purpose of strengthening the foundations of peace.

I speak of neighbourly relations. Philosophers have disputed through all the ages how far the attributes and qualities of human beings can properly be ascribed to States, but this at least is certain, that to be a good neighbour is not only a human but an international virtue, and its practice lies at the very foundation of all international progress.

As for the actual situation about disarmament, I would counsel you, if I may, that we should all face it steadily without undue depression of spirit and without ill-placed or premature satisfaction. Geneva is not only a meeting-place; it is — as these instruments before me show — a sounding-board, and a sounding-board, though a very necessary instrument if the ear of the world is to be reached, often tends at one time to exaggerate the note of optimism, and at another time to exaggerate the note of alarm.

There have been times, no doubt, when an exaggerated view has been taken of what the League, by the mere fact of its organisation and its discussions, could achieve. If a very complicated, difficult major problem is not promptly and satisfactorily solved at Geneva, there are people in the world who are quick to declare that this is proof positive that the League is quite useless. But the true view in such a case is that nations and Governments composing the League have not been able, in that instance, even with the help of its machinery and its influence, to compose forthwith a vital difference. To treat the institution of the League as to blame, and still more to declare that the existence of the League is the real cause of the trouble, is to disregard the true explanation, as well as to forget — what I here proclaim — the immense services which the League continues to render to the world.

But if we leave aside for a moment these primary and major tasks, a glance at this report which is submitted to us on the work of the League during the past year will reveal to anybody the range and the importance of the League's activities. Voluminous though that report is, it can hardly give us a complete picture of the untiring effort that is being made here for the better ordering of the world and for the alleviation of human misery and the stopping of human cruelty.

For example, the Council has the special responsibility imposed upon it by the mandatory system for watching over the development of backward races, and, by the minorities treaties, for assuring itself of the just and impartial treatment of those who, by race, language or religion, differ from the governing majority. Will anybody tell me that at this time of day the existence of these great operative instruments has meant nothing for the betterment of the world?

Again, in a world where the processes of international trade become ever more complicated, so that the interdependence of nations becomes every day more evident, the work of the Economic and Financial Organisation here becomes constantly

both more important and more difficult, and now the constant development of means of communication calls for the solution of new problems.

I would not wish to mention two other aspects of the League's work which the public and the critics do not always bear in mind. There is perhaps no sphere in which the League accomplishes more effective and useful work than in that of health, and we none of us know how much we may be individually indebted to the Health Organisation of the League for its work, which is none the less effective because it is less spectacular than certain other branches of the work that is done here at Geneva.

Then, again, the League is doing a noble work in seeking to promote the protection and the welfare of children and young people. It wages unceasing warfare against that frightful scourge of humanity — the drug traffic.

Last year, the Assembly decided to appoint a Permanent Commission of Experts to watch over and promote the execution of the Slavery Convention which was so happily negotiated under the auspices of the League in 1926. I may be permitted to say — and I say it from my heart — that I hope that this Commission will be constituted, and I hope it may enter upon its effective duties without delay and that it may be able effectively to assist the League and to assist the world in this matter of so great importance to humanity.

I do not pretend to have mentioned more than a few of the tasks which the League has set itself and which it is able to carry out successfully, thanks to the devotion of those who give their ability and their energy to the service of this great institution; and that alone would be enough to show that in the midst of these disturbances, which often attract more attention, there is a steady undercurrent of patient work and progress, which follows its course unseen and almost unheeded. The work goes smoothly — so smoothly, perhaps, that we are not aware how essential it has become; we should only realise its full value if by some misfortune we were to be deprived of the services set up here and so loyally rendered at Geneva.

And now, if I may return, in a concluding word or two, to the matter which preoccupies all our minds, though it is not in terms upon our agenda — the question of disarmament — I would take leave to make one observation about the programme for the disarmament discussions. The date is approaching when the League of Nations and the Disarmament Conference will be called upon to consider that matter. I would deprecate the facile adoption of the suggestion that, in view of the difficulties which confront us, we can take refuge in the method of repeated adjournment. For consider, much of the criticism which has been levelled against Geneva and against the proceedings of the Disarmament Conference is based upon the time which these discussions have occupied and the failure to reach more speedy results. I hold that that criticism up to the present is fundamentally unfair, for the critics really have no conception of the complications of the problem, complications which are not of our making, and it takes close, long and careful analysis thoroughly to understand them.

Just as I am satisfied that the work already done at the World Economic Conference is not wasted work — it is work that has been of real value — so I have not the least doubt that the work that has been done during the past year on disarmament (though definite results are still to show) has been most valuable in bringing home to Governments and publicists, and to opinion all over the world, the range and variety of the whole topic. But the study of these questions in their technical aspects

is now very complete, and we are really facing political issues which cannot be kept indefinitely in suspense and are not necessarily made easier by delay. I would therefore take advantage of this opportunity to express my own view that we must press forward and do our utmost, not only to promote a Convention in the form which best suits the present situation, but we must try to proceed quickly to that end.

There is a special reason for proceeding without delay. When I reflect on the course of events since the world war, I am appalled at the time which has elapsed without firmly establishing the new basis for peace. This is the fourteenth Assembly, and, if you add to those fourteen years four years of terrible war and the period which intervened in discussions about the peace treaties, you begin to realise the grave and significant fact that there are young men and young women now just reaching their majority who not only do not share our knowledge of what war meant, but who were not even born into the world at the time when it began.

This I conceive to be an overwhelming reason for pressing resolutely forward. It rests on us who know what was the horror and the loss of war to dedicate ourselves afresh to the work we have in hand, to protest against that fatalism which would teach that men are at the mercy of uncontrollable events — for man is still, if he would but believe it, the master of his fate — and, by mutual comprehension and sincere co-operation, to define and to adopt the sure conditions upon which international relations may be firmly established.

The President. — His Excellency Dr. Dollfuss, first delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Dollfuss (Austria):

Translation: The efforts that are now being made to achieve a social order corresponding to the revolutions in technique that have taken place have arrived at a critical point, characterised by the economic crisis and by fundamental changes in the political and economic structure of many countries. In such grave and troubled times, States are tending more and more to think only of their own interests, and to draw in upon themselves; but it is not along that path that mankind can find its future. Never has it been more important than it is to-day to remember that on the other side of political frontiers there are men united by the same faith in human destiny and the mission of mankind. Not indeed by fratricidal strife, but by the co-operation that is God's will, can the nations solve the great problems of our era. The League of Nations was created to form a centre for all efforts to avoid destructive contests and preserve humanity from the catastrophes to which they would inevitably lead. Intellectual and material changes must take place in each country in accordance with its own character and history. It is not possible, and it would be contrary to natural laws, to seek to impose upon them a uniform system.

Thanks to her thousand years of history, Austria has realised the importance of peaceful co-operation among a large number of peoples. She has not forgotten her traditions. After the terrible experiences of the war, she has regained her balance by her own efforts. A few days ago, the Austrian people gave an impressive demonstration of their faith and their lofty sense of morality. Austria is now engaged in profiting by the mistakes committed after the war and in providing herself with an economic and political constitution answering to her needs. She is inspired essentially by the principles set forth by the Holy Father Pope Pius XI for the solution of the social problems of our time.

But although it is false to say that men's minds and souls are merely the reflection of their material condition, yet it is absolutely necessary to provide them with work and the means of livelihood, lest their souls perish.

Austria has made the greatest efforts to adapt her economic system to an entirely changed situation. From the outset, however, it was clear, and it has become steadily clearer, that the only possibility of economic development for Austria lies in an extension of her markets. There is no question of one-sided sacrifices by other countries for Austria's benefit. During all these years, we have bought much more from the foreigner than the foreigner has bought from us, notwithstanding the fact that Austria is not a creditor but a debtor State. What we ask, and what we must have, is that all countries shall buy as much from us as we buy from them, and that this equalisation shall be effected, not by reducing our imports, but by increasing our exports.

After various efforts made by Austria had failed on account of political obstacles, the Stresa Conference last year established an economic programme for the Danubian States and Austria. On the basis of its recommendations, Austria has come to an agreement with France regarding facilities for the export of her timber; she has opened negotiations with Germany and Poland on the subject of unilateral preferential duties, though those negotiations are not yet concluded. With Italy and Hungary, the preferential regime of credits and transport tariffs has been developed. Austria has also granted Yugoslavia and Hungary preferential duties for wheat quotas. The commercial treaties with Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia have been revised with a view to increasing the volume of trade. The Austrian Government has thus endeavoured to put the recommendations of the Stresa Conference into practice. The results, however, are far from sufficient, not merely for Austria, but also for the other Danubian States. This notwithstanding, the resolutions of that Conference, on which fifteen European countries agreed, would form a good starting-point for further action. They should be adapted to the present situation, and extended if possible, but the essential point is that they should be effectively carried out.

Austria is determined to follow the path that offers her possibilities of independent existence and economic development. She counts upon the friendly co-operation of the other Powers, especially as such agreements would constitute a rational basis for the negotiations of the neighbouring States and would tend to hasten their success.

On this subject, Austria likewise appeals to the League of Nations to encourage her efforts in every direction by its high moral authority. It is plain, and has been acknowledged in every quarter, that this involves, not merely the economic consolidation of Austria herself, but also the economic reconstruction of the Danube basin. In the most difficult circumstances, the League has already given us valuable moral and practical support. Hence Austria is one of the countries that are unshakably convinced of the necessity and the high value of the international centre at Geneva. Austria's example demonstrates that the financial and monetary situation of a country can be restored, even in the most difficult circumstances, and while a severe lack of confidence prevails, by close co-operation with the League of Nations.

After these arduous years of struggle for her existence, Austria to-day asserts more than ever before her freedom and independence — not so much in virtue of formal treaties, as essentially through the free will of her people. Our history,

our geographical position and our culture confer the right and impose the duty, on our little Germanic country, of being and remaining a useful member of the community of nations.

The President. — The Honourable Robert J. Manion, first delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

The Hon. R. J. Manion (Canada). — I can assure you that it is with some hesitation that I come to this forum here this afternoon to make a few remarks after having listened to the two distinguished speakers who have preceded me, and to whose words the whole world will be listening with attention. I had intended, some time later in the general discussion, to make a few remarks on behalf of Canada, and, had I been given the opportunity to wait a little longer, those remarks would probably have been in better form, because I should then have had a better background. But my name appears somewhat early on the list, and therefore I am called upon at this point in the proceedings.

The Canadian delegation is the only one at this Assembly from north of the Rio Grande River — in other words, it is the only group here from the northern four-fifths of the North-American continent, comprising something over six million square miles, and including perhaps 135 million people. Therefore, since the League of Nations is an international organisation, it is possible that a few remarks from the Canadian delegation may not be out of proportion.

It appears to me that at no time in the history of the world have so many agreements and pacts guaranteeing the security of nations been in evidence, and yet it also appears to me that at no time since the armistice has there been quite so much uncertainty and fear in the world as there is at the present moment.

For that condition, there is a variety of reasons. There is, first of all, the psychological effect of the world depression under which we have been suffering for three or four years. Secondly, there is the fact that the Disarmament Conference has not been successful so far. Thirdly, there is the fact that the recent World Economic Conference in London had rather meagre results to show for the time expended.

This makes it all the more imperative, as it appears to me, to have strong and courageous leadership at the present time — particularly strong and courageous leadership from the greater nations — which leadership, if properly displayed in this Assembly, will go far to allay the psychology of fear throughout the world, and perhaps to create the proper atmosphere for the success of the Disarmament Conference when it is re-convened.

I have noticed that in the speeches of last year's Assembly, and notably in the speech of the President of the Council delivered this year, there has been a defence of the League of Nations, which defence is an admission, of course, that there has been fairly widespread criticism of the League, and, at the same time, that the confidence in the League is not too strong. In this regard, the Dominion of Canada is no exception among the countries of the world, but I do feel that the better thought, not only in Canada but in all countries, is in complete support of the League of Nations, although there is some evident disappointment at the results thus far. My own feeling is that, whatever the defects, the deficiencies or the weaknesses of the League, the free, open and frank discussions that take place in this Assembly and in the Committees of the League are far superior to the old diplomacy, where the secret, and too

often the slimy, methods led invariably to distrust and suspicion, and almost invariably also to war.

Most thinking people condemn war because of its physical, moral and economic results. They feel that war is as much a relic of barbarism as is mortal combat between individuals over petty disputes. And, after all, the League is making a sincere effort to promote peace throughout the world, and it is the only institution of its kind. Therefore we are on solid ground in supporting the League of Nations in every way in regard to its work for peace and its work for international co-operation.

The Pact of Paris expresses the Canadian attitude towards war almost completely. In other words, we believe that war as a method of settling international disputes should be outlawed, and that all disputes, whatever their kind, should be settled by pacific means. Until that Pact is accepted in principle and adopted in practice among the nations of the world, it would appear that civilisation as we know it is in great danger of complete destruction.

The greatest disappointment, I think, in connection with the results of the work of the League so far has been in regard to disarmament. Most people feel that large armaments lead inevitably to war, as was so ably expressed by the late Lord Grey. In Canada, for many generations, we have been in the fortunate position of being able always to settle our disputes — and we have had disputes — with our great neighbour to the south by peaceful means. Because of that, and because of the confidence which we feel that that happy position will continue, we are to-day possessed of almost no army and no navy. We realise, at the same time, that conditions on this side of the Atlantic are not identical with conditions on the other side. We sympathise with any nation which insists that it must have security and safety, and we understand, therefore, why disarmament and security must go together. But, if I may dare to make a suggestion, in all humility, it has sometimes seemed to me that there has been too much insistence upon security leading the way and disarmament coming after, and that, perhaps, if the courage and confidence were displayed to allow disarmament to proceed a few paces ahead of security, progressive security would follow. But, whatever differences of opinion exist in regard to that question, it is the hope of the people of Canada that those differences will be so harmonised that disarmament will ultimately be the result. Any success in bringing about disarmament will certainly receive the support and sympathy of the Canadian people; and, on the contrary, if the coming Disarmament Conference is a complete failure, it will have a demoralising effect upon thought throughout the world.

In this regard, it is our opinion also that every effort should be made to dissociate armament-making and private profit. As Article 8 of the Covenant points out, "the manufacture by private enterprise of munitions and implements of war is open to grave objections". With that we wholly agree. We therefore hope that, in the near future, some agreement may be reached to do away with this evil, either by nationalisation or by complete Government control of this industry.

Another thought: In reading the report of the Secretary-General, one is struck perforce by the multitude of activities of the League of Nations, and is likely to ask himself the questions which have been so forcibly presented in the report of the Supervisory Commission — namely: (1) Is the League to develop haphazard and to cover too many fields? (2) Has not the time come to keep the extension of the League's activities strictly within the limits of its financial possibilities?

Canada, in its dealings with the League, has been in the habit of putting first things first, and it is felt very generally among Canadians that, while there are both primary and secondary functions of the League, the primary function, the main objective, the real goal of the League of Nations is to preserve international peace; in other words, to prevent war among the nations of the world.

It is true that the Covenant contemplates certain important secondary functions relating to such matters as health, transport and others; but it is possible that we may be placing undue emphasis upon the secondary functions and not giving sufficient attention to the primary.

To accomplish the primary function of the League at the present time, disarmament stands completely

in the forefront. In saying this, I do not wish to minimise in any way the splendid efforts of the League in various branches of international co-operation, but it seems to me that it cannot be repeated too often or too emphatically that to preserve peace among the nations of the world is the primary function, the most important objective of the League of Nations.

Let us remember this individually, and let us at the same time keep in mind as a motto among ourselves these splendid words of Goethe written from Rome over a century ago:

"I am a man of peace and I want to preserve peace constantly."

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH, 1933, AT 10.30 A.M.

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27. — SIMPLIFICATION OF ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT IN THE NAME OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

The President. — The General Committee of the Assembly, at a meeting held on September 27th, took note with great interest of certain suggestions put forward by the Secretary-General with regard to means whereby Assembly procedure might be improved in order to accelerate its work and to render it more efficacious. Some experiments in this direction have been made since the first session of the Assembly. It now seems desirable to re-consider these methods and to see if they can be improved.

The General Committee does not think that it should make any particular proposal to the Assembly, but it considers that it would be useful if the First Committee — which is the competent Committee on questions of Assembly procedure —

would examine the Secretary-General's suggestions. If the Assembly shares the views of its General Committee on this point, it would simply authorise me, without any further procedure, to ask the First Committee to examine this question on the basis of the paper which was submitted to the General Committee. If the First Committee, after a further discussion, concludes that some practical measures can be proposed to the Assembly, it would submit a report and the Assembly could then decide what steps it would seem wise to take.

If there are no observations, I will consider the proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

28. — MANDATES: DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION.

The President. — The Assembly will remember a draft resolution submitted to it by the Norwegian delegation at its meeting of September 27th.

This draft resolution proposes that that part of the report on the work of the League since the thirteenth session of the Assembly which deals with mandates questions be referred to the Sixth Committee.

In accordance with precedent, I propose that the Assembly immediately adopt this draft resolution and decide, without further procedure, to refer to the Sixth Committee those parts of the report in question which deal with mandates.

The draft resolution was adopted.

29. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the general discussion on the report on the work

of the League since the thirteenth session of the Assembly.

M. Sandler, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly:

M. Sandler (Sweden):

Translation: This Assembly has not met on the date prescribed by the Assembly Rules of Procedure. The decision to defer it to September 25th was reached after the Members of the League had been consulted privately.

For reasons which it believes to be sound, the Swedish Government has expressed, and continues to entertain, serious doubts as to whether such a procedure is in consonance with the spirit and the letter of the constitution of the League. Furthermore, it seems to us dangerous to create a precedent which would make it possible to postpone the Assembly of any year to any date for reasons of expediency which are easy to comprehend, since the world is more full of confidences than of confidence.

We look upon the annual Assembly of the States Members as a stabilising factor in international life. If it is desired to avoid difficulties in connection with other international conferences, it is to those conferences, rather than to the Assembly, that these reasons of expediency should be applied; for, I repeat, it is upon the League and its organs that we wish to confer the highest degree of stability.

It has been felt necessary to make use of organisations other than the League because the League is not sufficiently universal. Since, however, the League is the only one of them that imposes clearly-specified obligations on its Members, the tasks of those other international conferences will inevitably fall upon the League, if the method of working outside the League machinery proves unsuccessful.

We have before us the experience of the two big international conferences. One, the London Conference, was a failure; the other, the Disarmament Conference, is in a critical condition. The world is waiting, impatiently rather than hopefully, for the weeks that will follow the Assembly.

The World Economic Conference has concluded its first session, and now stands adjourned *sine die*, without any tangible results having been achieved. If that Conference has done all it can do, all the questions it was to have dealt with now come back to the League. The position is so uncertain, however, that there is little hope that any useful work in that field can be done at this Assembly.

In view of the negative results of international discussions and the uncertainty of the general situation, the Swedish Government found itself obliged, a day or two ago, to denounce the tariff truce agreement.

I see little sign of any return to normal conditions. In any case, what do we mean by normal conditions? In every country in the world, expedients are being resorted to, and experiments carried on, in the hope of arriving at a new organisation of production and trade. There is, it seems to me, little likelihood that we can put the clock back. Sweden, for her part, is always prepared to co-operate in any effort to bring about, even by new methods, an increase in the volume of trade, and consequently of world production. If, however, there is no improvement in the international situation, Sweden will draw her own conclusions, and seek on her own account the best means of safeguarding the welfare and material existence of her people. In other words, she is ready for either alternative.

With regard to disarmament, it should likewise be emphasised that the fact that this problem is being dealt with by a separate Conference cannot

and must not be interpreted as meaning that the League is washing its hands of the question. There is still a chance that the work for disarmament may succeed by the methods that have so far been followed; but that may be the last chance. If this opportunity is not seized, the whole weight of the problem of disarmament will fall again upon the League.

Certain questions, such as that of the definition of the aggressor, are closely linked by their very nature with the contractual obligations in the Covenant, and thereby fall within the sphere of the League. In any event, the obligations laid down by Article 8 of the Covenant remain entirely in force for all Members of the League — I must stress that point — for all of us. The security of everybody is at stake, and the obligations must be applied to all of us without exception. It follows from these provisions of the Covenant that the States that have imposed upon themselves the common law represented by the Covenant must be placed on a footing of equality so far as concerns the application of their common obligations.

While upholding the above fundamental principle, the Swedish Government desires to point out that there is no question of the absolute legal equality of former times. What we want for the future is controlled equality. We know from experience what the old kind of equality means; it was nothing but the right of everybody to do whatever he liked, and we know to what disastrous consequences it led. Pre-war equality is the fratricidal fraternity of the war period, and the impoverished liberty of the post-war period. To return to an equality of that kind would be to restart the vicious circle of earlier times. That circle must be broken by a Convention, even if it means giving up radical solutions in order to reach sooner a positive and reasonable result.

The characteristics of the present situation are an obvious absence of stability, the interplay of political interests, economic disturbances of the most far-reaching character, crude social antagonisms and the interaction of tension, internal and external. We have to work, not only under the shadow of the menace of armed war between the peoples, but also under the influence of internal troubles and the dangers of civil wars. So far as the cause of peace is concerned, no absolute distinction can be made between external and internal questions, as the wording of the Covenant and the record of the League's activities have shown, again and again.

Each country remains the master of its fate. It is for each country to give to its own national social institutions the form which accords with its own particular conditions, requirements and intentions. The League of Nations can never set itself up as judge in the conflict of ideas, systems and parties. But there exist nevertheless unquestioned human values, the conservation of which the League cannot neglect in the interest of peace and humanity.

Long before the League was set up, it was realised that the victims of war could not be excluded from the rights of man under international law. It is essential that, at a time of great political and social disturbance, the voice of humanity should be raised no less clearly on behalf of the victims of civil conflict. At the very beginning of the revolutionary period, of which the world war was the starting point, the Red Cross proclaimed the application of its humanitarian principles "in the event" (I am quoting) "of civil war, social or revolutionary troubles". In a resolution passed in 1921, the International Red Cross Conference expressed itself as follows:

"The Conference,

"In the light of the painful experience of the Red Cross in countries in which civil war is raging:

Draws the attention of all peoples, Governments and political parties, national or other, to the fact that a state of civil war cannot justify the violation of international law, and that international law must be upheld at any cost;

"Condemns the system of political hostages and insists on the principle that families, and, above all, children, are not responsible for the actions of the heads of their respective families or other members of those families;

"Deplores the limitless sufferings to which prisoners and internees are sometimes subjected in countries in which civil war is being waged, and considers that persons kept in detention for political reasons in times of civil war should be regarded and treated in accordance with the principles by which those who drafted the Hague Convention of 1907 were actuated."

I recall this resolution, as also the obligations in connection with the fostering of the activities of the Red Cross by which the Members of the League are bound under Article 25 of the Covenant.

A problem of the same kind, which has been frequently discussed and is at all times acute, is the problem of minorities, one of the special aspects of which is the position of the Jewish minority. It is desirable to consider the possibility of thorough discussion of this problem in the competent committee, in which there will be every opportunity of submitting observations. I will here confine myself to saying that my Government would be glad to see a discussion on the possibility and methods of a more general application of the principles of the special treaties as a means of introducing the conception of equality in this connection also.

If I venture to raise these questions here, it is for the fundamental reason that the conception of the equality of men and nations is at the basis of this institution of the League of Nations. The League has not renounced its lofty aspiration of achieving universality. Any effort, the object or the effect of which is to divide humanity into separate species, necessarily goes counter to the ideas out of which the League of Nations was born. To proclaim the principle of inequality in the world is, in effect, to renounce the League.

Two centuries ago, an immortal voice proclaimed that no one had the right to make one man the instrument of another. That categorical imperative is applicable to nations as to individuals. Immanuel Kant, the spiritual founder of the League of Nations, long since gave voice to the truth which is at the very foundation of the League when he said: "We are all members of the same humanity".

The President. — Sir Brojendra Mitter, delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

Sir Brojendra Mitter (India). — I shall take very little of your time this morning, for the simple reason that I have no cut-and-dried solution for either of the two big problems which are engaging the collective wisdom of the world. Nevertheless, I wish to make a few remarks which may give food for thought to some of you.

I had the honour to represent India in the Assembly two years ago. The interval of two years enables me to take a somewhat detached view of the movements in Europe, and I see, through Indian eyes, a distinct change in thought and outlook. There is a new orientation. It almost seems as if the horrors of the war had been

forgotten. There is certainly less enthusiasm for the reign of peace in the world. No one, indeed, wants another war, but there is no longer the same passionate will to banish it. The war spirit is not condemned with the same passionate conviction, and the realisation that another war may shake, if not destroy, civilisation seems to be growing dim.

I am not unmindful of the heroic efforts which are being made to win definite results from the Disarmament Conference. Nor do I ignore the difficulties which confront it. Nevertheless, I have felt a weakening of the force of public opinion as the months of discussion lengthened. The picture of Europe is to me, an Indian, somewhat disheartening. We in India went peace, not only for our own country, but all over the world, that we may continue uninterrupted the progressive development of our destiny.

A war spirit in any important quarter of the earth has its repercussions in others, and the resulting tension is prejudicial to all. There is an Indian proverb, "A drop of acid turns the whole jug of milk".

Another feature of the European picture is the increasing boldness of the League's detractors. It is of no use trying to disguise the fact that the League is passing through a difficult period. The lack of a full measure of success in some of its endeavours has encouraged its critics. But the critics forget that every human institution has its ups and downs; they take little account of the League's achievements and never fail to concentrate on its failures. They pass the more lightly over such features in the League's record for the year as its achievements, partial or complete, in the cause of peace in Latin America; the undramatic but beneficent work of its Health Organisation at Singapore; its expert assistance to Siam over the development of her harbours; its contribution to the Chinese Government's great programme for welding one quarter of humanity into a united modern State — they pass over all these and similar activities of the League the more lightly because the field for them lies outside Europe. Yet it is this very fact that, to an Asiatic like myself, invests them with a special significance and appeal.

It is with particular interest that India will watch the progress of the scheme for technical co-operation in China. It is full of promise, and its results may be far-reaching. Its wholly technical and non-political character raises it above the hazards and contingencies of international political complications, and makes it constitute a new type of international relationship. It is a concrete application in the field of national reconstruction of the principle of international co-operation which is at the very root of the League. It shows how national independence can be reconciled with, and indeed fostered by, expert and technical assistance from an international source.

Our detractors make light, it is true, of these and other activities of the League. I do not suggest that we should shut our ears to their criticisms, but their criticisms would carry more force if they had an alternative machinery to suggest in place of the League. To-day the interdependence of nations is manifest; the need for international co-operation is imperative. But our critics do not vouchsafe to suggest how such co-operation could better be secured than through the machinery of the League. To myself, the conclusion of the whole matter is surely this: the more difficult the times and the more serious the setbacks to the League, the more essential is it that we should remain steadfast in its cause, and, undeterred by misfortune, rally unceasingly to its side that which is its

sole yet mighty sanction — namely, the moral opinion of the world.

The President. — His Excellency Dr. Wellington Koo, delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Wellington Koo (China). — The report of the Secretary-General shows that in the sphere of its everyday activities the League of Nations has continued to achieve much valuable progress during the year under review. The handling of the administrative and other special questions entrusted to it by the Covenant has been marked by the usual wisdom, tact and ability. With its well-organised and experienced Secretariat the League has, in my opinion, accomplished very much in promoting co-operation between nations in the many varied phases of international life. For one thing, the systematic collection, co-ordination and publication of information relating to questions of importance and general interest to the peoples of the world has proved of great value to statesmen and scholars everywhere in their study, preparation and planning with a view to finding suitable solutions.

The practice of rendering technical aid and assistance to Member States is perhaps little known to the general public, but it is becoming increasingly important to the cause of international co-operation. The technical organisations of the Secretariat, with their competent experts and advisers, have been of much benefit to the countries which have requested their assistance and advice. My own country feels grateful for the services which they have rendered, and in several ways are still rendering, by undertaking the investigation and study of specified problems of a technical character and making valuable reports on them. The practical recommendations made in these reports have been of invaluable service to my Government in its preparation of a comprehensive programme of national reconstruction.

The fact that this collaboration with the League, as has already been ably pointed out by the delegate for India, is purely technical and entirely non-political in character places it beyond cavil and enables it to be widely approved in China. It was in view of this fact that the Chinese Government requested the Council in July last to send a technical liaison agent to China to assist the Supreme National Economic Council in co-ordinating the work of the other League experts already on the spot. It is the intention of my Government to continue this policy of collaboration, so that China's stupendous task of internal reconstruction and economic development may be greatly hastened and facilitated to the mutual benefit of herself and the rest of the world.

But important as its everyday activities are, the interest and attention of the peoples of the world, in so far as the League of Nations is concerned, are naturally centred upon the success or failure of its efforts in the political sphere — in the promotion and maintenance of peace between nations, which is, after all, its main purpose. Measured by this obligation, the year under review cannot but be considered as the most disillusioning one for the League since its establishment.

In this disillusionment, China, victim of armed aggression from another Member of the League in the Far East, shares with the keenest feeling. It will be recalled that the initial act of an undeclared war of conquest on the part of Japan took place in the night of September 18th, 1931. Seventeen months after, the Assembly pronounced its verdict in a report unanimously adopted on February 24th, 1933. That report gives a clear account of the situation and establishes beyond doubt that, in the view of all the other Members of the League,

Japan's occupation of the Three Eastern Provinces was a violation of the Covenant as well as of the Pact of Paris and the Nine-Power Treaty of Washington, and that the new regime she had set up there was against the wishes of the people and incompatible with peace in the Far East. This report was accepted by China and rejected by Japan.

On the morrow of the Assembly meeting at which this report was adopted, the Japanese General Staff, no doubt as a reply to the League's pronouncement, and in disregard of Japan's covenants under Articles 12 and 15, attacked and occupied Jehol Province, and extended their aggressive operations to the south of the Great Wall, imminently threatening the security of Peking, China's ancient capital, and Tientsin, the great commercial metropolis of North China. The Chinese Government, rallying all available resources, resisted to the best of its ability but, in the face of the better equipped Japanese army, which had prepared for years for this war of conquest, found itself unable to check single-handed the onslaught of the invading forces. After fifty days of a bitter struggle, in which we lost thirty thousand dead and wounded, we were obliged to sign a truce at Tangku on May 31st, 1933. Although the Japanese troops have since been gradually withdrawn from the neighbourhood of Tientsin and Peking, the Four Eastern Provinces — namely, Manchuria and Jehol — have remained and still remain in the occupation of the Japanese army, contrary to Article 10 of the Covenant.

The Chinese Government views this situation in the Four Provinces as a standing violation of the treaties upon which the world is supposed to rely for security, disarmament and peace. It is determined steadfastly to maintain all its rights and claims, and not to recognise or acquiesce in the illegal accomplished fact. That accomplished fact will remain only so long as it is physically impossible for my country or politically impossible for the rest of the League to vindicate the sanctity of treaties. In maintaining this attitude, we consider that we are not only doing what lies in our unaided power to preserve China's territorial integrity and political independence against Japanese aggression, but that, in so doing, we are resisting the attempt to convert the Covenant into a scrap of paper. That attempt is now taking the form of the strongest pressure to induce China to abandon the policy of co-operation with the West through the League and to adopt the principle of "Asia for the Asiatics".

The Assembly report of February 24th, 1933, which China announced her readiness to accept on the very day of its adoption, remains for her, as for all Members of the League, the only basis for a satisfactory settlement. The Sino-Japanese issue, therefore, remains to-day the same as it was on the day when all the nations assembled here unanimously agreed not to recognise the illegal regime in Manchuria either *de jure* or *de facto*. The subsequent approval of the report by the United States of America has given added force to the solemn verdict of the Assembly.

The only difference in the situation is that the question has since assumed even more alarming proportions, as evidenced by the Japanese illegal occupation of Jehol and parts of Hopei Province in North China, and by the increasingly strained relations between Japan and other Pacific countries. From the juridical point of view, however, no change has taken place. It is indeed obvious that the mere lapse of time cannot have altered the legal character of such an issue. The principle of non-recognition cannot be interpreted so as to mean non-recognition of the obligations of the Covenant.

Nor can it in the long run mean closing our eyes to the consequences to world peace or to the continued violation of the Covenant.

We regret that the unanimous report of the Special Assembly on this question has not yet been carried out. The delay in acting on the findings of that report is the more regrettable to us, not only because of our desire to see the wrong done to China fully redressed, but also because the results of this delay are undermining the Covenant everywhere and imperilling world peace. The Covenant, which is the fundamental constitution of the League, and, in fact, the only valuable legacy of the Great War, must be upheld or the hopes of mankind, which are centred upon it for the consolidation of peace and the future of civilisation, will be dashed to the ground.

In his opening speech before this Assembly, the President of the Council referred to the World Monetary and Economic Conference and the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, and expressed the regret that the results of both gatherings, to the inauguration of which the peoples of the world had looked with so much enthusiasm, had turned out to be altogether negative. That such has been the outcome of the two Conferences is, however, not surprising to us. There may have been several causes, both general and particular, which were responsible for the meagreness of the results. But the menace and warning of the Far-Eastern situation had much to do with the scepticism and hesitation revealed in the deliberations of the two world Conferences. For when violations of existing international obligations arising from such solemn instruments as the Covenant of the League, the Pact of Paris and the Nine-Power Treaty of Washington could be committed by one signatory Power with impunity, is it to be wondered at that other nations of the world should have adopted an attitude of cautiousness in the matter of concluding new treaties and of assuming new obligations? If the Covenant is a scrap of paper east of Suez, how can it become a reality in Europe? The principle of the universality of the League, as has just been so eloquently stressed by our Swedish colleague, must be upheld at all costs.

It is to be feared that, so long as this glaring case of Covenant-breaking is not settled in accordance with the established principles of international law and the existing treaty obligations, it will remain, if not an insurmountable obstacle, at least a stumbling-block in the path of new international agreements looking to economic and military disarmament and to the maintenance of peace by common endeavour. The reason for this is not difficult to explain. The absence of any effective action from the League in this case has encouraged those who have all along been proclaiming the belief that might is right. It has, in fact, placed a premium upon aggression. It has given a new impetus to the activities of those in different countries who advocate and strive for an increase of armaments in the name of national defence, since treaties guaranteeing security may be disregarded with impunity.

Indeed, observing students of international affairs in the Far East already see ominous clouds rising on the international horizon in that region. The Assembly report, in predicting that the Japanese occupation of Manchuria was incompatible with peace, spoke the grim truth. A race in armaments has begun, with huge naval and air manœuvres, fleet concentrations and enormous increases in war expenditure. The strongest naval Power in Asia and one of the strongest in the world has already given official notice of its intention to make its navy still stronger on the

expiration of the existing treaty limitations, and her leading statesmen publicly refer to what they call the greatest crisis in their country's history within the next five years. As was said by one of the speakers at the recent Conference on Pacific Relations in Canada, it is useless to try to disguise the fact that the present increases in military and naval armaments indicate a future intention of using them. All the signs in the Far East point to a major conflict within a few years.

Such is the situation in the Far East to-day. Since recent events have made my country the only main link between the League of Nations and the very Far East, I have felt it my duty, as its representative, to give you a sober and objective account of the relevant facts in that region since the adjournment of the Special Assembly in February last.

As to the situation in Europe, I shall not try to enter into it, as you are all familiar with it. Whatever view is taken, it cannot, however, be gainsaid that the European situation, while not as critical perhaps as that of the Far East, is, too, far from satisfactory. Let us hope that the moral of events in the Far East may be drawn while there is yet time and that history will not be allowed to repeat itself.

It is my humble opinion that the whole situation of the world to-day revolves round this pivotal question: Are we determined to defend the League, uphold its prestige, strengthen its authority and endow it with the means of enforcing its decisions, or are we ready to allow it to dwindle in importance from year to year, to disintegrate for lack of support and eventually disappear from the international arena as the supreme guardian of world peace? China, for her part, with all her disappointment at the failure to carry out the Assembly's report, still believes in the soundness of the fundamental aims and purposes of the League and will do her utmost to foster its healthy growth. For the alternative would be unthinkable: it would mean the relapse of the world into a state of international anarchy, of incessant rivalry and conflict such as existed before the Great War and was ultimately responsible for the catastrophe from which the world has not yet fully recovered.

If, then, we wish to see the League succeed in its mission of consolidating the world's peace and safeguarding the future, there must be both a will to peace and a readiness to make sacrifices for the common good. The collective peace system based upon the Covenant and the Pact of Paris is predicated upon the fundamental principle that the maintenance of world peace is a matter of common concern to all nations and that, in order to make it effective, each of them must be disposed to bear the contingent share of risk and sacrifice in the common cause. It must be generally realised that in this practical world of ours we cannot hope to get something for nothing. If we wish to enjoy the fruits of peace, we have to pay for them too.

We have arrived at the cross-roads of the world's destiny. Our choice lies between an armed peace which, based upon a precarious balance of power, is most costly to every nation and postulates war as inevitable, and a peace based upon collective responsibility, which is the most economical for all, because it is maintained by joint effort and common sacrifice, and which is stable because it accepts justice as the final arbiter of nations. It means disarmament or rearmament, economic recovery or continuance of the world crisis; it means, in fact, war or peace. These are the alternative roads before us. For the sake of civilisation and for the well-being of humanity, I sincerely hope that we shall all choose wisely.

The President. — His Excellency Jonkheer de Graeff, delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

Jonkheer de Graeff (Netherlands):

Translation: A wave of pessimism has broken over the world. The last few months have put our confidence to severe tests. National armaments, which seemed to be on the way to reduction, or at all events limitation, have now begun to increase again. A new race in armaments seems to be starting and the Disarmament Conference has hitherto shown itself powerless to prevent this calamity.

In the economic field we find ever-growing poverty incommensurate with the potential wealth of the world, from which humanity seems incapable of benefiting. The London Conference disappointed the hopes of those who had trusted that it might provide the basis for the abolition of all that is strangling international trade. In despair at the shocks to the international economic machine which they have witnessed, the nations are tending more and more to fall back on their own resources.

Nationalism, often degenerating into Chauvinism, is everywhere raising its head and taking the place of internationalism. Faith in the final victory of internationalism has been shaken, and the minds of men who have hitherto pinned their faith to the development of the international organisation are now turning more and more towards a narrow nationalism.

The statesman must always try to face facts. Blind confidence in the force of principles and indifference to facts which do not harmonise with our ideals are not proof of an enlightened policy. The League of Nations must always bear this in mind. The international spirit may manifest itself when we meet in this hospitable city of Geneva; but no one can deny that, when we return to our homes and are brought into contact with national aspirations and requirements, things frequently appear in a different light.

On the other hand, we should be making a serious mistake if we were to exaggerate our pessimism and attribute to recent events too much importance for the future evolution of the international community. We human beings are only too prone to forget that the period of time with which we are specially concerned is but a moment in the history of the world's development. Acts or sentiments of which we have been aware for a few years, or in some cases only a few months, are sometimes sufficient to make us believe that all that has been revealed to us by philosophy or morality in the course of centuries is proved false. We are wrong. The great social and moral assets of humanity do not lose their value from one day to another. Ephemeral conceptions may for a time obscure the eternal truths, but can never dethrone them.

The organisation of the international community is a process which inevitably takes several centuries. The foundation of the League of Nations was not a chance event; it was the outcome of long evolution. At the 1924 Assembly, the head of the Netherlands delegation, Jonkheer van Karnebeek, said:

"The uncertainty which still hovers over the League does not cause me disquiet. The League will last because it lives. It lives because it was bound to be. It was bound to be because mankind has entered upon an era of inter-relationship, and even States cannot stand aside."

After nine years, I can still repeat those words. The realisation of the idea of an organised community of States was an act of faith and an act of courage. It was to be anticipated that the

enthusiasm with which the greater part of the world hailed the new institution would be put to the test. The reaction has been all the more violent because it was brought about by a world economic crisis, which was itself to a large extent the consequence of the world war — the inevitable consequence, indeed — as, in the state of interdependence in which the world finds itself to-day, war must in ever-growing measure be followed by disorder and impoverishment, not only for the vanquished but also for the victors and the neutrals.

It would be unfair to the League to expect it to have prevented the economic chaos from which the world is now suffering. It would be a still more serious mistake to deny the *raison d'être* of the League because of that failure.

Those who continue to preach the ideas of organisation and good understanding between nations are sometimes asked if propaganda for an aim which at present seems so remote is not a thankless and discouraging task. To this it may be replied that there is another task which is much more discouraging and much more thankless, and that is the destruction of what has so far been constructed in the sphere of international collaboration. All this work which is beginning to be destroyed will one day have to be done again, because, in spite of everything, the future belongs to international solidarity. It is a mournful fact that, in present circumstances, no State can withhold itself from this work of destruction. Convinced though it may be that the path now being followed will necessarily lead to ruin, every State thinks it is obliged to work along the same lines, for fear of being crushed by the others. How will it be possible to extricate ourselves from the economic labyrinth as long as we refuse to make mutual concessions?

The economic position is becoming more and more disquieting. On the international market everyone wants to sell and no one wants to buy. The number of countries which are turning away from the tried principle of free trade is rapidly increasing. The Netherlands, which for long remained the last rampart of free trade, has now been obliged to have recourse to exceptional and temporary measures in order to protect its national economic interests. We shall all agree that such measures are but fresh obstacles in the way of the economic restoration of the world, and must all disappear if we desire one day to get back to satisfactory international relations.

All those who realise the facts must understand that, at the present time, the League of Nations is not in a position to remedy the great evils from which mankind is suffering; but let us not forget that, even in these troubled times, the League has continued to do useful work. There is the international jurisdiction at the Peace Palace, which, in spite of everything, is developing and has already reached a stage of which not even the greatest optimists of pre-war days would have dared to dream.

Thanks to the work of the Council of the League, it has sometimes been possible to exercise a pacifying influence in regions where armed conflicts had broken out. The work done in connection with the suppression of the drug traffic and international supervision over territories under mandate — to give only a few instances — continue to be of the greatest value.

As regards assistance to refugees, also, the League has proved its value. In this field it will, in our opinion, have fresh work to do. A large number of German nationals have taken refuge in neighbouring countries during the last few months. Private initiative, which has hitherto striven to succour them, cannot long continue to do so, and the

presence of so large a number of immigrants is bound very soon, owing to the existing unemployment, to cause serious difficulties in several countries. In the circumstances, it will be necessary to organise international collaboration in order to take the appropriate measures — *inter alia*, to place these refugees in different countries without harming the national economy of those countries.

Nothing is further from our thoughts than a desire to interfere in internal affairs coming under Germany's sovereignty. We have no wish to examine the reasons why these people have left their country, but we are faced with the undeniable fact that thousands of German subjects have crossed the frontiers of neighbouring countries and are refusing to return to their homes, for reasons which we are not called upon to judge. For us, therefore, it is a purely technical problem, and its solution must be found by common agreement. It is a problem that lies within the competence of the League, which in the past has frequently dealt with questions of this kind. The Netherlands delegation has the honour to submit the following draft resolution dealing with this subject:

"The Assembly,

"Having regard to the situation created by the fact that a great number of German nationals have taken refuge in recent months in several countries;

"Considering that their presence in these countries constitutes, in proportion as means of assistance from private sources are exhausted, an economic, financial and social problem which can be solved only by international collaboration:

"Requests the Council to consider as soon as possible methods for bringing about a practical arrangement for this purpose, and to take the necessary measures for the execution of any plans to which such consideration may give rise;

"Decides, in accordance with Article 16 (a), paragraph 1, of its Financial Regulations, to include a special item for this purpose in the budget for 1934."

The League's failure to solve the great political and economic problems can never justify us in destroying, to the great loss of humanity, the possibilities of development which lie within this institution. It is true that, at the present time, considerations of economy are making themselves particularly keenly felt. The assiduous efforts that are being made, therefore, to rationalise the Secretariat services merit our careful attention. On the other hand, we must not deprive the League of the financial means necessary to its existence. We must beware of sacrificing the League on the altar of economy. It would be a disastrous retrograde step to allow all that has hitherto been achieved in the matter of organised international collaboration to be lost.

The more we study the Covenant, the more we must admire the wisdom and political experience

of which that instrument gives evidence. That does not mean that everything in the constitution of the international organisation is perfect. The man who for fourteen years directed the Secretariat in so striking a manner would be the first to admit that. M. Avenol, whom we have great pleasure in welcoming here for the first time as Sir Eric Drummond's successor, will undoubtedly be of the same opinion. Our distinguished Secretary-General will not fail to place his talents and his great experience at our disposal to help us in perfecting the Geneva organisation. The traditions which have grown up, the methods of work and procedure in the various organs, must not necessarily remain immutable. We must not consider it sacrilege to effect any change at all in the procedure to which we have grown accustomed. If, side by side with the Assembly, where it is difficult to obtain the collaboration of non-member States, and side by side with the Council, which by the constant increase in the number of its seats may lose the character that the authors of the Covenant gave it, there is need of other organs, we must not reject such ideas forthwith. We ought rather to endeavour to adapt the existing institutions to present needs, and to widen them, provided always that such action is based on respect for the Covenant. In this connection the Netherlands Government felt no disquiet as regards the League's development when it welcomed recently the conclusion of the Four-Power Pact.

As I said at the beginning of my speech, we are living in a time when nationalism is to the fore. I have no wish to speak ill of nationalism. Indeed, it is my opinion that internationalism cannot develop except upon the foundation of a sound nationalism. But we see only too frequently that nationalist sentiments are abused in order to provide moral justification for measures which run directly counter to the fundamental interests of the international community and which are aimed only at State autarchy. The cult of narrow nationalism seems to us harmful. We abide by our faith in a happier future, in which the international spirit will be able to develop anew.

In conclusion, I venture to quote the words recently uttered by my Gracious Sovereign, Her Majesty the Queen of the Netherlands, in the speech from the throne:

"Although the present hour is not favourable to the development of international co-operation or to the development of the League of Nations, I still hope that the evolution of the organisation of the community of States will soon take an upward trend once again."

The President. — The draft resolution submitted by the Netherlands delegation will be printed and distributed, and I reserve the right to offer at a later date suggestions on the procedure to be followed with regard to it.

The Assembly rose at 12.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1933, AT 10.30 A.M.

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President : Mr. TE WATER.

30. — ELECTION OF THE VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY. COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT IN THE NAME OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

The President. — At its meeting on September 27th, the General Committee considered the question of the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and asked me to make the following proposal to the Assembly :

Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly provides that the Assembly shall elect six Vice-Presidents at one of the early meetings of the session. Up to the present, the practice has been for the Assembly to elect six individuals, but misunderstandings have sometimes arisen as regards the actual member of a delegation whom the Assembly intended to elect. The Norwegian delegation proposed to the General Committee last year that it should recommend a new practice which would, in future, prevent such confusion.

The General Committee, at Wednesday's meeting, reconsidered the question and recognised that the Norwegian delegation's proposal was most opportune and that it should be recommended to the Assembly as a practice for the future. It is a practice which does not necessitate any change in the Rules of Procedure, as it is simply an interpretation of them.

In the name of the General Committee, I therefore have the honour to recommend to the approval of the Assembly the following practice for future sessions of the Assembly, which would be generally followed unless the Assembly decides otherwise :

" When proceeding to the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly, in application of Rule 7, paragraphs 1 and 4, of the Rules of Procedure, the voting papers should not bear the names of individuals but should be marked 'The First Delegate' of such and such a country. "

If no objection is raised, I will consider that the Assembly, in agreement with its General Committee, adopts this practice for the future, and that this decision will be borne in mind by succeeding Presidents when proceeding to the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly.

The above proposition was adopted.

31. — ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES: DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION: REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President. — At the meeting yesterday morning, a draft resolution with regard to assistance to refugees was submitted to the Assembly, by the Netherlands delegation.

In accordance with precedent, I would now propose that the draft resolution be referred to the Agenda Committee, and that the latter be

requested to forward to the Assembly suggestions on the procedure to be followed.

The proposal was adopted.

32.—REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion of the report on the work of the League since the thirteenth session of the Assembly.

His Excellency M. Frangulis, delegate of Haiti, will address the Assembly.

M. Frangulis (Haiti):

Translation: I should like in the first place to pay a solemn tribute to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations and to his esteemed collaborators for their work during the past year. In spite of the difficulties of the present time, in spite of the crisis which prevails throughout the world — an economic crisis dominated by an even more acute political crisis — they have persevered in the admirable work of the organisation of peace and its application.

When we examine the report on the work of the League, we find that that work has been dominated by the problem of disarmament and by conflicts, particularly of a political character, which are largely due to the imperfect state of law as it exists to-day.

The League was founded in a manner quite different from all the human societies which preceded it. At the very basis of the constitutions which followed the American Revolution, there was a declaration of the rights and duties of nations, a declaration embodied in the various constitutions of Victoria and Massachusetts. The French Revolution established a declaration of the rights of man containing the principles of emancipation which were henceforth to govern the whole of the political relationships of citizens, and also to prescribe their duties. The same is true of a large number of constitutions which preceded the formation on a legal basis of the various human societies.

Nothing similar is to be found in the Covenant of the League of Nations. It was not preceded by any declaration of rights or duties which must constitute the basis of the League. There is a series of articles designed to overcome any difficulties that could or would arise between the Members composing this League, with an obligation, contained in Article 8 of the Covenant, whereby each nation would reduce its armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety.

No central organisation of international forces was placed at the disposal of the League. There was not even the shadow of the definition of the rights of its Members, still less of their duties. War itself, that crime which for centuries has been the decisive factor in inter-State relationships, remained to a certain extent permissible.

Since the Covenant was drawn up, considerable progress has been made, thanks to the League of Nations. The Pact for the renunciation of war proclaimed that war was a crime and outlawed it. But the definition of rights still remained very imperfect and manifestations in favour of equality of rights as between the various countries have been the result. On the other hand, the principle of an international force to be placed at the disposal of the League remained merely as a project, and the limitation aimed at by the Disarmament Conference

both quantitative and qualitative, has actually led, not to a reduction, but to an increase in armaments.

To-day, we regret to find, the world has been transformed into a vast workshop, in which science has been enlisted in the service of the worst means for destroying wealth. This peril in the material sphere exists also in the intellectual and moral spheres. The strongest foundations, even those which seemed the least destructible, the conquests achieved by liberty and civilisation, have been shaken to the foundations. The great work which the League has done by introducing, in the conduct of public affairs, constant supervision by the people, the considerable progress evinced by the fact that the humblest of men may watch over the evolution of diplomacy and that public affairs are discussed openly and under the direct control of public opinion, all this great progress has not been able to prevent the very bases of the best-established principles from being shaken.

This equality of rights so ardently desired for the nations has not yet been given any real international guarantee in the domestic sphere of the different countries. As a result of the absence, in the Covenant itself, of any definition of the rights of the different nations, fifteen small and medium-sized States have been compelled to assume minority obligations, while the remainder of the fifty-six States Members of the League have not assumed any such obligations.

Moreover, although the various treaties of 1919 and 1920 relate to a definite category of citizens in various States, they do not, on the other hand, make any provision from the international point of view for the status of the other citizens. The outcome of this inequality of status has been that those rights which were claimed in the international sphere by the various collectivities composing the League have not been applied within the domestic realm of the States. Thus more was required of international law than of national law, which had to define the rights and obligations of those citizens whom in fact it was desired to protect.

As a consequence of this inequality, owing to the disturbances which have arisen in the social and economic sphere as the aftermath of the war, the fundamental principles governing human societies have been shaken and the most sacred rights of men and of citizens are no longer respected.

In view of this situation, learned institutions have been studying this problem for several years past, quite irrespective of any political consideration, and have sought international guarantees for the liberties of the individual. I shall have the honour presently to submit to you these resolutions, which constitute at the present time the juridical and moral conscience of the contemporary world.

We have been instructed by the Government of a small country, a country which has always striven for the great and noble ideas which have been manifested through history, to defend these principles if they were in danger, and to lay before you a resolution which may facilitate the solution of the problem at present disturbing the conscience of all mankind. In taking this action, my distinguished friend, His Excellency M. Stenio Vincent, President of the Republic of Haiti, has followed the purest traditions of Haiti, derived from those of the French Revolution.

Indeed, this small nation has given its blood for the very independence of the great American people. It helped Greece in its war of independence; it has taken part in the revolutions in Central and South America which were designed to defend the rights of man and of citizens. It has thus given proof that those rights which conse-

crate the equality of races, religions and languages are particularly dear to it, that the universal maintenance of those liberties is a guarantee of maintenance of its own.

I have therefore the honour to lay before you the following draft resolution :

"The Fourteenth Assembly of the League of Nations,

"Considering :

"That the minorities treaties concluded in 1919 and 1920 by the Principal Allied and Associated Powers bind a certain number of States to respect the rights of men and of citizens ;

"That the international protection of the rights of men and of citizens solemnly affirmed in the minority treaties is in harmony with the juridical sentiments of the contemporary world ;

"That, therefore, the generalisation of the protection of the rights of men and of citizens is highly desirable ;

"Considering that, at the present moment, these rights might be so formulated as to ensure that every inhabitant of a State should have the right to the full and entire protection of his life and liberty, and that all the citizens of a State should be equal before the law and should enjoy the same civil and political rights, without distinction of race, language or religion ;

"Expresses the hope that a world convention may be drawn up under the auspices of the League of Nations, ensuring the protection and respect of such rights."

This resolution was adopted on November 8th, 1928, by the International Diplomatic Academy, which is attended by the most distinguished diplomats of seventy-three countries. The same resolution, if not textually, at all events in essence, was adopted by the Institute of International Law on October 12th, 1929, at its meeting in New York, and it has been taken up by the International Leagues for the Rights of Man and by the Federation of League of Nations Unions. It therefore represents the very essence of the juridical and moral conscience of the contemporary world.

The Haitian delegation has the honour, in submitting this draft resolution, to request the Assembly to be good enough to refer it to the Sixth Committee. In taking this action, the Haitian delegation is giving proof of its ardent faith in the League of Nations, in that League in which the peoples of the world have placed their highest and noblest hopes.

The President. — The draft resolution just read by M. Frangulis will be printed and distributed to the delegations, and, at the next meeting, I shall make a proposal for dealing with it.

M. Alberto Guani, delegate of Uruguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Guani (Uruguay) :

Translation : I should like to speak for a few minutes on the economic activities of the League of Nations. At this time of dire and universal confusion, these activities are keenly interesting nations and Governments, which, ready as they are to give their attention to any efforts to bring us nearer to a period of greater well-being and prosperity, are turning their eyes towards Geneva. The forces which will restore world equilibrium must certainly be those of solidarity and general participation in the work of political and economic peace ; for which the world, passing as it is through

a crisis greater than any other crisis recorded in history is waiting.

No international body is better qualified than this Geneva institution to discuss and decide upon a common policy, always provided that the Governments and public opinion everywhere give the League their entire confidence and that the League's prestige is paramount in the decisions of the responsible authorities who have to seek remedies for the present truly chaotic situation.

Previous crises have, in general, been local or individual crises. There has never yet been so far-reaching an upheaval taking place simultaneously in all economic spheres — an enormous fall in prices, the reduction of world trade by nearly half, the disorganisation of consumption and production markets, the collapse of industrial undertakings, thirty million unemployed, with all the sufferings and all the needs resulting from such a situation, budgetary deficits which cannot be covered, the abandonment of the gold standard and the consequent restrictions upon the trade in foreign exchange, the bankruptcy of many countries which have been unable to keep their foreign engagements, and, as a result of this state of affairs, the complete stoppage of all activities on the public credit markets.

Nevertheless, the League has taken the initiative in this matter in many and varied ways. From its inception, three great international conferences — the Financial Conference of Brussels held in 1920, the Economic Conference of Geneva in 1927 and the Monetary and Economic Conference held in London this year, have marked the principal stages which have been passed.

As early as 1922, the Genoa Conference asked the League to facilitate the application of certain resolutions in accordance with the principles of the equitable treatment of commerce, as set forth in Article 23 of the Covenant.

I may briefly mention other meetings, such as that held in November 1923 on Customs Formalities, in regard to which a Convention was signed with a view to freeing international trade from the burden of needless, excessive or arbitrary formalities. It was said at the time that the best means of achieving results in that field was to have recourse to an international agreement based on a fair system of reciprocity ; and on that basis a Convention was also concluded recognising that the obstacles to international trade caused by import and export prohibitions were so serious that States should adopt and apply all measures likely to reduce such obstacles to a minimum.

Some years later — October-November 1927 — an international conference was held which, in accordance with the conclusions of the International Economic Conference in May of that year, recognised that the return to effective freedom of trade was one of the essential conditions of world prosperity, and emphasised the necessity of resorting to simultaneous and concerted action. Other conferences dealing with more restricted subjects, such as those of Ouchy and Stresa, also voiced the League's constant endeavour to find, in the spirit of the Covenant, a remedy for evils which were constantly growing worse.

Again, the countries of the American continent, most of which are represented at this Assembly, are shortly to meet on the occasion of the seventh Pan-American Conference at Montevideo. All these problems will be approached in a wide spirit of continental solidarity. European circles have certainly not attached to this Conference the importance it deserves.

Nevertheless, a few days ago I read in a financial paper that the result of this Conference may radically change the economic and political policy

of the world. In an article in the British Press a distinguished British statesman heralds the approaching Conference with the observation that the Western world had not yet sufficiently turned its thoughts to the important Pan-American Congress which is to take place in a few weeks at Montevideo; it had not yet realised the full significance of the Conference, but the nature of the Conference's agenda and the fact that all countries of North and South America had taken part in drawing it up demonstrated its possibilities. It was to discuss among other things the organisation of peace; it also proposed to study economic and financial questions, the stabilisation of currencies, commercial and Customs agreements, tariff barriers and quotas, — a broadly conceived programme. If the Congress arrived at practical conclusions, he added, America might be able to rescue the world from its present difficulties.

But although all these efforts, designed to reduce as far as possible prohibitions and restrictions to international trade, reveal the existence of a fund of optimism, it must be admitted that their practical efficacy has not up to the present been very conspicuous. All that these praiseworthy efforts have achieved is to swell the archives of a very copious bibliography, which presents a deplorable contrast to the bitter realities of the present time.

We must, without self-deception and without flinching, face the spectacle which the world presents as the result of the catastrophic developments that have taken place in the economic, financial and monetary fields.

"The spirit of Geneva" is the spirit of international collaboration; and, in the economic field, it has been given clear expression in Article 23 of our Covenant, which enacts that the Members of the League will make provision to secure equitable treatment for commerce as between one another. I venture to wonder whether this spirit is doomed to disappear from the commercial relations between nations.

That is the question which public opinion in every country is asking in this period of uncertainty. It is impossible to understand what fatal impulses drove the nations to embark upon courses which are leading them to an ever narrower nationalism, a veritable autarchy in tariff matters, and Customs obstacles of every kind, while international trade is at its last gasp and all our hopes of recovery and salvation are dying with it.

The League's very considerable achievements in this field must not be allowed to go for nothing. Nor must the League give the impression that there is any real inconsistency between the policy now being followed by States and the principles so often enunciated at this Assembly.

The progress of the nations towards prosperity and progress largely depends, however, upon the principles underlying the economic policies of the various countries. These principles must envisage the necessity for close collaboration between all nations notwithstanding any differences in their economic systems. As the President of the International Economic Conference said, we cannot count, for the maintenance of peace, on any organisation if the economic policies of the world are not only to lead to profound differences of economic interests between the various groups of the world population, but are also to create a feeling of intolerable prejudice and injustice.

In face of all the obstacles and restrictions to the free development of international trade, there is also economic disarmament to be undertaken and carried through without delay. The world is awaiting it, as it awaits military disarmament, as the result of mutual concessions and that sincere collaboration which the League has always pro-

claimed, not only as a means of ensuring peace in the political field, but also as a means of ensuring order and justice in the economic field.

The President. — His Excellency M. Tsaldaris, delegate of Greece, will address the Assembly.

M. Tsaldaris (Greece):

Translation: On this, the first occasion on which I have participated in the work of the Assembly, I am happy to be able to assure you, on behalf of my country, of its sincere devotion to the great ideal of justice and peace represented by our institution.

Greece retains her wholehearted faith in the League of Nations. More than ever, in present circumstances, she sees in the League the supreme guarantee of international order, and she is proud that, within the modest limits of her sphere of activity, she has spared no effort to carry into effect the principles of good understanding and confident co-operation which form the basis of our Covenant.

Greece has concluded a number of treaties of conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement. She has acceded to Article 86 of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice and to the General Act of Geneva. She has established relations of firm friendship with most of her neighbours, and is prepared to do so with the other neighbouring countries.

Two weeks ago, I had the very signal honour and pleasure of signing at Ankara, with my colleagues and friends of the Turkish Republic, a Pact mutually guaranteeing our common frontier designed solely to extend our Treaty of Non-Aggression and thereby to consolidate a tried friendship, the development of which is earnestly desired by unanimous public opinion in both countries.

By giving this further token of friendship, Greece and Turkey were merely following the methods recommended by the League for restoring and increasing mutual confidence between the nations.

Allow me, on behalf of my Government and also on behalf of the Turkish Government, to remind you that, in 1925, the Assembly stated that it "regarded favourably the conclusion of treaties of mutual security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant and in harmony with the principles of the 1924 Protocol" and also recorded the fact that "such agreements might be applied to the whole world".

In the following year, the Assembly welcomed with the greatest satisfaction the Treaties of Locarno, which had just come into force; it "asserted its conviction that the general ideas embodied therein might well be accepted amongst the fundamental rules which should govern the foreign policy of every civilised nation", and "expressed the hope that those principles would be recognised by all States and would be put into practice as soon as possible by all States in whose interest it was to contract such treaties".

It is to that desire, expressed by the Assembly, that Greece and Turkey have just acceded. They are conscious of having thereby acted in the general interest and are resolved to take every available occasion to continue so to serve it.

In the economic field also, Greece has been inspired by the ideal of international solidarity, and can say that she has profited by the valuable recommendations of the Geneva organisation. She has pursued to the greatest possible degree, with the countries which produce oriental tobacco, a policy of economic understanding calculated to contribute to the reorganisation of the tobacco

market and to serve as a starting-point for implementing the international scheme to assist tobacco producers which was drawn up at Geneva in March of this year.

The creation of an Oriental Tobaccos Office, in which Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece are to be represented, undoubtedly constitutes one of the most valuable manifestations of this spirit of collaboration.

The relations of friendship and solidarity which we have established with Turkey have also enabled us to contemplate the co-ordination of our industrial policy, in a still wider field, and I am happy to announce that, as a result of the conversations recently held at Ankara, we shall soon be able to give definite and practical form to this co-operation in the field of industrial production.

I need hardly remind you, however, that, in the economic field, all national activities are so closely bound up with one another that it is useless to hope for any appreciable improvement in the present state of affairs until international action has succeeded in establishing fresh regulations for international trade, on the basis of the immutable principles of freedom of trade and with due reference to the particularly difficult position created for the debtor countries by the fall in prices. During the London Conference, the Greek delegation suggested a solution of this difficult problem; and it will continue to examine the problem within the sphere of the League of Nations, as it is in this atmosphere of solidarity and understanding—the outstanding characteristic of our organisation—that solutions of this kind can best be sought and found.

We must endeavour to give concrete and practical expression to the international spirit; and I am glad to say here that my Government is prepared to contribute to this result as far as it possibly can, and is firmly convinced that, in this effort to achieve and to continue to achieve, practical results, all the Members of the League—great and small Powers alike—will be imbued with the same spirit.

The President.—His Excellency M. Voldemaras Salnais, delegate of Latvia, will address the Assembly.

M. Salnais (Latvia).—If the last two Assemblies were entirely dominated by the worldwide economic depression, this year's gathering shows different features reflecting primarily the state of psychological depression ruling at this moment throughout the whole world. Indeed, neither a look back on the past year nor a look forward to the nearest future gives ground for any kind of satisfaction or optimism. Failures of important initiatives, political and economic, growing chaos in world economy, growing uncertainty and tension in the political situation, dwindling confidence and tumbling ideas and ideals—such is without exaggeration the present state of affairs.

It would be as unjust to throw the responsibility for the difficulties which we are all facing on the League of Nations as it would be disastrous for the League to refuse to assume its share—and an important share—in the solution of the problems which weigh heavily upon the nations of the world. Some of these problems can only be solved by common international action, and the psychological depression to which I alluded at the beginning will certainly yield only to an international effort. No country represented at this Assembly should, therefore, hesitate to assert its firm resolution to support by all possible means the activities of the League, and, if necessary, to develop new methods for the accomplishment of its vital task.

I should like to state at once that my country has not lost its faith in the League of Nations, and that it still firmly believes in the necessity of an international organisation of nations and in the principle of international co-operation as the best means of achieving real progress in the development and consolidation of friendly and peaceful relations between nations and States. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore the disillusionment created in important sections of public opinion in our country—as well as, I am sure, in many other countries—on account of the unsatisfactory results so far achieved in the treatment of the two all-important problems of disarmament and economic recovery, results which have very seriously affected the prestige of the League, since the latter is being held responsible for the calling into being of the two great Conferences dealing with the above-mentioned problems and, hence, part of the moral responsibility for their meagre results is being ascribed to the League.

It is therefore the foremost duty of us all, and particularly of the representatives of the big Powers, to spare no effort with a view to finding means and methods to recreate and strengthen the authority of the League of Nations and thus revive the confidence of the peoples in our organisation.

Although there is doubtless some truth in the assertion that we have had too many conferences, and that referring a problem to an international conference is nowadays equal to dooming it to failure, it is still more dangerous to revert to the other extreme and to seek rescue in the methods of political and economic individualism, followed of necessity by seclusion and isolation. The saying about "getting one's own house in order first" is only partly justifiable just because a State is not a house, and if outside the closed doors of one's house one finds the street, squares and public gardens, there is nothing of the kind behind the closed doors of a State.

Again, the virtues of the regional principle for the solution of political and economic questions are only of a temporary nature, and by the regional concentration of political and economic forces—which in itself is quite desirable—the tension or tensions between nations are eventually not averted but accentuated and increased, and the hour of conflict merely postponed, looming more dangerous than ever in the background, if these regional tendencies do not remain within the general framework of international solidarity and pacification.

I am happy to state that what has been done by my country in this direction has not been in contradiction with the fundamental principles of the League, nor does it bear in itself the nucleus of any future complications.

The Protocol signed in London on July 3rd last between Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Poland, Roumania, Persia, Turkey, Afghanistan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics concerning the definition of the aggressor is a valuable addition to the network of non-aggression treaties covering the north and east of Europe. These treaties by themselves represent the further development of the ideas of the Briand-Kellogg Pact, and we may safely say that, in the north and east of Europe, every guarantee of security has been created and the pacification of this part of our continent advanced more rapidly than anywhere else.

It is not superfluous to observe that the London Protocol for the definition of the aggressor represents a note worthy contribution to the doctrine of security, since it is the first international agreement which elevates to the status of contractual obligations the principles embodied in the relevant part of the report of May 24th last of the Disarma-

ment Conference. Consequently, the London Protocol possesses not only the qualities of a regional instrument of pacification but remains in full conformity with, and represents even a certain progress in, the League's policy of security.

In the matter of political pacification certain instances of progress of at least a regional character may be quoted, the field of economic recovery does not show any signs of hope; on the contrary, the very few cases of an upward movement in the economic life of individual countries are outweighed by the regress in others and by the growing stagnation in international economic relations.

The notion of an economic truce initiated by the Convention for abolishing Import and Export Prohibitions and Restrictions, followed by the abortive Customs Truce of 1930 and the Gentlemen's Agreement on the eve of the London Monetary and Economic Conference has been badly compromised. Not only has it been forgotten that an economic truce was originally conceived as a mere preliminary step towards a more general solution of the international economic difficulties, not only has the minimum of temporary stability in commercial policy been sadly disregarded, we have actually ceased trying to keep our individual actions in line with the most elementary notions of that international commercial policy to which we still profess to adhere.

The state of things prevailing before the London Conference was bad enough. The Tariff Truce, bristling with reservations, legalised an unjustifiable position in international commercial policy, but matters are being still more aggravated by the prospect of a breakdown of that last feeble bulwark and of complete chaos in international commercial policy. The admission by silent consent of quota practices having nothing in common with the principle of fair and equal treatment, the bold introduction of the principle of reciprocity into the relations between countries bound by most-favoured-nation treaties, the impossibility of currency stabilisation, must be viewed with the gravest concern, and we look again to the League for a lead out of the pitiful conditions under which we all are suffering.

I entirely associate myself with the point of view expressed by the President of the Council in his opening speech — that it is indispensable to establish a basis of collaboration between the States which, through their importance and their force, exercise a decisive influence in the world. I should like to say more and to assert that, without an agreement between the leading Powers, we are threatened by a still more disastrous development in international economic relations. Such an agreement naturally involves sacrifices, but are the events of the last two years not the best proof that such sacrifices are inevitable and that the longer they are postponed the heavier they will weigh when they at last will have to be made? The lead of the big Powers would be as beneficial if it moved in the right direction as it has been dangerous in the past whilst being directed entirely in the interests of economic self-defence.

I can speak only of the experience of my own country: but it shows clearly enough that every restrictive measure of one of the great economic units which, in proportion to the whole economic structure of that unit, may have been even of no very great importance, immediately and automatically provoked counter-measures, because it disturbed the equilibrium in our commercial relations with the respective country to an extent which presented a danger to the whole national economy. To be quite clear — there is no question of retaliation involved in this observation, but only the conclusion that the law of action and

reaction holds good also in the economic sphere and becomes particularly imperative if it is applied to factors of very divergent economic weight.

There is another aspect of the economic problem which I cannot avoid mentioning in my capacity as the representative of an agricultural country. I refer to the growing tendency towards a maximum of agricultural self-sufficiency manifested by the industrial countries of Europe, a tendency which may be justifiable from a social point of view, but which nevertheless is fraught with serious economic consequences.

I regret that the exclusion of the item of the agenda referring to the work of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union will deprive us of an opportunity for a more detailed discussion of the European agricultural problem; but I urge all Members of the League to give their serious attention to this problem, which in its present unsolved state will continue to present a considerable obstacle to economic recovery, since it reduces the consuming capacity of the population of a numerically important block of countries and forces them, against their desire, into a policy of unsound industrial development and exaggerated industrial protectionism.

In spite of the undertone of anxiety perceptible in the speeches to which we have listened and of the pessimistic outlook which imposes itself as to the possibility of an imminent solution of the dominating political and economic problems, we have witnessed the repeated profession of faith in the League of Nations by all speakers on this platform. That is the most gratifying fact which differs markedly from the unduly critical attitude manifested in respect of the League's work from many quarters in the course of past Assemblies. The truth that the League has a mission which is essential to the maintenance of the existing order in the community of nations, and that in the execution of this mission the League can neither be missed nor replaced, ought to be hammered into the minds of all peoples, and we all have to assume our conscientious share in this task.

I address an earnest appeal to the delegates of all countries represented here, and particularly to those of them to whom falls the heaviest burden of responsibility, to bear in mind that the hopes of the peoples of the world are centred on their actions, and that these hopes must not be disappointed, lest the ensuing disintegration of the edifice of international co-operation bring irreparable mischief to all.

The President. — Mr. Sean T. O'Kelly, delegate of the Irish Free State, will address the Assembly.

Mr. O'Kelly (Irish Free State). — I desire to commence by paying a tribute to the remarkable address with which the President of the Council opened the proceedings of this Assembly. M. Mowinkel's words are doubly deserving of attention, both because of the distinguished personality of the speaker and by reason of the great and honourable part which his country has taken in League affairs.

In this connection, you will allow me to say how gratified my delegation has been that the remarks which Mr. de Valera made to the last Assembly, have found in the speech of the President of the Council such an authoritative endorsement.

It is a feature of this Assembly that delegates have shown a certain reluctance to take part in the general discussion. I think that is regrettable. Surely, in the present circumstances, it is important that statesmen who have been in close discussion on problems of the greatest magnitude during the past year should use the opportunity of the As-

sembly to take stock of the whole position. The general discussion at the Assembly is a new and valuable feature of international life and its value will increase the more it takes the form of a public examination of conscience.

The circumstances to-day are so exceptional and so far from being encouraging that it would be out of place to occupy the time of the Assembly with a mere commentary on the work of the League during the past year. In spite of solid achievements in the wide but little known field of its technical activities, its social and humanitarian work; in spite of the devoted and efficient service of the Secretariat, the record of the past year, as it appears to the world, is a record of three reverses — the Sino-Japanese dispute, the Disarmament Conference and the Economic Conference. In so far as the latter Conference is concerned, some consolation is derived from the fact that it may prove to be good preparation for future action. Disarmament is said to be not yet a forlorn hope, although, if one is to believe what one reads, there is at the moment far more reality in the increase of armaments than in their reduction, and it is, I think, true to say that Powers in all parts of the world are feverishly active in developing preparations for chemical warfare of a nature more terrifying and inhuman, especially for the civil population, than anything hitherto known.

We must all recognise that this is a situation which cannot be described as anything other than grave. It is a situation which may well put in jeopardy the success of this great experiment upon which so large a part of mankind had founded its hopes. It is not a situation that can be glossed over by fine phrases, but one which must be fearlessly examined so that its causes may be defined and, if possible, removed.

We are surely bound to ask why it is that international co-operation has proved so ineffective in practice. In regard to the Economic Conference, was the line set in the preparatory work a sound line, or should new ground have been explored? Was the problem of economic aggression honestly examined, and were the dangers to peace which it involves given genuine consideration?

With regard to disarmament, have the lessons of history been fully learned? Competition in armaments was a major factor in bringing about the great war. Is the memory of that war so dim as not to be able to preserve us from the menace of further competition and conflict?

As for the Sino-Japanese dispute, are there gaps in the Covenant of the League and in other instruments of peace which ought to be filled up? How far have the recommendations and the decisions of the Special Assembly been put into effect?

These are specific questions which we should, I think, put to ourselves to-day, and I do not think

that we shall find much difficulty in answering them.

If, then, new initiatives are necessary, have the nations the courage and goodwill to take them? For any effective co-operation, peace and the will to peace are the essentials.

I have not come to this tribune merely to criticise, and in putting before you the fruits of my reflection on the present situation I am not unmindful of the League's success in many spheres. Nor am I without appreciation of its great difficulties. I fully realise that it is easy to criticise. Indeed, when I say that in the major problems the League has been ineffective, it is necessary to explain, as other speakers before me have done, that it is not the machinery that has been found wanting. It is not the machinery that has broken down. What I mean is that there has been a failure to use the League machinery to the full. The responsibility for that failure must lie with the great Powers, who, owing to their importance and their resources, exercise a decisive influence in the world. I make no apology for emphasising this point, which has already been made by M. Mowinckel, for it is a point which must be frankly faced. As I have indicated, I do not minimise the difficulties of those States, difficulties which we all know to be commensurate only with their great responsibilities and the great rôle which they play in world affairs. Still less would I presume to apportion praise or blame; but, recognising this fact as one of capital importance, I say that it should be marked and understood.

In saying this again, I must not be taken to say that the small States have no responsibility for the success or failure of the League. They could often contribute by their impartiality, courage and independence towards the solution of many of the League's problems, and this particularly applies to those of them who are elected to represent their fellows on the Council.

I am not suggesting that the small States have a monopoly of League virtue. Those which have been elected to the Council have perhaps sometimes forgotten that, unlike the great Powers, they do not only represent themselves, but those who elect them; and those who elect them have perhaps not always given that support to their representatives which would have been desirable.

In my view, the duty of the League is to face its difficulties frankly. Face them we must, because there is no alternative save international anarchy. If we face them courageously and with a full determination that they shall be solved, and that the individual sacrifices which are required for the common good shall be made, I am convinced that we shall have achieved the first and most important step towards success.

The Assembly rose at 12.35 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 2ND, 1933, AT 4 P.M.

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33. — ABSENCE FROM THE PRESENT SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF A DELEGATION OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC: COMMUNICATION FROM THE ARGENTINE MINISTER AT BERNE.

The President. — The Secretary-General has received a communication from the Argentine

Minister at Berne to the effect that the Argentine Government regretted exceedingly that it had not had time or opportunity to organise a delegation to attend the present session of the Assembly.

The Argentine Government was most eager to take an active part in the affairs of the League. It hesitated to do so until it had formulated its instructions and had communicated them to a properly constituted delegation. As there was no time in which to do this, it regretted its inability to be represented at the session.

34. — PROPOSAL FOR A WORLD CONVENTION ENSURING THE PROTECTION OF AND RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS OF MEN AND OF CITIZENS : DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE DELEGATION OF HAITI. REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President. — The Assembly will remember that at its fifth meeting, held on September 30th, it was seized of a proposal submitted by the delegation of Haiti with regard to a plan for a World Convention for ensuring the protection of and respect for the rights of men and of citizens.

I will now propose that the Assembly refer this draft resolution to the Agenda Committee and ask the latter to make suggestions as to the procedure to be followed.

If there are no observations, it shall be so decided, and the Agenda Committee will be convened at an early date to examine this proposal.

The President's proposal was adopted.

The President. — As it seems probable that the present plenary meeting will be the last before those to be devoted to the examination of the reports of the various Committees, which will not be called for a few days, I feel that the Assembly

will perhaps not wish to have a special plenary meeting summoned to take cognisance of the Agenda Committee's report on the proposal made by the delegation of Haiti. The Agenda Committee's proposal can only be purely formal and relate to the procedure to be followed.

I would therefore suggest to the Assembly an expedient which has already been used by one of my predecessors. If the report of the Agenda Committee is unanimous, I will arrange to have it communicated to the delegations immediately through the *Assembly Journal*, with an explanatory note by the President.

If, after twenty-four hours, no delegation has made any observations or asked for this report to be discussed by the Assembly and put to the vote, I will consider the silence of the delegations as a sign that they accept the conclusions of the Agenda Committee.

Thereafter I will proceed as the Agenda Committee suggests. If it proposes placing the question on the agenda of this session, I will have it done; and, if it proposes referring the question to a Committee, I will transmit it to that particular Committee.

Of course, if any observations are communicated to me on the conclusion of the Agenda Committee's report, I will call a plenary meeting at an early date to enable them to be made.

If the Assembly is ready to accept this method of simplifying its work, I will interpret the silence of the delegations as indicating their consent.

The President's proposals were adopted.

35. — PROPOSAL FOR THE ORGANISATION, ON AN INTERNATIONAL BASIS, OF ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES COMING FROM GERMANY: DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION: REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President. — At its fourth meeting, held on September 29th, the Assembly referred to its Agenda Committee a draft resolution submitted by the Netherlands delegation with regard to the organisation, on an international basis, of assistance for German nationals who have taken refuge in several countries.

The Agenda Committee met in the afternoon of September 30th, and has forwarded me its report, which I will now read to the Assembly:

"The Agenda Committee met to-day, September 30th, 1933, under the chairmanship of M. Mikoff. It examined the draft resolution submitted by the Netherlands delegation to the Assembly on Friday, September 29th, on the question of assistance to German refugees.

"After a thorough discussion, the majority of the Committee was in favour of proposing to the Assembly that it should place the draft resolution on the agenda of its present session. It should be mentioned that one of its members expressed doubts as to the competence of the League of Nations in the matter and as to the desirability of laying such questions before the Assembly.

"The Agenda Committee proposed that the examination of the question should be entrusted to the Second Committee of the Assembly.

"For reasons of expediency, the Committee did not think it desirable to pronounce on the financial aspect of the question."

I would ask the Assembly if it has any observations to make on the conclusions of the Agenda

Committee's report. I also wish to draw its attention to the fact that, as the last paragraph of the draft resolution may involve a request for further credits for the coming year, the Assembly must approve the insertion of the question in the agenda by a two-thirds majority, in accordance with Article 16 (a), paragraph 1, of the Financial Regulations of the League.

If there are no observations, I shall take it that the Assembly has duly pronounced in favour of the adoption of the Agenda Committee's report.

M. von Keller (Germany):

Translation: The German delegation will abstain from voting.

The President. — I wish to make one further statement in regard to this matter, to the effect that the Secretary-General will call the Second Committee's attention to the financial aspect of this question and ask that Committee to refer it to the Fourth Committee for its consideration.

The fact that the German delegate will abstain from voting is duly noted.

The proposals of the Agenda Committee were adopted, the German delegation abstaining.

36. — ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President. — Following the practice of my predecessors in this office, I would remind you of the provisions of the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, making rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

Article 1, paragraph 1, reads as follows:

"The Assembly shall each year, in the course of its ordinary session, elect three non-permanent Members of the Council. They shall be elected for a term commencing immediately on their election and ending on the day of the elections held three years later by the Assembly."

Before opening the ballot, I would again remind you of the provisions of Rule 22 (a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, which apply in this case.

The rule reads as follows:

"(1) The Members whose representatives are to sit on the Council as non-permanent Members of that body shall be selected by the Assembly by secret ballot.

"(2) 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.

"(3) 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.

"(4) 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 computing the absolute majority prescribed for the first and second ballots, the Assembly will, I think, agree with me that, as at previous sessions, we should here, by analogy, apply the rule contained in the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, concerning the "rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility".

This resolution provides as follows :

"The Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting papers deposited, blank or spoilt votes being deducted."

In electing the non-permanent Members of the Council, blank or spoilt voting papers must not be counted when the number of votes is reckoned. The absolute majority should be calculated on the basis of the total number of valid voting papers.

If no one has any remarks to make, I shall assume that the Assembly, adopting the precedents of previous sessions, agrees to take the course I suggest.

The proposal was adopted.

The President. — I would emphasise the point that, to be valid, voting papers must bear the names of States and not of representatives of States. Further, no voting paper must bear more than three names ; otherwise, they will be regarded as invalid.

May I ask the Rt. Hon. Ormsby-Gore, delegate of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and Baron Aloisi, first delegate of Italy, to come to the platform and act as tellers.

(The Rt. Hon. Ormsby-Gore and Baron Aloisi took their places on the platform as tellers.)

The President. — We will now proceed to ballot by roll-call.

(The ballot was taken by roll-call.)

The President. — The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of votes cast | 53 |
| Voting papers blank or spoilt | 0 |
| Voting papers valid | 53 |
| Absolute majority | 27 |

The votes obtained by the States are as follows :

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Denmark | 52 |
| Argentina | 49 |
| Australia | 47 |

I therefore declare Denmark, Argentina and Australia, which have obtained the requisite majority, elected non-permanent Members of the Council for a period of three years. I have pleasure in congratulating these States.

I wish also to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

37. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE THIRTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion of the report on the work of the League since the thirteenth session of the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga (Spain). — The Assembly will readily understand my desire to begin by paying a personal tribute to Sir Eric Drummond. I do not intend to repeat the praises which have already been voiced by others of far greater authority than myself. I should only like to say that I have worked for six years under his direction in the League Secretariat and collaborated with him for two years in the Assembly, the Council and the Disarmament Conference, where — especially in the Council — I have not always been so happy as to find myself in agreement with him ; and the admiration I have always felt for his great moral and intellectual qualities has steadily increased. I wish him every success in his new sphere of activity.

I should like to associate with his name that of his successor, my eminent friend, M. Avenol, whose authority and experience in the affairs dealt with at Geneva afford us good earnest of his success.

Allow me also to mention another old friend, M. Pierre Comert, the value of whose twelve years' work in the Information Section has left an indelible mark.

The new Secretary-General must, I am sure, have taken up his duties with courage, doubtless, but also with a certain melancholy ; for the League is passing through a period of serious crisis, a fact which — with only too much reason, alas ! — has become the *leitmotiv* of the speeches delivered this year from this platform.

It often happens that the most familiar words — by their very familiarity — conceal, instead of revealing, the ideas they are intended to convey. When we hear of a crisis in connection with the League of Nations, we often think simply of the organisation at Geneva, whereas it is obvious that the real crisis is in the society of nations — that is to say, the association of civilised peoples for the organisation of human life on earth. That is the crisis of which, with your permission, I wish to speak to you to day, since therein lies the root of the disease, of which the other crisis is but a symptom.

The fact that a society is in a state of crisis means that it is suffering from something contrary to the very conception of society — anarchy. To-day, wherever we look, whether on ideals or realities, we see nothing but anarchy. In fact, the word "anarchy" is really not adequate. What we are faced with is anarchy in the second degree, a network of anarchies, an anarchy of anarchies. I do not propose to describe it to you fully ; to do so would be an endless and a melancholy task. I should like, however, to say something about it from certain aspects, in particular, its relationship to facts, to the minds of men, and to methods.

I will take facts first. The anarchy which exists in economic facts is particularly apparent. Whereas progress in finance, transport, taste, civilisation and the standard of life have made nations more and more interdependent, there now appears that dangerous Utopia of autarchy, whose name is as forbidding as the idea is absurd. The old smooth-working system of balancing payments by means of free trade, of financial systems, loans and the whole machinery of financial arbitration, is giving place to the unattainable ideal of levelling trade balances by dual agreements — that is to say, by agreements between States two by two.

Moreover, at a time when finance has reached the most advanced and complex state of development, nations are returning to the medieval system of barter, and national economic policies are perforce reverting, in spite of the very lofty and

complicated, but often only too contradictory, advice of economists, to the narrow and empirical financial methods of the humble peasant.

In politics, anarchy is no less evident. This year, our League has had to deal with three serious and even grave conflicts. It gives me pleasure, not only from a general standpoint as a delegate to the League but more particularly as a delegate of Spain, to be able to state that one of these conflicts — I refer to that which has existed for too long between Peru and Colombia — is approaching a solution, thanks to the wisdom displayed by the two parties in submitting to the requirements of the Covenant of which they are both signatories.

I wish I could make an equally optimistic statement with regard to the dispute between two other countries of Spanish America — Bolivia and Paraguay. At a meeting of the Council, I felt it necessary to emphasise that this conflict had become embittered because it had been submitted to too many procedures, that the initial difficulty had been aggravated by the fact that the conflict had been submitted to all kinds of procedures before more or less voluntary agencies, whereas the League was, by its legal standing, the only one which was under an obligation to find a solution. On that occasion, I urged — and in this I had the honour of being supported by my colleagues — that the Council should take the matter in hand and not relax its grasp until a settlement was reached. But the course of international affairs can never be foreseen, and we found one day that the two parties, which for so long had been unable to reach an agreement on the substance of the question, had been able to agree on procedure. On the eve of the departure of the Commission which — as we at least believed and were entitled to hope — would arrive at a rapid solution of the conflict by common agreement, the parties asked us to refer the matter to a committee of four South-American Powers — the Argentine, Brazil, Chile and Peru.

Whatever doubts we may have felt as to the advantages of this new procedure, we could not raise any objection in view of such a striking conformity of views between the two parties, and the Council asked the A. B. C. P. to deal with the question. It is already, I believe, a matter of common knowledge that these four countries, after the most painstaking and patient efforts, had to abandon the attempt to find a solution, and referred the matter back to us. All we gained by referring the question to these four Powers was a renewed assurance that the Argentine, Brazil, Chile and Peru would always lend us their support in any attempt to solve the problems submitted to the League.

I have dwelt at some length on this conflict because it affords a striking illustration of the argument, which I propose to develop later, that the affairs of the world must be centralised in the League, and that every time we depart from that rule we are riding for a fall.

There is a third dispute — and I should be sorry to say anything to increase its difficulties — namely, that which has existed since September 1931 between China and Japan. The facts are well known to all of you and I do not propose to say anything definite on the matter. I only wish to express my Government's earnest hope that this dispute, which, we are convinced, has only become embittered because, from the outset, the strict application of the principles of the Covenant was set aside, may once more be brought within the normal channels and that, through the strict application of the principles that were forgotten, we may soon be able to celebrate the restoration

of peace between those two Members of the League and the return of that greatly respected country which, though it has not yet officially left us, may perhaps be lost if the dispute is not settled. When I say "lost", I have in mind both that that State would lose our collaboration and that for our part we should lose the advantage of the high authority of its opinion and advice in our Assemblies.

I venture to say that one of the most grave and disquieting signs of the political anarchy in which we are involved is the fact that, while the Council and the Assembly were patiently trying to find a solution for these conflicts, and the Disarmament Conference was endeavouring to frame a Convention, at that very time armament dealers were still selling arms to the parties to the disputes.

In the years between 1921 and 1930, the traffic in arms, calculated in millions of dollars, was as follows :

| Year | Traffic in arms in millions of dollars, <i>excluding</i> the figures relating to aircraft and naval armaments |
|---------------|---|
| 1921. | 43 |
| 1922. | 42 |
| 1923. | 39 |
| 1924. | 46 |
| 1925. | 48 |
| 1926. | 51 |
| 1927. | 48 |
| 1928. | 59 |
| 1929. | 64 |
| 1930. | 55 |

Moreover, in 1932, while we were striving to make peace between two countries which were in conflict with the League, one exporting country alone supplied to them — I am speaking of exports to only two countries in one single year — four times more munitions than it had sold to all the countries of the world in 1930.

I would draw your attention to a third extremely grave fact. According to the figures published by the League, the total for the export of arms from all countries in the period 1920 to 1930 was 616 million dollars. Of this amount, only 478 millions appear in the total figure given to the League for imports. There remain, therefore, 138 million dollars' worth of arms the destination of which is unknown. Is it possible that a civilised and organised world regulated by a system like ours could allow 138 million dollars' worth of arms to disappear every ten years without being able to find out where they go ?

I lay stress on this problem, for this platform seems to me the right place from which to speak of such serious and difficult matters.

Side by side with the anarchy of facts there is the anarchy in men's minds. Before entering upon this delicate question, I should not like it to be said that I had forgotten the line which separates domestic politics from foreign politics. I therefore entirely associate myself with the view expressed here at the beginning of the present Assembly by the delegates of Sweden and the Netherlands, who spoke with more authority than I can do, with regard to the undeniable fact that this line is becoming more and more vague and that it is extremely difficult to respect it in the old strict and legal sense, seeing that we are all living in the same world and that the domestic politics of one country react, or may react, most seriously on those of other countries, and also — which is still more serious — on international politics. In my opinion, it is far less important to respect the line between domestic and foreign politics than the line which separates peace from war.

The anarchy in men's minds has in our day become extremely complex, because, in former times, politics were regarded almost as a straight line between the extreme of conservatism and authority, on the one hand, and the opposite extreme of liberalism and democracy, on the other. Not that I claim that the words "liberalism" and "democracy" are equivalent in meaning; I think, indeed, that their meanings are often opposite. But there is no doubt that during the nineteenth century, though sometimes an ill-matched pair, they did at least pull in the same direction. That beautiful simplicity no longer exists.

The day came when we saw the rise of a dictatorship which, though directed against democracy, was endowed from the left with a sort of dignity, inasmuch as it arose from the extreme left wing of socialism; since that time, political systems, which must inevitably gravitate between the two poles of authority and liberty, have been more or less equally divided as between the authoritarian and the liberal poles. We must respect the right of each country, not exactly its sovereignty — for since the birth of the League this conception is perhaps destined, slowly or rapidly, to fade away — but the right to develop its own personality and to follow its own evolution in accordance with its own genius. There is, however, a reciprocal duty — namely, to adjust this inward evolution to the outward evolution of humanity. At a time when we are endeavouring, in the international field, to ensure the peace of the world by respect for the liberty of each people and by free discussion, it is, to say the least, disturbing, and naturally gives the impression that anarchy among men's minds is increasing, to observe the rise of movements in which the authoritarian element predominates too strongly over the liberal element; such systems can only be regarded as in decreasing harmony with the Geneva system, which believes, and has always believed, in free discussion and in liberty.

In conjunction with these causes of anarchy in the international ideas of mankind, and perhaps not entirely unconnected therewith, we may note yet another feature: I refer to the extent to which the movement towards solidarity and organisation on universal lines is now faced, in the sphere which, since the war, has been its own, by a growing spirit of nationalism and by a growing scepticism in regard to the gospel of internationalism.

And in addition to all this, as if the existing spiritual and material anarchy were not enough, we are faced also with an anarchy of method.

We have all complained that confidence has entirely, or largely, disappeared. Confidence is the gold of the international political bank; its paper money is represented by agreements. The stock of confidence has not increased, but tends rather to disappear, whereas the paper money of agreements continually increases and is the most dangerous of all forms of inflation. We are applying inflation to agreements, and the more agreements we make the smaller becomes the gold reserve of confidence and the less value is attached by the peoples who use them to each additional agreement we conclude.

Side by side with the inflation of agreements, there is the inflation of war budgets, and side by side with the inflation of war budgets, the inflation of conferences and an increasing number of failures.

Why has this state of affairs arisen? Because our methods are in a condition of complete anarchy; because, as the eminent statesmen who prepared the Covenant of the League had learnt from their indisputable political experience, if conferences are to succeed, the problems must first be prepared methodically and without intermission, because (if I may use a homely metaphor) conferences should

be dining-rooms and never kitchens, because a meal should only be served when it is ready and when the guests have the appetite to eat it.

Thus it has come about — still further increasing anarchy of method — that, while heroic efforts are being made to create confidence by means of speeches (of which mine is, unfortunately, an example), the Governments are taking action which must inevitably increase mistrust. It is not that Governments are not anxious to increase confidence. It is because they have not been able to bring into existence something which I ask you to consider with me — namely, the re-organisation of the organic whole — that Governments have been compelled to take refuge in national, and even in nationalistic, measures; and that the result must inevitably be distrust.

What is the conclusion to be drawn? The conclusion drawn by our critics — and there is no lack of them — is that the League has failed. Here I should like to apply to the League the very witty remark of a contemporary Irish dramatist regarding Christianity, by saying that the League has not failed because it has never been tried.

In a period of complete anarchy we should follow the example of the sailor lost on the high seas. He guides himself by the stars. Our stars are principles. Let us return humbly but resolutely to simple ideas, to essential principles; let us ask ourselves what exactly the League of Nations is.

The League of Nations must be regarded as a manifestation, in the sphere of human institutions, of an age-long process by which mankind in the course of his evolution is constantly led towards a conscious and organised unity. Of this process almost forgotten instances can be found in ancient history, and particularly in the history of China; and in Europe in the sixteenth century there was a most interesting attempt along the same lines. A great monarch, part German and part Spanish — namely, Charles the Fifth of Germany and First of Spain — endeavoured to construct Europe. He was the first political ancestor of Aristide Briand, and history has so willed it that the man who at that time showed no understanding was Aristide Briand's fellow-countryman, Francis I.

I would refer you to the great speech delivered by Charles the Fifth to the Pope at Bologna in 1535 — a speech that might have been delivered to the Assembly of Geneva by Aristide Briand — when Charles exclaimed three times: "I want peace; I want peace; I want peace".

The attempt failed, but not for want of eminent jurists to assist in bringing it into effect; at Salamanca during the same period Francisco of Vitoria was teaching doctrines which should even to-day be at the base of the work of the Mandates Commission. The attempt failed because its basis was too narrow; Charles the Fifth endeavoured to build a united Europe on the basis of Christianity, and therefore acted with injustice and even with cruelty towards two great races and two great religions — Islam and the Jews.

To-day, when the Jewish question is to the fore, the Spanish Republic turns its eyes towards that great race, to which it is indebted for illustrious men of letters, lawyers, mystics, doctors and statesmen. Spain believes that the attempt to be made in the twentieth century should cover the entire world and — to use the words of a famous French writer — nothing but the world, that it should embrace all men, all races, all religions, all nations.

It is because we believe the League to be the manifestation, in the institutional sphere, of the organic and self-conscious unity of humanity on this planet that we have an intellectual faith in

the League which nothing can shake. We believe, none the less, that its development must necessarily be slow, and we can therefore bear patiently with setbacks because — and this is our third point — we are profoundly convinced of its ultimate triumph.

There are two ways of looking at the League. It may be regarded as the chamber in which rivalries of all kinds, rivalries of ambition and prestige, are balanced up one against another; to a certain extent, inasmuch as historical evolution must always proceed from the existing historical stage towards a higher stage, such a state of affairs is unfortunately inevitable. Criticisms of the League along these lines leave us undismayed; it is quite natural that they should arise. We shall endeavour to reduce this kind of criticism to a minimum, and to decrease its frequency as time advances; but, I repeat, such criticism must inevitably arise, and it causes us no dismay.

Nevertheless, the League towards which we must strive is the directing body of a co-operative association for international affairs, and in this connection I should like to draw a few conclusions. In the first place, we consider that the Covenant in its present form is adequate; in our opinion it provides an admirable documentary basis for such a co-operative association in the political field as the League, and we consider that the organisation is, in its main lines, excellent. I make this remark, which may in some respects seem a truism, because of the existence of two lines of criticism of the League, which are often contradictory, and neither of which is just.

On the one hand, we are told that the League is failing because it does not confine itself to its proper sphere, which should be that of technical, humanitarian and social questions, politics being left to the old diplomacy. On the other hand, we are told that the League of Nations is failing because it wastes its energy in dealing with secondary questions of technical, humanitarian and social interest, and neglects its real duty, which is to deal with political questions.

In our opinion, the League should deal with everything; and just as we consider that its activities should not be restricted to political questions, to humanitarian, technical or social questions, but should be extended to cover all the activities of organised humanity, so we are convinced that it is a mistake to endeavour to confine its action to any single continent, and that it is of necessity universal. The League should, therefore, deal with everything everywhere.

And why? It will be sufficient, in reply, to give a short analysis of the disarmament question. What is necessary for disarmament? To disarm we must be sure of peace. When shall we be sure of peace? Only when there is mutual confidence. We shall have mutual confidence when a community of aims exists. We shall have community of aims when we are really willing to collaborate. Disarmament therefore leads to collaboration. But collaboration in what? In everything: not merely collaboration in frontiers or in armaments, but collaboration in everything. Without collaboration in everything we cannot disarm. In other words: Why are there wars? Because there are disputes. Why are there disputes? Because problems become aggravated. Why do problems become aggravated? Because they are not studied at the stage when they are no more than questions. The conclusion is the same: if we want to avoid war, we must not concern ourselves merely with the last stage — namely, material disarmament, when weapons fall from men's hand. We must go further back, we must find out the reason why men are carrying arms; it lies in the fact that their aims are irrecon-

cilable. They must therefore be made to collaborate, so that they learn the habit of co-operation. We must therefore have a co-operative association of international work; and when this co-operative association is active in every sphere — economic, humanitarian, political and social — then, and then only, may we be sure that the weapons will fall from men's hands.

I would like to draw one further conclusion. For the reasons I have just given — reasons which are fundamental and are not merely formal in character — the Spanish Government has never supported, save under the pressure of necessity and the need for unanimity, the arguments advanced here in favour of systematic and *a priori* economising on the League budget. Our Government, like all others, is solicitous of the interests of its citizens, and is anxious that every centime expended on the League should produce the maximum of return. But it has never been able to understand why a ridiculously small budget should be subjected to such heavy and systematic attack with a view to its reduction.

Our Government considers that, since the League is an institution which is in process of evolution — and it should be a progressive evolution — towards the international organisation of humanity, its budget must necessarily increase year by year — though that increase, of course, must not exceed the requisite minimum. The child must grow, and if it grows it will require more nourishment every day. In this connection, I should like to express grave doubts as to the wisdom of having allowed, so far as the Assembly is concerned, the Supervisory Commission and the Fourth Committee to become, by almost imperceptible degrees, the bodies on whom, in the last resort, the adoption or rejection of any given resolution depends. If, after taking due note of the financial position as put before them by the Supervisory Commission and the Fourth Committee, the various Committees decide that any given policy should be followed, then it should be for those Committees and for the Assembly to take the final decision. To leave that decision to the Supervisory Commission and the Fourth Committee would involve a complete change in the existing hierarchy.

The League's budget is so very small — one five-hundredth or one-thousandth part of the war budgets of the entire world — that there is no reason for attaching so great an importance to finances. Indeed, there would be every reason for a gradual increase in its budget if the nations really had faith in the League.

In conclusion, I should like to refer to the session of the Permanent Committee on Arts and Letters at Madrid this summer. It is with sorrow and surprise that I have to inform the Assembly that the two highly respected Committees to which I have just referred, and which, in spite of the valuable services they render, are sometimes dangerously zealous, have not included in the budget the modest sum of 8,000 Swiss francs required for the expenses of this Permanent Committee.

The Permanent Committee, which, with one exception, was composed of men of great eminence, enquired into the problem of the future of civilisation, and reached various conclusions, the most important of which I will read to you.

"The Committee expresses the opinion that the future of civilisation, even within the various national units, is essentially bound up with the development of its universal elements, which in its turn is conditional upon the organisation of mankind as a moral and legal entity.

"That national civilisations can only be conceived in relation to one another and to the universal civilisation which includes all countries, and that, in consequence, man can only reach full civilisation when there is complete liberty of intellectual intercourse between individuals, nations and institutions.

"The Committee expresses the opinion that the reasons which justify limitation of the liberty of the individual within the national group remain valid for the nations themselves both in their individual conduct and in their dealings one with another;

"That, having reached its present stage, universal civilisation cannot develop or even be maintained unless nations, in their own interests, consent to a limitation of their freedom of action by moral and legal rules, the moral and legal unity of mankind being, as the Committee has already affirmed, a necessary condition of the future of civilisation."

Nothing could be wiser than these remarks of these men, who, while politically independent, are close observers of human evolution.

It is essential that the League should develop in every direction and in all spheres; it is essential that we should acquire more and more the habit of co-operation. In too many cases the sharp attacks made on the League are due to ignorance. The evolutionary process bearing man towards the League is a process that has been operating over untold centuries, a process that is leading him away from the empire of force and on to the higher empire of reason. This evolution is therefore a fundamental one, and those opposed to the League are opposed to it also. The League cannot fail, for it is the expression of human reason. If anyone believes that it is failing, let him come here and we will lead him in a friendly manner towards the light. To those who desire the League to fail, we can only apply the immortal words of Dante: "*Non ragionam di lor, ma guarda, e passa*".

The President. — M. de Vasconcellos, first delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

M. de Vasconcellos (Portugal):

Translation: The Government of the Portuguese Republic, as one of the original Members of the League of Nations, has for the past fourteen years given its most loyal and disinterested assistance in the work of peace and international solidarity undertaken by the League. Both in the Assemblies, which they have never failed to attend, and in the Committees, where their collaboration has never been wanting, the Portuguese representatives have striven modestly, but with sincere devotion, to promote the noble endeavour to organise peace among the nations. As assiduous and active collaborators in all departments of the League's work, we have spared no effort in the struggle against opium and other dangerous drugs and in the work of the child welfare organisation, whose remarkable achievements we are proud to see.

As regards communications and transit, our assistance has been no less considerable: we even had the honour to hold at Lisbon one of the conferences on these matters — the Conference on Buoyage and Lighting of Coasts. That Conference succeeded in drawing up rules to govern this question, which is of such great importance to shipping, and these rules are in course of being adopted by almost all the countries of the world.

In health matters and in matters of intellectual co-operation we have also given evidence of our active collaboration.

When the financial and economic disturbances now ravaging the world began to produce their effects, and the League of Nations endeavoured at successive conferences to study the phenomena of the depression and to seek means for putting an end to it, Portugal invariably took her part in all the attempts at recovery that were proposed and in all the endeavours to institute a policy of international solidarity in economic matters, which has unfortunately been given more lip-service than practical application. Thus, we were one of the few countries which ratified the Convention on Import and Export Prohibitions, of such ephemeral memory. Moreover, apart from all conferences, Portugal, by putting her finances in order, by balancing her budget and re-ordering her ravaged economic life — and this in the midst of the crisis and by her own efforts alone — has given the world an eloquent example of the possibility of reconstructing the economic life of a nation which, under intelligent and able leadership, voluntarily shoulders the sacrifices indispensable for the success of this heavy task of recovery.

On the Mandates Commission, in the struggle against slavery, in the protection of natives, the Government of the Republic has placed in the common stock its skill and its centuries-old experience in colonial matters. It has found — and it has never concealed its view — that there are few colonial problems which can be discussed by big committees or assemblies, as it is difficult, and even harmful, for such problems to be made the subject of criticisms and decisions by a majority ignorant of their substance and details.

The Government of the Republic, which has given proof of such long and devoted collaboration with the League, considered that, in such circumstances, it might be deemed worthy of the confidence of the Assembly as one of its representatives on the Council, and consequently, since the 1926 reform, it has on two occasions submitted its candidature to a non-permanent seat on the Council.

On the first occasion it received a fair number of votes, and on the second occasion the votes cast in its favour, which were well in excess of the absolute majority, showed it that it did not lack the confidence of the Assembly; but the study of the system of election in force proved to us that there was a defect in its practical operation, in the matter of the election of the non-permanent Members, which resulted in some fifteen States being in reality deprived of all possibility of ever becoming Members of the Council.

We drew attention to this in the speech made at the eleventh Assembly, during the discussion of the Secretary-General's report.

After the 1930 election, the Government of the Republic publicly announced its decision to abstain from becoming a candidate for the Council. I will read the actual words:

"Decides, as long as the present situation continues, to abstain from becoming a candidate for the Council, and to use every effort to introduce into the system in force such amendments as are indispensable for safeguarding the essential principle of the equality of States."

Shortly after, the Portuguese Government addressed to all the States Members a memorandum laying before the Governments the question of reforming the electoral system in force, which had become indispensable, and dealing with the participation of States in the composition of the Council. At the twelfth Assembly, the Government of the United Kingdom submitted, through the authoritative voice of Lord Cecil, a draft

resolution proposing the creation of a special Committee to study the system of elections to the Council.

After a detailed discussion by the First Committee, the Assembly adopted the resolution proposed, and the Committee was appointed, met and drew up the report which will be submitted to you.

My object in mentioning this question now, without desiring in any way to touch upon a discussion of the Committee's report, is to show that, through the initiative taken by Portugal and the United Kingdom and sympathetically received by successive Assemblies, the state of affairs to which the above-mentioned Portuguese declaration referred will be changed and that, in consequence, the Government of the Republic will regard it as its moral duty to submit its candidature for the Council once more if the Committee's report is adopted and if the Council sanctions the provisional increase in the number of non-permanent Members which will then be proposed to it.

I could enumerate all the various services which justify my country's aspiration to the honour of a seat upon your Council.

I will merely say that Portugal has had her frontiers definitely fixed for a longer period than any other European country. It is called a small country because its European territory is not very large; but it is certainly a great country whose language is spoken by some 60 millions, as will be realised when it is recalled that its colonial empire covers more than 2 million square kilometres and greatly exceeds the total area of Spain, France, Germany and Italy combined. It will perhaps be said that ours is an immense empire with a very small number of Europeans, but that is not true. If the figures for the Europeans inhabiting the vast colonies of French Equatorial Africa, the Cameroons and Madagascar, the Belgian Congo, the Gold Coast, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Zanzibar, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia are compared, and also the area of these territories and their black populations, it will be found that in these colonies the largest proportion of Europeans is 25 to every 10,000 natives, while in the Portuguese colonies there are 80 Europeans to 10,000 natives. Moreover, while in the above-mentioned colonies the largest is 24 Europeans per 1,000 square kilometres, the figure is 30 for the Portuguese territories.

It is not, however, solely in virtue of the number of colonists that the Portuguese colonial empire deserves to take a leading place among the great colonial nations: let us take one of the most important factors in the development of civilisation — the trade figure. The total trade of French West Africa amounts to 249 francs per head of the population; the imports and exports of French Equatorial Africa and Madagascar amount to 230 francs per head of population; the total trade of the British colonies of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika amounts to £2 6s. per head of population; the maritime trade of the Italian colonies in Africa amounted in 1930 to 373 lire per head of population; and the foreign trade of the Belgian Congo amounts to the enormous figure of 395 francs per head of population; but the total trade of the Portuguese colonies is 598 escudos per head of population, the Portuguese escudo being, at the present rate of exchange, roughly equivalent to the French franc.

If I add that we possess in Angola and Mozambique 3,750 kilometres of railways at present in operation, and more than 58,000 kilometres of good roads in all our colonies, and that the two most important ports of the east and west coasts of Africa — Lourenço Marques and Lobito — are

also Portuguese, you will be able to form a general idea of the gigantic efforts made by this people, which, not content with discovering these territories, has done its utmost to further their civilisation and progress as the greatest nations of the world have done.

If I quote these figures, taken from the admirable speech delivered by our young Minister for the Colonies at the inauguration of the twenty-second session of the International Colonial Institute and quoted in the Belgian Senate by His Highness the Duke of Brabant, it is to bring home to you that, in spite of this constructive work, Portugal is the only colonial nation that has not yet been represented on the Council. I will confine myself to the present and not weary you by appeals to the history or to the colonising genius of my country, as evinced by the creation of Brazil and the maintenance of its unity until the proclamation of its independence — regarded by the greatest historians as one of the finest achievements in the work of civilisation, and one of which any nation may be proud.

None is better qualified to appreciate the value of this effort than you, Mr. President, representing as you do a nation which, in order to do justice to the great Portuguese figures of the past, has just opened, in the magnificent building that houses its representatives in London, two rooms in honour of the immortal names of Bartholomew Diaz and Vasco da Gama.

I do not propose to touch upon the discussion which has just taken place on the reverses and successes attending the work of the League. I note with the greatest satisfaction the unquestionable successes achieved by the technical organisations in their campaign against dangerous drugs, in the realm of public health, in communications and transit, intellectual co-operation, child welfare, etc. I do not take a very pessimistic view of the League's political and economic activities, as I think that, if there have been any reverses, they should be attributed rather to the Governments than to the institution, whose advice, opinions and proposals have been misunderstood or even flouted.

I will quote to you in this connection the words written a short time ago by the Head of our Government, whose financial achievements you have on a number of occasions had the opportunity of appreciating. He wrote as follows:

"Discourses in favour of peace and co-operation are followed by aggressive measures and relentless selfishness. Speeches worthy of attention have been followed by laws which should never have been passed — an evident sign that the laws are made by some people and the speeches by others. The truth is that there are few Governments to-day which can answer for their own peoples. The acuteness of the crisis has made men restive and uncertain of mind, and has produced a soil favourable for the machinations of speculators in the political and social fields. When we return home from these great international gatherings and renew contact with our own countries, which resound with the complaints of our fellow-citizens, we are led to adopt makeshift solutions likely to produce an immediate effect, and these solutions are generally inconsistent with the sound principles that have just been preached. Difficulties are frequently shelved in the hope that that great statesman, Time, will solve them or help to solve them."

And he added:

"The work we have done in the financial field is the condition and the essential basis of

one small part of the work of national reconstruction which must be pursued in all spheres, from the production of wealth to the education and civilisation of the Portuguese people. We have, indeed, begun with the financial and administrative reconstruction of the country in order to acquire such material resources and such labour in the service of the State as may enable us to utilise the available funds for the benefit of the whole nation."

That is a fine programme, and success has constantly attended its execution; why should it not be tried in the majority of cases?

With the reconstruction of the nations' finances and the restoration of their economic systems, sound policies would soon be inaugurated.

National reconstruction and international solidarity — those are the broad roads that will lead to the regeneration of the world. They will lead to the organisation of peace through the firm and unfaltering application of the principles of the Covenant and respect for treaties signed and ratified.

For this fruitful work of progress and of peace, you may count on all the strength and energy of the Government and people of my country.

The President. — M. Paul-Boncour, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Paul-Boncour (France):

Translation: Although the whole French delegation is following the work of this Assembly with close attention, I did not intend to take part in this general discussion. My thoughts and cares are all, I confess, directed towards that coming date, which, I agree with Sir John Simon, cannot be deferred, when, after nineteen months' work, we shall see whether the Disarmament Conference can produce results or not and, consequently, whether or no the armaments race will be resumed, that race which must sooner or later lead to the catastrophe which the League of Nations, its machinery, discussions and meetings (I agree with M. de Madariaga that they need not be so numerous), were designed to avoid.

But, during the discussion, things have been said and questions to some extent raised to which my country feels in duty bound to reply and to which I shall reply very simply and very briefly.

I can assure the first delegate of Norway, who opened and, if I may say so, gave the tone to the Assembly, that he interpreted my country's intentions aright when, in response to the initiative of the Italian Government, frank and detailed discussions were instituted which, while dispelling any misunderstanding as to its future application, led to the signing of the Four-Power Pact in the form in which it will be submitted to the French Parliament for ratification.

You were right: France has never abandoned and will never abandon a policy of confidence and co-operation with the League of Nations. That policy has been consistently pursued by France ever since the inception of the League, and has been followed by every other Government. The attacks that have been made upon it in France have been negligible, and they have had no effect on public opinion, passionately devoted as it is to peace and, in particular, to that democratic form of peace, the assembly of nations, meeting in unity and on equal terms, as embodied in the League.

It was reassuring to us, and to me personally, who have been in the forefront of the battle, that the first words spoken here, consecrating our efforts, so to speak, and epitomising their signi-

ficance, should have been spoken by the representative of one of those nations which at one time, we had reason to fear, would regard themselves as prejudiced by the system of co-operation which four great Western and neighbouring Powers were attempting to organise among themselves.

Sir John Simon told us with kindly irony that we would have to choose between two opposite criticisms as contradictory as those mentioned just now by M. de Madariaga. When the great Powers meet to discuss with one another, those who do not attend those meetings are inclined to regard them as conclaves at which the right is arrogated to deal with questions within the province of the whole Assembly or at which even attempts are made to achieve results likely to be harmful to the small States as a whole.

Yet we are always being told that progress is being retarded because the great Powers, which are expected to give a lead, have not definitely agreed in advance among themselves on a common line of policy, which the other Powers would be prepared to adopt.

We must choose, and the choice is easy; or, rather, it is that we must, now as always, reconcile the different points of view.

Those with experience of the League know perfectly well that the greatest service we can render it is to avoid embarking without preparation upon public debates and thus widening divergences which concerted diplomatic action might have reduced, and obliging the small Powers to mediate between the great Powers in disputes which the great Powers have not taken the trouble to avoid. The great Conferences — the Economic Conference, the Disarmament Conference — the adjournment or procrastination of which is so largely responsible for the spirit of pessimism which seems to be weighing down the atmosphere of this Assembly, would have succeeded better had they been more carefully prepared.

The countries which refuse to lose faith in these great international meetings — and France is one of them — must not neglect any of the factors which have always been the condition of success in international relations. These factors may be deduced from the rules of intelligence as much as from those of diplomacy. We must proceed from the simple to the complex. We must first settle, if we can, the common questions, the individual interests as governed by proximity and by political relationships. Although the year which has elapsed since the last Assembly is closing on a note of anxiety which should not be ignored and which no one, moreover, has ignored, yet it has in many valuable ways enhanced the efficiency of the machinery of peace by regional agreements — the Four-Power Pact and the Pact of the Little Entente — and the pacts of non-aggression and pacts for the definition of the aggressor which Poland, Roumania and the other neighbouring States have so wisely concluded with Russia and with one another.

As at Locarno, where the principles of a protocol which it had not been possible to apply universally were applied to a particularly sensitive spot of Europe, so now, since Europe, unable to set up a coherent structure at one stroke, is building piece by piece, it is the duty of diplomacy to try to extend that structure and to join its parts together. To join them together, that seems to be the League's great task.

We must compare, conciliate and co-ordinate in the international organisation these regional structures which would be antagonistic to one another if the League were not there to incorporate them in the rules and practice of a pact which makes provision for them all and, by so doing, commends them to our attention and to our use.

Such agreements are even more necessary when, as in the case of the Four-Power Pact, the Powers affirming the need for such collaboration are bound to each other by the prior Pact I mentioned just now — that of Locarno. For the Four-Power Pact is but the sequel and implementation of Locarno, which, if peace is to be assured, it is now more necessary than ever to keep alive and active. The essential point of these individual pacts is that, in the last resort, it is the League which decides; but it must decide, it must speak, it must act.

Too often, slowness of procedure and hesitation to embark on a course of action and follow it up, and, above all, reluctance to take a final decision compelling a definite statement as to who is in the right and who in the wrong — and that is, after all, why we are here, and we have, by signing the act, committed ourselves in advance to listening to and respecting decisions of this nature — all this has helped to dash the high hopes which the peoples had placed in the League. Already, on all hands, those who, in their hearts, have never admitted that rules of law should replace solutions by force are raising their heads again. But, never fear! the nations have suffered so much from settlements by violence that they are standing by us. They will retain their confidence in the League, if it retains confidence in itself.

It is precisely because, during this discussion, the League has received a moving request from a number of nations, including some which, for historical or geographical reasons, were spared the recent conflicts, but which nevertheless realise that the threat of new conflicts will not spare them, that I have come to this platform to tell them that France is with them. France is with the first delegate of Norway, who was the first to say what needed to be said; with the first delegate of Austria, in defending the independence of his country against all machinations, external or internal; with the first delegate of Sweden, who, quoting Kant, recalled that man must not be the slave of man; with the first delegate of the Netherlands, in support of the noble initiative he has taken; and, I hope, with you all, in the desire and the determination that, not force, but the League of Nations, its procedure and its verdicts, may remain our common safeguard and the guarantee of a peace which cannot be jeopardised unless we show ourselves incapable of defending it, and defending it here.

The lesson to be drawn from this Assembly, its object, the watchword that must be heard throughout its discursive debates, must be sought, not in constantly restated formulas of vague hope, nor as an echo of the pessimism of our detractors, but by taking firm resolves.

In a Europe where so much violence is once more being meditated, the hour is past for mere idle or idyllic words. It is time to know whether international security will be ensured by the scrupulous observance of the provisions of the Covenant and of the Pacts which define and strengthen it; whether the Disarmament Conference will produce a reasonable and equitable convention acceptable to all; whether there will be a mutual, equal and effective supervision to ensure its execution; and whether the signatory States will stand firm in making it respected.

Thus the two tasks before us are closely bound up with one another — our present task and our future task. It will depend on the tone and the resolutions of this Assembly whether there is to be an atmosphere favourable to the resumption and success of the Disarmament Conference, on which, as you realise, the whole trend of affairs in Europe and throughout the world now hangs.

I apologise if the need to speak frankly and, in the case of a great country, the duty to reply frankly to the questions put by the small nations that have spoken here have caused me to use language rather different from that we are accustomed to hear from this platform; I beg that you will attribute this solely to my zeal for the accomplishment of the task to which we all, equally and with a common mind, have set our hands.

The President. — Mirza Abol-Hassan Khan Foroughi, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

Mirza Abol-Hassan Khan Foroughi (Persia):

Translation: I venture to address you to-day because I see, in the anxiety caused by what appears to be wavering faith in the League of Nations, a significant fact showing that the time has come to raise a general question which, though of a speculative nature, is at the same time of vital importance from a practical point of view: I refer to the need to investigate the principles on which the League is based and thus seek more exactly to determine the true part which this international institution should play in the interests of mankind in order to enhance its prestige in the eyes of the public and to place it where it will be safe from its detractors.

Conscious of the horror which was everywhere aroused by that extraordinary fratricidal struggle, the world war, the founders of the League, and public opinion itself, considered that they were endowing that great international institution with its closest definition and the highest expression of its aims by holding it up as a superior instrument which was henceforth to safeguard world peace. In the circumstances, that was, and it still remains, the best expression of the truth.

Nevertheless, the only rational principles on which world peace could be based — that universal and lasting peace which alone could inspire in the human breast a reaction against the horror that was the world war — necessarily subserve a higher ideal, on the basis of which society to-day must be radically transformed. That was the view, or at least the ideal, gradually formulated during the organisation of the practical system which was to make it a reality, an ideal that led the highest representatives of intellect and thought to rally round the League with greater enthusiasm than the statesmen themselves, and thus gave the meetings held here the reassuring appearance of a happy and cordial agreement between the theoretical and the practical intellect. That disinterested enthusiasm felt by the élite of the purely intellectual world appears to be waning, and is withdrawing into itself in face of the practical arrangements left to diplomats or technicians, who, overwhelmed with work, are displaying an aloofness that must be regarded as the most alarming symptom claiming the attention of the League's supporters.

I do not believe that that enthusiasm is really waning. The true representatives of the intellectual world, who are competent to appreciate, as the Netherlands delegate aptly observed, the value of those seconds of eternity represented by individual human existences, can never allow themselves to be discouraged by such vicissitudes as may awaken the legitimate apprehensions of the impatient public. Nothing short of a re-adjustment of the intellect will suffice in such circumstances to carry out an examination of every aspect of the problem of finding a satisfactory and constant formula for the human ideal, an examination such as will, if crowned with success, yield a practical result by raising the ideal itself still higher. In

order that this re-adjustment may not be so protracted as to engender disappointment, I will try to place the reasons for our attachment to the League in a new light for the benefit of the public, which has, perhaps, understood the expression "lasting peace" in too limited a sense — namely, as the sole safeguard constituted by the treaties terminating a disastrous war, the ineffaceable spectre of which still haunts us. And I find this new light in the contribution to world civilisation that must be made by the nation to which I have the honour to belong; for the mission of that nation, placed as it is between East and West, has always been to act in all things as a channel of mediation and of regenerating synthesis.

The human mind itself is a synthetic reality, which finds remarkable expression in the extraordinary synthesis represented by the structure of our brain. All the great feats of progress accomplished by man in the course of his long history have been the products of synthesis between the various geniuses of different nations and civilisations. That is a truth which we Iranians are best qualified to know from our own experience, as we have almost continuously lived this life of synthesis resulting from frequent contact with different national geniuses and fostered by the conciliatory spirit of our race, which has often sacrificed the splendour of its own originality to reconcile apparently conflicting expressions of higher culture.

These syntheses, in themselves so regenerating and so productive of progress, have, unfortunately, through some defect in the constitution of our globe or of our material world, always coincided with the decadence or disappearance of the older society, so that the two societies whose combined civilisations had this regenerative influence never survived under the same conditions of prosperity. Human civilisation, transplanting itself with this change of destinies, was reborn and continued its unpredictable progress across the ages, employing, to the advantage of one portion of mankind and to the great detriment of another portion, the weapons of war and conquest, which constituted the principal element of change, accentuating as they do this disequilibrium. Such was the case with the ancient empires of the East, whose civilisations were inherited by the glorious dynasty of the Achemenides of Persia; the splendour of the Roman Empire, enslaving ancient Greece whence it had drawn its culture; the civilisation of Arabia, offspring of a fertile union to which ancient Iran imparted her own glorious independence; and finally, such is the case with the splendid modern civilisation of the West, that found a first impulse in the East, when its star was setting in the misty horizon of decadence.

Although civilisation has always tended to expand, in order, with contemporary progress, to bring the whole world under its influence; although, through this inescapable process of propagation, the whole of mankind is to-day permeated with a universal desire to enjoy the benefits of civilisation some day, yet eventually this original evil, which has always linked progress with decline, must find its remedy in the very course of the laws governing human evolution, or in the resources of the higher intellect and will of man. For otherwise there will be a perpetual conflict between light and darkness, between prosperity and disaster, troubling the atmosphere of peace and concord necessary to the life of human groups that are so closely dependent on one another, and the more backward of which will always aspire to a share in all the benefits of civilisation. This time is, you will perceive, the time in which we live, when the whole world is no longer

divided into two great camps of civilisation — the West now approaching its zenith (a presage of coming decline), and the East, which is awakening from its long sleep which, not being death, could but come to an end, now accomplished by the dazzling light and by the tremendous upheavals of Western civilisation itself.

A reassuring synthesis — the vastest and profoundest that humanity has known — is already entering upon its consummation, despite all the material difficulties which in appearance are leading the League to ruin. If, however, in this new stage of regeneration by synthesis, the original evil still makes its influence felt by placing regeneration and progress at the exclusive service of one party, yet the human ideal, though it finds that the universality of its consummation, so clearly prepared, is being attacked, will certainly surmount the obstacle through the very force of its need to realise itself. Since the influence of civilisation has no margin of apathetic ignorance to mitigate the violence of the blow, the world will have either to explode or to prepare itself for the universal attainment of the human ideal, when the two great societies whose combined geniuses are regenerating civilisation for the last time may share equally the benefits of the progress thus achieved. East and West must attain to an equal level of civilisation, which must progress in both, this progress being accelerated by the influence of complementary qualities designed to perfect each of the parts which have finally entered upon a happy union.

This is the conclusion: progress towards the universal attainment of the human ideal is necessary, if not inevitable, since the free choice of the human will will perforce create the necessity. As this choice is not necessarily unanimous, there are two alternatives. If we freely acquiesce in the unanimous choice of an agreement to work for civilisation, which will be perfected by the voluntary operation of the synthesis, we shall develop happily and wisely; but, if we use our liberty to depart from such a beneficent agreement, there will be a terrible revolution, which, in spite of ourselves, will lead us, though through the very destruction its conflicts will engender, to the inevitable goal where what is left of humanity will find its happiness.

It will inevitably lead there this time, for humanity has so much vitality that it cannot die out entirely through any evil. Provided that a small handful of intelligent beings survive, the spirit of man will mend the broken chain of progress, for that spirit is the force that will rise above ruin to repair the havoc, which is not irreparable. Nevertheless, we do not suffer scourges willingly; and revolution, like war, is the most terrible scourge. Even the extremest of revolutionaries, if he really wants revolution — as he always says he does — in order to achieve an object far removed from destruction and cruelty, could not reasonably deny that his tactics, involving as they do horrible destruction, are a terrible means which no one can wish to employ so long as he can hope for a better way.

Since the world war, the public has constantly gone in fear of war. What it fears comes within the scope of the general idea which I have called revolution, applying revolution to every acute phase reached in an ardent determination to advance in a particular direction. If the inevitable imperfection of man and his institutions is recognised, the inescapable necessity of a certain form of revolution for the progress of humanity will be admitted. But the reality being extremely complex, the present transformation of society involves progress in an infinite number of directions — which progress the regenerative synthesis of the

two geniuses, Eastern and Western, is destined to vitalise and to guide — and it will be seen that many and serious vicissitudes are to be expected before the day comes when man will find his salvation in real progress, in the already perfected synthesis of all the different geniuses, and in the true wisdom acquired by hard experience.

In order to avert the great peril that may beset society and civilisation during all these vicissitudes, a higher, and hence international, institution is necessary to regulate movements and temper the blows that will inevitably be sustained.

That institution, which, if it is to be complete, must itself keep a watchful eye on the collective mind and wield international authority enabling minds which can visualise the human ideal to procure enlightenment for themselves and illumine the world with its beams — that institution, the importance of which must be measured by the vastness of the universal ideal of mankind and by the difficulties to be overcome before the noble object in view is attained, can be defined only by its title of League of Nations. It is the League of Nations as at present constituted, the League which has already rendered such genuine services to the cause of peace and concord in international life. It will become what we may justifiably expect it to become, provided that public opinion in all countries understands that its support of the League and its just appreciation of the League's rôle and usefulness will constitute its effective authority, and provided that the intellectual world continues to see in its supple perfectability and in the universality implied in its international character — favourable as it is to the beneficent synthesis of the different geniuses and of the various elements of civilisation in all their wealth — a sufficient reason for maintaining an unflinching interest in the League.

In concluding my speech, from which I have intentionally omitted all mention of political and economic matters of immediate interest in order to show how it is proposed to broaden the conception, I will, as a practical contribution, express the hope that the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation may be supplemented by a special study and propaganda section for investigating the principles on which faith in the League of Nations and the definition of its true rôle must rest, and for the study, in this connection, of the synthesis to be achieved between the two geniuses, Eastern and Western. Such a task will mean an effort at mutual understanding.

This attempt to investigate the principles involved may usefully serve as the propaganda advocated by many enlightened minds. The synthesis between the genius of the East and that of the West will help to solve many problems which to-day defeat learned and rational Western thought and, as we all realise, call loudly and insistently for solution.

38. — SYSTEM OF ELECTIONS TO THE COUNCIL: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the question of the system of elections to the Council. The report of the First Committee on this question has been distributed to the delegations (document A.31.1933, Annex 2).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Motta, President of the First Committee, and Count Piola Caselli, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — Count Piola Caselli, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

Count Piola Caselli (Italy), Rapporteur:

Translation: The First Committee has the honour to submit for your approval two distinct proposals: The first, which relates to the increase by one of the elected seats on the Council, is a question for decision by the Council, in accordance with the provisions of Article 4, paragraph 2 of the Covenant. As, however, the Council's decision must be accompanied by the approval of the majority of the Assembly, you are asked to give that approval.

The second proposal comes exclusively within the competence of the Assembly, in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 2*bis* of the Covenant, as it concerns a reform in the procedure of the elections, and your approval, under the terms of that article, must be given by a two-thirds majority.

I think that a few brief observations will be sufficient to supplement the contents of the printed report which you have before you.

The justification for the second proposal was given by Viscount Cecil of Chelwood, the representative of the United Kingdom, who advocated it on the Special Committee of which I had the honour to be Chairman, observing that it was necessary to avoid candidatures' being put forward at the last moment without sufficient consideration and liable to lead to unfortunate results. (See Minutes of the meeting of May 19th, 1933.)

In order to avoid these surprise votes, it is proposed, on the model of a system in force in the electoral laws of England and other countries, that candidatures should be publicly declared forty-eight hours before the elections. The declaration made by the candidate, or by the electors supporting the candidature, must be communicated in writing to the Secretary-General, who will forthwith bring it to the attention of the Assembly.

For the reasons stated in the printed report, this reform cannot come into force before the elections at the ordinary session of the Assembly next year.

The first proposal, relating to the provisional increase by one of the elected seats on the Council, is, I should like to point out, the outcome of an exhaustive examination by the Special Committee of the electoral system at present in force.

This Committee, composed of fifteen Members of the League, carefully examined the various aspects of the difficult, complex, delicate and thorny problem of the elective composition of the Council — a problem which has been a source of preoccupation and anxiety from the very origin of the Covenant and which, in view of the different solutions it offers for discussion, would seem to involve not only the past, but also the present and the future, of the League.

As a result of its discussions, to which the highest political personalities connected with the League have brought their contributions, the Committee proposed a solution which is in the nature of a provisional compromise between two opposing tendencies and opinions.

As is generally the case with a compromise, it does not wholly satisfy either of these tendencies and opinions, and it is open to criticism on both general and theoretical grounds. But, in the unanimous opinion of the Special Committee, which was approved by the First Committee, it meets the needs of the moment and gives evidence of wisdom and prudence.

The increase of the elective seats by only one may seem insufficient to enable the Members of the League not included in groups to find a place without difficulty in the normal rotation of Council elections. But the groups have no obligatory and absolutely rigid consistency. Their machinery can in practice, if desired, be made more adaptable,

more adjustable and fairer to those Members, without any need for regulation by law. In any case, the Committee's discussions seem to show that the proposal to add two seats would have no chance of securing the necessary unanimous acceptance by the Council, and might give rise to an undesirable conflict between Council and Assembly on a serious constitutional question.

The reform of an electoral law, when associated with a change in the composition of the political body to be elected, must obviously develop into a reform of a constitutional character. Considered in relation to the composition of the League Council — that is to say not only the question of the existence and number of the elective seats, but that of the existence and proportionate number of permanent seats — this question goes to the very root of the Covenant.

The Committee wisely and prudently took the view that the present was not an opportune moment to discuss so vast and momentous a question. But the vote you are asked to take to-day will not bind you in any way ; it cannot prevent the question from being reconsidered at any moment you may choose.

The period of three years indicated in the proposal is intended solely to give the minimum stability necessary for the new seat. It will be clear, however, from the Committee's Minutes (I refer especially to the Minutes of the meeting of May 19th, 1933) that there was no intention — and, indeed, any such commitment would have no value — to encroach upon the sovereign power of the Assembly and of the Council.

When, in the considered opinion of the Assembly and the Council, the time has come to reconsider the constitutional question, their faith in the fundamental idea which justifies the League's very existence will certainly suggest to them solutions calculated to consolidate the League's authority and perfect the working of its organs.

For these reasons, I have the honour, on behalf of the First Committee, to recommend for your adoption the following draft resolutions :

I.

The Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee appointed to study the existing system of election to the Council,

Approves the recommendation of the Committee for the provisional creation of one new non-permanent seat on the Council, and accordingly declares that it is desirable that, for the period commencing with the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council at the Assembly's session of 1933 and ending with the election of the said non-permanent Members in the year 1936, the number of non-permanent seats on the Council should be provisionally increased from nine to ten, on the understanding that, towards the end of that period, the question of the number of the Members of the Council will be reconsidered and that all the Members of the League will remain entirely free to propose any final solution of this question which they consider desirable.

The Assembly instructs the Secretary-General to bring this resolution to the attention of the Council.

II.

The Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Committee mentioned in resolution No. I,

Adopts the following provisions as an addition to the rules dealing with the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council adopted by the Assembly on September 15th, 1926 :

No Member of the League shall be eligible to be elected as a non-permanent Member of the Council unless it has proposed itself for election or been nominated by another Member of the League at least forty-eight hours before the election, which shall not be held before the seventh day of the Assembly's session ;

The notice of the candidature shall be given in writing to the Secretary-General, who shall forthwith bring it to the attention of the Assembly. The Secretary-General shall at the time of the election place before the Assembly a list of the Members which have been duly put forward as candidates.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

The meeting rose at 7.45 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7TH, 1933, AT 4 P.M.

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I felt I should inform the Assembly of this exchange of messages, as I was anxious to give it an opportunity of approving the action I had taken in its name.

The President's action was approved.

**40. — PENAL AND PENITENTIARY QUESTIONS :
GRADUAL UNIFICATION OF CRIMINAL
LAW AND CO-OPERATION OF STATES
IN THE PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION
OF CRIME: REPORT OF THE FIRST
COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.**

The President. — The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the First Committee's report on the gradual unification of criminal law and co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime (document A.37.1933.V, Annex 4).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Limburg, Vice-Chairman of the First Committee, and M. Pella, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — M. Pella, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Pella (Roumania), Rapporteur :

Translation : In submitting to you the work of the First Committee on the problems of the gradual unification of criminal law and co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime, I will merely put before you the two views expressed.

The first view was favourable to the progressive unification of criminal law in cases where the divergencies between national legislations allow, in practice, the impunity of criminals. As regards the co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime, the supporters of this view stated that there could be no effective co-operation of States in the absence of uniform regulations governing extradition and of co-operation between police forces.

The second view was that the League's field of action should be carefully circumscribed in such matters, particular questions being chosen and studied separately. The League could take action only when international interests called for the co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime.

In view of the differences in the two views advanced, the First Committee considered that it should adopt a compromise; the League's assistance should consist of closer collaboration with the technical organisations mentioned in the resolution adopted by the Assembly in 1931, and their opinion should be asked on penal and penitentiary questions.

Moreover, if the work of those organisations led to definite results, and if practical necessity and international requirements demanded League action, the League might intervene with the object of securing, if possible, the conclusion of international conventions.

The First Committee also noted in its resolution the re-organisation of the International Bureau for the Unification of Criminal Law, and considered that, in cases where the organs of the League felt it appropriate to do so, that Bureau might be entrusted with the preparatory investigations undertaken in connection with the drawing-up of any convention on the subject that might be contemplated.

Legal theory and practice in penitentiary questions might be made the subject of collaboration with the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission.

For my part, in view of the need for closer solidarity between States in the suppression of crime, which should nowhere find impunity and asylum, I would ask the Assembly to approve the following resolution adopted unanimously by the First Committee :

The Assembly,

Having examined with the greatest interest the joint reply given by the seven technical organisations which the Secretary-General consulted on the subject of the form in which the League of Nations might lend its assistance in the gradual unification of criminal law and the co-operation of States in the prevention and suppression of crime (document A.7.1933.V, Annex) ;

Noting the re-organisation of the International Bureau for the Unification of Criminal Law by the entry of representatives of the six other organisations into that body ;

Considering that the Members of the League have been consulted on the question of the gradual unification of criminal law and the co-operation of States in the campaign against crime and that the majority of the replies received are favourable, in principle, to collaboration by the League in these matters ;

Considering that certain other Governments have expressed the opinion that the only method by which useful results in this sphere may be obtained consists in studying each particular question separately, if it is of international interest, as and when need arises :

Recognises the value of the international exchange of views on criminal matters which occurs within the technical organisations ;

Is of the opinion that, when the work of these organisations leads to definite proposals, the League of Nations may intervene with the object of securing the possible conclusion of international conventions if the proposals referred to answer to real needs recognised as such by the organs of the League—in which case, the procedure would be that normally followed in the conclusion of conventions under the auspices of the League of Nations ;

Thanks the seven technical organisations for their offer to place the results of their work at the disposal of the League of Nations, the possibility of having recourse to this collaboration obviating the necessity for the creation of a special organ of the League to deal with criminal and penitentiary questions ;

And considers it desirable that, in cases where the organs of the League feel it appropriate to do so, those organs should consult the said organisations. In such cases, the International Bureau for the Unification of Penal Law might be asked to give its assistance in the preparatory investigations undertaken in connection with the drawing-up of any convention which may be contemplated. So far as concerns law and practice in regard to penitentiary questions, the assistance of the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission might be obtained.

The President. — If there are no delegates who wish to speak, I shall consider the First Committee's report and the draft resolution accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

**41. — TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN :
CONVOCATION OF A DIPLOMATIC CON-
FERENCE TO PREPARE THE FINAL TEXT
OF A CONVENTION FOR THE SUPPRESSION
OF TRAFFIC IN WOMEN OF FULL AGE :
DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE
FIFTH COMMITTEE.**

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the examination of a resolution adopted by the Fifth Committee with regard to the convocation during the present session of the Assembly of a Diplomatic Conference for the purpose of drawing up for signature the final text of the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women of Full Age (document A.47.1933.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, Mlle. Hesselgren, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Miss Horsbrugh, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — Miss Horsbrugh, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Miss Horsbrugh (United Kingdom), Rapporteur. — The subject of the report I have the honour to present to the Assembly is the convocation of a Diplomatic Conference to study the draft Convention for the Abolition of the Age-Limit in the existing conventions on the traffic in women and children between different countries.

The question of the abolition of the age-limit has been discussed by the Committees of the League for many years, and at the last session of the Advisory Committee it was unanimously agreed that the time had come to take a decision and that the age-limit could be abolished. This was reported to the Council in May of this year, and the Secretary-General was instructed to ask the Governments for their observations on the subject. In the replies that have been received, there is a very wide measure of support for the signing of the Convention during the present Assembly.

In the discussions in the Fifth Committee, the principle of the abolition of the age-limit was approved with almost complete unanimity. A Sub-Committee was set up to consider the observations of the Governments, to make certain drafting amendments, and especially to make clear a phrase in order that the offence of taking a woman from one country to another for immoral purposes might be punishable even if the country to which she was taken was a colony or mandated territory under the sovereignty of the country from which she came. The Sub-Committee completed its work and reported to the Fifth Committee.

We hope that the Assembly will adopt this resolution, that the Diplomatic Conference will be called, and that it will be possible to sign the Convention, because we believe that, with its signing, we shall have made some considerable advance in abolishing this traffic which is abhorrent to all of us.

The draft resolution reads as follows :

The Assembly,

Having taken note of the answers of the Governments on the draft Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women of Full Age contained in documents A.24.1933.IV and A.24(a).1933.IV, and having heard the statements on the Convention of delegates in the Fifth Committee ;

Considering that the great majority of Governments which have submitted observations on the draft Convention are in favour of holding, during the

*present session of the Assembly, a Diplomatic Conference for the purpose of drawing up for signature the final text of the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women of Full Age :
Decides to convocate this Diplomatic Conference during its present session.*

The President. — If there are no observations, I shall take it that this proposal, together with the explanations verbally given by Miss Horsbrugh, are accepted by the Assembly, and that the Conference will therefore be convoked under the suggested conditions.

If no delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution of the Fifth Committee as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The President. — The Diplomatic Conference charged with drawing up the final text of the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women of Full Age will meet at the Secretariat on Monday next, October 9th, at 10 o'clock.

Those States which have not yet accredited their delegates to the Conference are asked to indicate in writing to the Secretary-General to-day the name of their delegate or delegates to this Conference. The credentials authorising delegates to sign the Act which may be finally adopted should be deposited at the Secretariat, Room 109, before Monday next.

**42. — PENAL AND PENITENTIARY QUES-
TIONS : STANDARD MINIMUM RULES FOR
THE TREATMENT OF PRISONERS : ACTI-
VITIES OF THE TECHNICAL ORGANISA-
TIONS : REPORT OF THE FIFTH
COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.**

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the examination of the Fifth Committee's report on the standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners and the activities of the Technical Organisations (document A.44.1933.IV, Annex 5).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Pella, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President. — M. Pella, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Pella (Roumania), Rapporteur :

Translation : I will not read you the report on penal and penitentiary questions ; it was unanimously adopted by the Fifth Committee and has already been communicated to you.

I merely desire to draw your attention to the decision taken by the Fifth Committee on the standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners.

The International Penal and Penitentiary Commission gave effect to the resolution adopted by the Assembly in 1931 by revising these standard minimum rules in the light of the observations of the various Governments and of the organisations consulted. The revised rules represent the minimum necessary for the humane and rational treatment of convicted persons, and are easily adaptable to local circumstances and to the peculiar position of each country. It is thus a question of submitting these rules to the Members of the League and to the non-member States, requesting them to state whether, in view of their existing or proposed laws and regulations, they are in a position to consider approving and applying these rules in whole or in part.

The question of a recommendation with regard to the standard rules, and, on the other hand, that of their mere approval by the League or the possible conclusion of an international convention, was reserved for the next Assembly, it being naturally understood that the prior opinion of the Governments would be sought.

Further, without expressing an opinion on the substance of certain other cognate questions, the Fifth Committee requested the International Penal and Penitentiary Commission to continue its work in this field. As regards convict labour in particular, the International Labour Office was also requested to continue its studies.

The Fifth Committee also advocates collaboration with the technical organisations which deal with penal and penitentiary questions on an international scale and which are referred to in the resolution of the 1931 Assembly; this collaboration would obviate the necessity of creating a special League organisation for penal and penitentiary questions.

A report by the Secretary-General on the work of the women's organisations mentioned in the 1931 resolution was also referred to the Fifth Committee, which expressed its satisfaction at the valuable work done by those organisations.

I personally am convinced that, by the humane and rational treatment of the convict in accordance with modern principles of law and of modern penitentiary practice, and by the international solution of certain cognate problems, we shall achieve the main object of contemporary criminal law, which is the reformation of the convict—that is to say, the transformation of the negative factor which he represents into a positive factor of value to the community.

For this reason, I venture, on behalf of the Fifth Committee, to ask you to adopt the report which I am submitting to you and which has been unanimously adopted by the Committee, and accordingly to pass the following draft resolution:

The Assembly adopts the report of the Fifth Committee on penal and penitentiary questions.

The President.— If no delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Fifth Committee's report and resolution as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

43. — WORK OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President.— The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Health Organisation (document A.38.1933.III, Annex 6).

(On the invitation of the President, Count Carton de Wiart, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Baranyai, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President.— M. Baranyai, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Baranyai (Hungary), Rapporteur:

Translation: The Second Committee's report to the Assembly was unanimously adopted by the Committee and is in your hands; and I need not therefore read it. It summarises the manifold activities of the Health Organisation. In the first place, it mentions the work of that Organisation carried out at the request of the Governments of certain of the States Members which turned to

it for assistance in the solution of problems that, transcending the national sphere, can be solved only on the international plane. During the past year, the four principal continents were represented among the countries which thus called upon the Health Organisation for assistance. The report also mentions the work of the Eastern Bureau, that sentry placed at Singapore by the Health Organisation to announce the appearance and watch the development of epidemics of pestilential diseases.

It then goes on to discuss the various special committees and the other activities of the Health Organisation.

After thus reviewing the varied and fruitful work of our Health Organisation, the report deals with certain aspects of the discussion in the Committee.

Before considering the work of the Health Organisation, the Second Committee desired to pay a tribute to the memory of the Vice-President of the Health Committee, M. O. Velghe, Chairman of the Permanent Committee of the Office international d'Hygiène publique, who died during the last session of the Health Committee.

In the course of the discussion, the representatives of the countries which the Health Organisation has endeavoured to assist offered it their unanimous thanks.

The Chairman of the Second Committee was glad to note that the curtailment of the financial resources at the disposal of States had had scarcely any detrimental effect on the essential task of protecting public health. Speaking as the representative of Belgium, he stated that his Government took particular care to encourage the employment on sanitary projects of those without work.

The report adopted by the Committee is, however, the outcome of the speeches of all the delegates who took part in the discussion. An account of the discussion is contained in the official records, which will be of the greatest value to the Health Committee when it comes to prepare and carry out its programme of work.

I should like to mention here certain statements to which the report does not allude.

The Roumanian delegate referred to the interest which his Government took in the investigations into infant mortality carried out under the auspices of the Health Organisation. The Organisation lent its support to the enquiry set on foot in Roumania, and the results were found so valuable that the Minister of Health decided to extend them to the whole country. The Roumanian delegate then spoke of the international anti-malaria campaign, in which his country had participated together with the Health Organisation, and of his Government's interest in the pellagra question, which the Health Organisation had studied. Roumania, he said, was at the disposal of the Health Organisation in whatever field her collaboration might be desired.

The South African delegate paid a tribute to the way in which the Health Organisation brought to a successful issue the Health Conference convened at the Cape on the request of his Government.

The Chinese delegate expressed his gratitude for the support accorded by the Health Organisation to his country in its work of technical reconstruction.

The Czechoslovak delegate also expressed the thanks of his Government for the technical assistance given to his country by the Health Organisation.

I should like to thank these delegates and others who have made such useful contributions to the discussions and thus facilitated my task as Rapporteur.

In conclusion, I will read the following resolution :

The Assembly :

Values highly the results obtained in the Health Organisation's various fields of work ;

Attaches special importance to the work accomplished by that Organisation, particularly as regards the campaigns against malaria, tuberculosis, diphtheria and infant mortality, as well as in connection with biological standardisation ;

Is gratified at the increasing importance of the part played by the Eastern Bureau in the prevention of pestilential diseases ;

Notes with satisfaction that the countries which have requested the Health Organisation's technical collaboration have received all the assistance which they desired ;

Takes note of the report (pages 92 to 97 of document A.6.1933 and pages 43 to 45 of document A.6(a).1933) which has been submitted on the work of the Health Organisation, and approves the general work carried out by that Organisation since the last session of the Assembly.

The draft resolution was adopted.

44. — RUSSIAN, ARMENIAN, ASSYRIAN, ASSYRO-CHALDEAN AND TURKISH REFUGEES: REPORT BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on the work of the Nansen International Office for Refugees (document A.39.1933, Annex 7).

(On the invitation of the President, Sir Denys Bray, Vice-Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and M. Antoniade, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — M. Antoniade, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Antoniade (Roumania), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Sixth Committee had to examine, on the basis of the annual report by the Governing Body of the Nansen Office for Refugees, the work of that Office during the past year. The Committee unanimously recognised that, thanks to the enlightened guidance of its Chairmen, first M. Max Huber and afterwards Professor Werner, and despite the economic difficulties which affected its resources, the Office was able to carry on its very varied and complex work.

The Office, meticulously carrying out the resolutions of the previous Assembly, has continued to render important services in the humanitarian and economic fields, and has at the same time helped very considerably to promote political and social stability. Having to deal with nearly a million refugees, of whom almost 150,000 are wholly unemployed and about 55,000, disabled and children, are physically unable to earn their living, the Office granted assistance and relief to some 72,000 refugees and succeeded by its judicious action in preventing an increase in the number of unemployed.

The details as to the work done to promote the settlement of Armenian refugees in Asia Minor, the transfer of other Armenians to Erivan and the settlement of refugees in countries open to colonisation, particularly Brazil, will be found in the Office's report and in my own.

One question which claimed the Committee's attention is the draft Convention prepared by the Office in co-operation with the Advisory Inter-

Governmental Commission and designed to ensure protection for refugees. A Conference is to be held shortly to establish a real legal status for refugees, that status having been provided hitherto by mere inter-governmental arrangements. When this Conference is held, a decision will have to be taken on the somewhat thorny question of the expulsion of refugees.

In view of the importance of the work to be done by the Office, the reduction of the means at its disposal prior to the present year and the sharpening of the crisis, the Committee is of opinion that, in its budget for 1934, it is necessary to keep the figures as already approved in the scheme for the liquidation of the Office adopted by the twelfth Assembly.

I have the honour to submit to the Assembly the following resolution, which has already been approved by the Sixth Committee :

The Assembly,

Having considered the report of the Governing Body of the Nansen International Office for Refugees on the important assistance given during the past year to thousands of Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish refugees :

Thanks the organs of the Office for the humanitarian and economic services they have rendered, and for the important contribution they have thus made to political and social stability ;

Requests the Nansen International Office to continue its study of the possibility of transferring to Erivan new groups of Armenian refugees ;

Notes with satisfaction the steps taken by the Office, in close co-operation with the Inter-Governmental Advisory Commission for Refugees, to prepare a draft Convention for ensuring the protection of refugees ;

Urges the Inter-Governmental Conference which has been summoned for the purpose of examining that draft Convention to give the most sympathetic consideration to the recommendations contained therein ;

In view of the growing difficulty of settling certain classes of refugees in Europe :

Invites immigration countries which are desirous of developing their territories to co-operate with the Office in settling refugees suitable for those territories ;

Recognising the dangers to which expelled refugees are exposed, and the difficulties caused to the countries to which they proceed :

Repeats its earnest appeal to Governments not to expel refugees before they have obtained formal permission to enter an adjacent country ;

Invites the Council to take the necessary action to give effect to this resolution ;

And confirms its approval of the figure of 300,000 francs for the year 1934 contained in the liquidation plan adopted by the Assembly at its twelfth ordinary session.

The President. — If no one else wishes to speak, I shall consider the Sixth Committee's report and the draft resolution as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

45. — MANDATES: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on the question of mandates (document A.45.1933. VI, Annex 8).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Lange, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President. — M. Lange, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Lange (Norway), Rapporteur :

Translation : I will not read my report, but will merely point out the importance of the conclusion to be drawn from it, which is summarised in paragraph (a) of the draft resolution — namely, the expression of the Assembly's confidence in the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council, as regards the execution of Article 22 of the Covenant.

I should like, however, to add a few words on the paragraph of the report devoted to the mandate for Palestine. This is the aspect of the work in connection with mandates which has principally claimed the attention of the Sixth Committee. Nearly all the speakers, in the course of the discussion, mentioned the remarkable progress recently made in Palestine, which has ensured a considerable improvement in the well-being of the population as a whole. Mr. Ormsby-Gore quoted some quite conclusive figures in this connection.

I am sure we are all glad to congratulate the mandatory Power, which has been able to reconcile with the legitimate interests of the non-Jewish population its obligations towards the Jewish National Home, defined as follows in Article 2 of the Mandate :

"The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home, as laid down in the Preamble."

I am sure we should all like to add to our congratulations to the mandatory Power our congratulations to the Jewish Agency for Palestine, which has carried out its great work so efficiently in spite of all the difficulties.

I will ask you, on the strength of the discussions in the Sixth Committee and of my report, to adopt the following resolution :

The Assembly,

Having taken note of the work accomplished by the mandatory Powers, the Permanent Mandates Commission and the Council in regard to the execution of Article 22 of the Covenant :

(a) *Renews the expression of confidence in them voted by the past sessions of the Assembly, expresses its appreciation of the results secured and its hope that the spirit of co-operation which inspires their work will enable them to achieve further progress along the lines indicated by the principles on which the mandates system is founded ;*

(b) *Expresses the hope that the native populations of the mandated territories may, to the utmost possible extent, be spared the consequences of the economic depression, and notes that this object has been secured in one of these territories through the efforts of the mandatory Power with the co-operation of the population concerned.*

The President. — M. Lucien Hubert, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Lucien Hubert (France) :

Translation : The submission of the excellent report of our colleague and friend, M. Lange, leads me to sketch very rapidly a few general ideas on mandates policy.

For some ten years, the Permanent Commission has been doing fruitful and important work, consisting in the constant supervision of the political, economic and social life of the mandated territories. There can be no doubt that the work

of the Commission, assisted by the authoritative opinions of the Council, is being recognised as one of the most hopeful branches of the League's activities. There are several reasons for this success : in the first place, the rôle and the work of the Committee rest upon precise texts — Article 22 of the Covenant — and on the various statutes which constitute so many charters for the various countries. Moreover, this work is strictly limited to the territories which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world. Secondly, the success attending the Committee's work has been due to the ability of its members. In this field, technical knowledge is indispensable, and the colonising Powers have used it : they and they alone could, in view of their past and the results obtained in their own colonies, ensure the regular progress of the work. The Council, as the supreme body, by entrusting them with the tutelage of certain peoples, thus acted wisely and rendered the very greatest services to these peoples themselves and to the League.

Nevertheless, the mandates question is an extremely delicate one, as is the colonial problem generally. By placing the mandates in different categories, the Covenant clearly intended to show the impossibility of uniform but sterile conclusions. A very light touch will always be necessary in dealing with this matter, especially as, within the different mandated areas, economic and social conditions vary according as the people are still in the stone age or are highly developed people using typewriters and motor-cars. It is here that the experience of the colonising nations is the best guide on the road of progress, and in the efforts to increase the material and moral welfare of the populations placed under the League's control. In this complex sphere, caution must be the rule ; caution alone will enable the Permanent Mandates Commission to build up, on the basis of the experience of the colonising nations, such legal practice and doctrine as may later become the manual of the perfect mandatory Power.

The fact that the Sixth Committee was able to accord sincere praise to the Permanent Mandates Commission was due mainly to the close parallelism between the lines of action taken by the mandatory Powers in their own colonies and in the countries they administer under mandate. Their experience in their oversea domains, the knowledge they have acquired of native conditions and the economic work undertaken in the various distant possessions have all been utilised by them in the sole interest of the mandated country. That is an asset of incalculable value which the colonising nations have placed at the service of the League, and it should never be forgotten.

These considerations explain why the colonising Powers that have been given mandates are particularly appreciative of any praise they may receive here each year.

In a rapid review of the question of colonial mandates, the mind is inevitably led, by the contemplation of the successful development of those territories, to wonder, with our colleague M. Lange, whether the mandate form is not the ideal form of colonisation.

There once more arises, therefore, the complexity of colonial problems. In colonial matters, the most hard and fast forms are the worst. There can be no single form of colonisation ; there must be a whole range of possibilities. What may be good in one case may be bad in another.

If the United Kingdom's centuries of experience has resulted in the establishment of various kinds of institutions — dominions, protectorates, Crown colonies — France's experience has also led her to

follow different roads — assimilation, decentralisation, association. But the object to which all efforts overseas tend in the long run is to transform backward races with a view to enabling them to collaborate with the modern world.

This collaboration can be realised, as we see in our own case, by the maintenance of a close bond between colonies and mother-country and by the real embodiment of the colony in the nation. It may exist also in the form of a dominion or follow the same evolution as mandated countries follow in their progress towards liberty of action. It would, however, be a great mistake to pin our hopes to a hasty generalisation which would clash with age-long traditions, community of culture and legitimate interests maintained by the invisible but none-the-less solid bond of common sacrifice.

I will not rehearse the very interesting details of the Sixth Committee's discussion. Its distinguished Rapporteur took account of that discussion and gave prominence to it in his report, and I will, in conclusion, merely refer to one of his many sound reflections, which is of peculiar interest at the present moment.

In connection with the mandate for Palestine, our eminent colleague, M. Beneš, raised — quite logically — the question of Jewish refugees — a particularly distressing and delicate problem.

Throughout the ages, the Jews have tended to incorporate themselves in the various nations which have received them; but after the great war it was asked whether the Jewish nation might not perhaps arise from the tomb of centuries and return to Zion. Palestine seemed to be an opening, but Palestine is the cradle of so many religions and so many legends; the thunders of Sinai gave birth to the Mosaic Law. On the banks of the Lake of Tiberias, the gentler doctrines of Christianity were given to the world; while the burning flame of Islam issued forth from the desert of Damascus. In this land of Job and his misfortunes, Jerusalem is the meeting-point of Christianity, of Mohammedanism and of Judaism; and that is the great difficulty.

It might have been thought that, after so many racial quarrels, an indissoluble bond would have been welded between the Jews and the nations which gave them refuge.

When the call to arms came, the Jews, too, rallied *pro aris et focis*, and their loyalty was made manifest on both sides of the battle-line.

That was not enough; and we are now faced with a really mediæval problem which touches at once our reason and our hearts. M. Beneš was right in linking the problem of the German refugees with that of the mandates of the Levant. But, when the Jews left their native home, it was amply large to harbour them. During long journeyings through the world, the family has increased, and now that the question of their returning — or even a minority of them — has arisen, their home has become too small for them, and their neighbours are not in the mood to give up theirs.

That is an essential aspect of the problem; and, in conclusion, I should like to say that I concur wholeheartedly in the wise remarks of the United Kingdom delegate to the Sixth Committee.

The President. — If no delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the report of the Sixth Committee and draft resolution adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

46. — WORK OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT ORGANISATION. REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the examination of the report on the work of the Communications and Transit Organisation, submitted by the Second Committee (document A.41.1933.VIII, Annex 9).

(On the invitation of the President, Count Carton de Wiart, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Wohlin, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — M. Wohlin, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Wohlin (Sweden), Rapporteur:

Translation: The Second Committee unanimously adopted its report on the work of the Communications and Transit Organisation between the thirteenth and fourteenth ordinary session of the Assembly.

The information supplied by the Secretary-General on the work of the League shows that the Communications and Transit Organisation has continued to work under the same conditions, and with the same methods, that have frequently received the approval of the Assembly. The Organisation has tended, in present circumstances, to restrict its activities and to concentrate on a limited number of problems.

In connection with air navigation, special studies have been made in regard to the establishment of essential air communications on the European continent, a question to which the Assembly has always attached special importance.

As regards maritime navigation, the efforts to achieve the unification of buoyage have continued. A draft Agreement and Regulations for a uniform system of buoyage has been drawn up by the Advisory and Technical Committee for Communications and Transit.

I venture also to draw the Assembly's attention to the work of the Special Committee for Questions relating to Road Traffic. This work is mainly connected with light signalling, the codification of signalling by officials directing traffic and drivers of motor vehicles, and the problem of commercial motor traffic.

A new question of great importance for transport by rail has also begun to be studied: that of supplementary signalling at level-crossings.

Apart from questions relating to the international regulation of communications, the Second Committee has also studied certain problems relating to public works. Thanks to the goodwill displayed by my colleagues and to their spirit of collaboration, the Committee, while avoiding any discussion of questions which might give rise to divergencies of opinion, has accomplished useful work in this connection. The circumstances which led the Communications and Transit Organisation to set up a Committee of Enquiry into Questions relating to Public Works and National Technical Equipment are well known. Originally, the main questions which were to be considered by the Committee were those relating to international large-scale public works. The Committee of Enquiry found it necessary, however, to concentrate its efforts chiefly on considering the schemes for national public works, the financing of which requires an appeal for foreign capital, and which were submitted to it by a certain number of Governments.

A report on the work done by that Committee has been submitted to the Monetary and Economic

Conference. This Conference has not so far been able to undertake a full discussion of the questions relating to public works schemes. It has provided for the setting up of a special Sub-Committee to deal with this matter.

Quite apart from the question whether the execution of such works involves an appeal for foreign capital, a continuous study of general questions relating to public works financed by States themselves without recourse to foreign capital would no doubt be of considerable interest. It would enable information to be collected as to the experience acquired in the different countries. Such information would be particularly useful and would enable Governments to judge of the possibility and desirability of pursuing, in present circumstances, a policy of carrying out programmes of public works on parallel lines.

On behalf of the Second Committee, I beg to submit to you the following resolution :

The Assembly :

Takes note of the work done by the Communications and Transit Organisation between the thirteenth and fourteenth ordinary sessions of the Assembly ;

Expresses its lively satisfaction at the fact that the Communications and Transit Organisation, while carrying on its work under the conditions and in accordance with the methods already approved by the Assembly, is continuing, within the limits of the resources at its disposal, to render to the Members of the League the important services which the latter expect of it ;

Recalls its statement at its thirteenth session that it attaches special importance to the work done by the Committee of Enquiry on Questions relating to Public Works and National Technical Equipment ;

Refers to the discussions in the Second Committee on the question of public works, including national public works, and to the recommendation adopted by the Second Committee with regard to the appointing and convening as soon as possible of the Committee which the Monetary and Economic Conference decided to set up to study the problem of public works and other means for reducing unemployment ;

Adopts the report on the work of the Communications and Transit Organisation between the thirteenth and fourteenth ordinary sessions of the Assembly, submitted to it by the Second Committee.

The President. — M. de Castro, delegate of Uruguay, will address the Assembly.

M. de Castro (Uruguay) :

Translation : I venture to claim your attention for a few moments to consider the serious question of unemployment, which has been causing us so much anxiety for nearly three years. I should like quite briefly to examine the situation with you, so that public opinion throughout the world may realise that the League of Nations has not failed in the task imposed upon it by the distressing conditions of the last few years.

Allow me first of all to quote some figures which we should constantly bear in mind. In his speech last year at the thirteenth session of the League Assembly, M. Léon Jouhaux pointed out that, in twenty countries, the annual loss of wages of some 20,000,000 wholly unemployed persons represented, on the basis of the corresponding data for the end of 1931, a total sum of 115 to 125 milliards of Swiss francs. He added that if the whole world were taken, instead of these twenty countries, 275 to 300 milliards would certainly not be an overestimate. At the London Conference,

M. Cahen-Salvador showed that there were at present nearly 35,000,000 unemployed in the world, and that, in Europe, the expenditure on unemployed relief and insurance amounted to nearly 40 milliards a year.

Those figures have already given much food for reflection, and should lead us to take with as little delay as possible all decisions necessary to prevent an economic catastrophe. Such a catastrophe would without doubt give rise to almost insoluble national and international problems ; for we have already witnessed examples of countries which, as a result of sudden suffering coming upon their unemployed, have fallen into the most terrible political and social disorder.

I am therefore authorised to say that the delegation of Uruguay cordially supports the resolution which the Second Committee is now submitting to us and in which the Assembly requests the Bureau of the Monetary and Economic Conference to appoint and convene as soon as possible the Public Works Committee which the London Conference itself decided to set up.

The remedies specially contemplated for combating the depression include, as you know, the execution of national and international public works.

I will not go into the substance of the question. I know that the Governments are not all in agreement as to the efficacy of a remedy championed by Albert Thomas and, after him, by the present Director of the International Labour Office, Mr. Butler ; but I also know that the great majority of them consider that, at all events, this scheme merits careful examination on the eminently sound principle that, at a time of economic depression, no solution should be incontinently cast aside.

I think it ought to be pointed out that, both in Geneva and in London, very considerable progress has been made in the direction of practical achievements in this field.

As representative of Uruguay at the International Labour Conference, I took an active part in the study of this question. From the beginning of the crisis, my Government has shown its eagerness to assist its unemployed, and I had occasion to inform the last Labour Conference of the steps it had taken to check the evils of unemployment. These steps included the re-opening of workshops which had been closed, and the execution of large-scale public works — roads, bridges, railways, the construction of large electric power stations to be supplied from an artificial lake, which still remains to be made and is an ambitious piece of work.

These public works will give employment to several thousand Uruguayan and foreign workmen and technical experts and will perhaps open up once again the way to European emigration.

The latest news which has reached me to-day is that, in the city of Montevideo alone, the special public works undertaken by the municipality in the short space of the last four weeks, with the sole object of combating unemployment, have given work to more than 10,000 men.

As M. Salinas, delegate of Mexico, reminded our Second Committee, the Uruguayan delegation secured the adoption by the International Labour Conference of a recommendation instructing the International Labour Office to "request the Governments concerned to place upon their programme of public works intended to diminish unemployment, public health works, and, in particular hydraulic works, water-supply, abolition of unhealthy conditions, construction of workers' dwellings and electrification of rural districts." I would add that these public works have been placed by the League of Nations Committee on

Public Works in the category of those likely to give a direct return.

In my statement at the International Labour Conference which completed its discussions last June, I said it would be well, in order to save valuable time, to entrust the preliminary study of the question of public works to a special Committee which should also be instructed : (a) rapidly to collect and co-ordinate schemes of public works ; (b) to study them, not only from a technical, but also from a financial point of view ; (c) to report to the 1934 Conference and, in the meantime, to give a purely advisory opinion on each of them.

I added that such a body might facilitate contact between Governments, producers and the financial world on the one hand, and the world of labour on the other, and thus speed up the organisation of the financing of public works.

I was interested to note that this idea was taken up and developed at the Monetary and Economic Conference by M. Oersted, the representative of the employers' group of the International Labour Conference. M. Oersted, whose qualifications are unquestioned, suggested the setting up of a permanent international commission under the auspices of the League, with the participation of all its competent technical bodies and also including Government representatives who might be chosen from the National Economic Committees, where such existed, representatives of the International Labour Office and representatives of the Bank for International Settlements. In M. Oersted's opinion, this permanent commission would constitute a competent organ of guarantee and control worthy of public confidence ; it would include financial experts, who would also act as advisers to the public and to public and private undertakings. The Committee would also act as an office for documentation, information, guarantee and supervision.

It will be for the Public Works Committee of the Monetary and Economic Conference to give its opinion on this proposal, to which I have referred with the sole object of bringing it to your notice and to that of public opinion generally. It is, in fact, a clear indication of the very real desire which is making itself felt at all our official meetings — namely, that the question of public works should now enter upon the stage of practical achievement.

Although the League Committee on Public Works has done valuable work, which we all appreciate, it is none the less true, as its representative at the London Conference, Sir John Baldwin, pointed out, that it has not taken up the financial aspect of the question, which does not indeed come within its province.

The Public Works Committee would therefore seem to be indicated as the centre round which the special committee, the need for which has been shown by many of us, might be formed.

I cannot conclude without paying a tribute to the distinguished Director of the Transit Organisation of the League of Nations. The indefatigable devotion of which M. Haas has given proof during the numerous missions entrusted to him and his enlightened efficiency are so many titles to our gratitude. It is thanks to such men that we can hope one day to find a solution for all the serious problems now facing us.

The President. — If no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Second Committee's report and the draft resolution as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

47. — ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Economic and Financial Organisation (document A.42.1933.II, Annex 10).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Schmidt, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President. — M Schmidt, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Schmidt (Estonia), Rapporteur :

Translation : This year the discussion in the Second Committee on the economic and financial work of the League of Nations has taken place in very special circumstances.

As you know, in the course of the past year the economic work of the League has been practically merged in the preparation for the London Monetary and Economic Conference and the actual work of that Conference. You know, too, that the London Conference has postponed the continuation of its work until a more favourable season. It decided, however, pending the reassembly of the Conference, to continue the study of certain special questions which were examined by some of its Sub-Committees. The responsible organs of the Conference have to decide for what questions and to what extent the studies undertaken could be usefully pursued. In these circumstances, the Second Committee preferred to refrain from any detailed discussion of the various questions referred to the London Conference.

Nevertheless, an interesting exchange of views took place in the Committee regarding the general economic situation, and, in particular, certain signs of improvement which are beginning to be discernible in a large number of countries. The Committee thought that attention should be drawn to these signs, and, for that purpose, special tables are annexed to the report which has been distributed to you and which, on behalf of the Second Committee, I have the honour to submit for your approval. These tables have been drawn up by the competent service of the Secretariat on the basis of the most recent available figures. They will undoubtedly be of as much interest to specialists on the question as to persons desiring to follow the development of the world economic situation.

As regards, in particular, the League's work in the financial field, you will certainly realise from the report the hard work which the Financial Committee has had to do in the last twelve months. It has had to take up problems exceptional both in their complexity and in their gravity. It has accomplished this difficult and often thankless task with a masterly ability which the Assembly, I am sure, will not fail to appreciate.

I need not, perhaps, dwell upon the other parts of the report, which I hope you may have had an opportunity of consulting. I therefore ask the Assembly to approve the resolution which accompanies the report and which is worded as follows :

The Assembly approves the report submitted to it by the Second Committee on the Economic and Financial Work of the League of Nations.

The President. — If no delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Second Committee's report and the draft resolution as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 6.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 9TH, 1933, AT 3.30 P.M.

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President : Mr. TE WATER.

48. — PROVISIONAL CREATION OF ONE NEW NON-PERMANENT SEAT ON THE COUNCIL : RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 4TH, 1933.

The President. — The first item on the agenda of the present meeting is the resolution adopted by the Council on October 4th, 1933, with regard to the provisional creation of one new non-permanent seat on the Council. The text of the resolution reads as follows :¹

" The Council,

" Having had before it the resolution adopted by the Assembly on October 2nd, 1933, in favour of the provisional creation of one new non-permanent seat on the Council ;

" Acting in accordance with the provisions of Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Covenant :

" Decides as follows :

" For the period commencing with the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council at the Assembly's session of 1933 and ending with the election of the said non-permanent Members in the year 1936, the number of non-permanent seats on the Council shall be provisionally increased from nine to ten, on the understanding that, towards the end of that period, the question of the number of the Members of the Council will be reconsidered and that all the Members of the League will remain entirely free to propose any final solution of this question which they consider desirable."

The action which the Council has taken is the action in favour of which the Assembly declared itself in its resolution adopted at its sixth meeting on October 2nd, on the proposal of its First Committee.

In these circumstances, I believe that I am interpreting the views of the Assembly in considering that the Council's action is unanimously approved by the Assembly and that therefore the creation of the provisional non-permanent seat has been effected in accordance with the decision of the Council.

If there are no observations, I will consider that this is the view of the Assembly, and that the decision of the Council having entered into force and the provisions of Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Covenant having been fulfilled, the Assembly can now proceed to the next item on its agenda — namely, the election by which the new seat is to be filled.

Agreed.

¹ Document A.43.1933.V.

49. — ELECTION OF ONE NON-PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL.

The President. — The rules applicable to this election are those laid down in Rule 22 (a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.

In accordance with paragraph 1 of this Rule, the election will take place by secret ballot. In accordance with paragraph 2, ballot-papers must contain only a single name, as there is only one seat to be filled, otherwise they will be considered null and void. In accordance with paragraph 3, an absolute majority of the States will be required for the first and second ballots. If the first two ballots give no result, a third ballot will be held among the candidates which obtained most votes at the second ballot, up to a number double that of the seat to be filled — that is to say, two candidates. The one of these two candidates obtaining the greatest number of votes will then be elected. In accordance with paragraph 4, if the candidates obtain the same number of votes, a special ballot will then be held between them. Should they again obtain an equal number of votes, the President will decide between them by drawing lots.

As regards the calculation of the absolute majority prescribed for the first and second ballots, the Assembly, according to its usual practice, will not include null and void or blank voting-papers in reckoning the majority. The absolute majority will therefore be calculated only on the basis of the total number of valid voting-papers.

I must also draw the Assembly's attention to the fact that voting-papers must contain the name of a single State and not of the representative of a State; otherwise they will be null and void.

May I ask Baron Alfredo Acton, delegate of Italy, and Mr. Ormsby-Gore, delegate of the United Kingdom, to come to the platform and act as tellers.

(Baron Alfredo Acton and Mr. Ormsby-Gore took their places on the platform as tellers.)

The President. — We will now proceed to ballot by roll-call.

(The ballot was taken by roll-call.)

The President. — The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of votes cast | 51 |
| Voting papers blank or spoilt | 1 |
| Voting papers valid | 50 |
| Absolute majority | 26 |

The votes obtained by the States are as follows :

| | |
|--------------------|----|
| Portugal | 30 |
| Turkey | 20 |

I therefore declare that Portugal, having obtained the requisite majority, is elected a non-permanent Member of the Council for a period of three years.

I have pleasure in congratulating Portugal.

I wish also to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

50. — WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on the work of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation (document A.46.1933. XII, Annex 11).

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Madariaga, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and M. Mistler, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — M. Mistler, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Mistler (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : I have the honour to lay before the Assembly the report of the Sixth Committee on the work of the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation. This document contains a summary of the work done during the past year and an all too brief sketch of the interesting discussion which took place on intellectual co-operation in the Sixth Committee, under the chairmanship of M. de Madariaga. The unanimous adoption by that Committee of the eleven resolutions now before you justifies our belief that there will be an exchange of views in the Assembly rather than a real discussion. I will therefore ask your leave to speak less as Rapporteur for intellectual co-operation than as a convinced advocate of that co-operation and as the delegate of a country which, in presenting to the League the universally honoured Institute in the Palais-Royal, is conscious of having done yeoman service to the cause of peace.

When listening to the succession of distinguished speakers from this platform during the general discussion on the Secretariat's report, I, like all of you, was struck by the gravity of their words and by the anxiety they expressed as regards the methods and the views of the League of Nations. I do not profess to be able to throw light on the causes of this uneasiness, but it is not the fact that the League has had to breast the blows of circumstance, and that the daily disturbances to the atmosphere of Europe are felt so keenly at Geneva, due to an uncertainty which has never been entirely dispelled during the last fourteen years — uncertainty as to the very rôle of the League, its rights and duties, and the differences of opinion between countries as to the principles on which the organisation of a new world should be based ?

Whereas the intention of the promoters of the League was that it should in some sort foreshadow a kind of confederation of States, it seems that, under the pressure of events, under the pressure of the changing exigencies of political life, it has in fact become primarily a centre for the discussion of economic and financial problems arising day by day — a tribunal for settling differences of all kinds. No one, it is true, will object to the League being saddled with this necessary, if ungrateful, task. Are we, however, while seeking empirical remedies for superficial symptoms, at the same time endeavouring to remove their deep-lying cause ? The mere fact that representatives of fifty States are meeting in the same town could hold no magical virtue if the delegates of each country were merely to echo hereditary quarrels and national rivalries, tempered only by the forms of courtesy.

Paul Valéry said some years ago : "La Société des Nations suppose une société des esprits." The work of intellectual co-operation consists, and will consist to an increasing extent, in eliciting the factors making up an international moral code, in laying the foundations of a world conscience. This object will be attained when the nations have realised that, out-weighing the needs of the State, which is too often made a god, there are human needs.

In one of the last volumes published by the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, M. de Madariaga recalled the time when Europe, through famine and plague, wars and alarms, still remained

conscious of the moral unity of Christendom. True, the ideal of the Middle Ages was not of this world; in the minds of those clergy who constituted one spiritual community from Oxford to Salamanca, and from Paris to Cracow, the city of God alone knew that permanent peace of which the cities of men dreamed. To-day, more sceptical of the future or less resigned to the present, we would fain realise this ideal here below. I venture to say that we are perhaps wrong to depend, in our attempts to ensure peace, on the physical weariness of men rather than on their intellectual activity. The fear of war, the memory of its past atrocities, the evocation of its possible horrors in the future — these guarantees are not enough; for the fundamental law of human action is to forget bereavement, and to trust in the future, as the law of the forest is to forget winter and to trust in the coming of April.

To justify this instinctive trust — this stubborn hope — and to provide it with the positive doctrine that it needs — *spes quærens intellectum*, as St. Augustine said — must we leave it to the intelligentsia to act, or ought we to hold, as some do, that moral progress has been finally outdistanced by material progress, and that human thought is no longer capable of anything but negative action? We may be tempted to fear this when we see certain philosophies of action contrast the soul with the mind, or exalt instinct at the expense of reason. Perhaps it is easier to stir the masses of the people to action when they have been given some elementary and confused ideas as a watchword; but do we know to what abysses this march forward in the darkness is hurrying, and must we abandon for ever the example and the lessons of the sages?

Let us rather hearken to the heir of classic reason, Goethe, in his "Gespräche": "National hatreds", says the sage of Weimar, "are something peculiar. You will always find them stronger and more ardent in the lower stages of civilisation; but there is a stage when they disappear entirely, when a super-national point is reached, when the happiness or misfortune of a neighbouring nation is felt as if it were your own. . . ."

Far though the world is from this Olympic serenity, there is no reason to believe that it will never be approached. A few years ago, when the countries of Europe, in the full tide of war, were bending their utmost efforts to the struggle, the intelligentsia itself donned harness and entered the fray, and we have not forgotten those polemics in which the belligerents used any and everything as a weapon, including the glory of their own great dead.

To-day, thanks to the organisation of intellectual co-operation, we see the most representative men of all countries exchanging ideas and comparing systems by correspondence or conversations. Their object is no longer to give predominance to any national point of view, but to bring that point of view as a contribution to the common fund of international wisdom. Let us welcome this movement towards reconciliation, which is being carried on at the present time in different parts of the world by some of the minds which are the greatest honour to mankind.

Here we touch upon the very principle underlying the work which brings the representatives of so many nations together here. To project on the universal plane the rational discipline which creates the sage on the individual plane — that must be our common aim. The issue at stake is not merely the future of international relations, but the future of civilisation itself, which, as the Madrid Committee recently reminded us, depends on "the organisation of mankind as a moral and juridical unit". And the same Committee solemnly affirmed that "national culture is inconceivable, save in relation to the neighbouring national cultures and the

universal culture which comprises them all; and consequently mankind cannot attain its full culture except in complete freedom of intellectual intercourse between men, nations and institutions."

After the inevitable hesitation at the outset, the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation is now advancing in two fields: it is creating the technical machinery for intellectual co-operation, and it is endeavouring to awaken the spirit, the breath, that will set it in motion. As a model of the universal wisdom of which we dream, it is holding up to mankind certain representative types of individual wisdom, in the hope that their example will be followed and their methods generally adopted.

In one of the most venerable books of one of the most venerable civilisations, the "Great Teaching" of Tseng-Tsan, a disciple of Confucius, we read these lines:

"When we have studied phenomena, we may attain knowledge; when we have knowledge, we acquire goodwill; when goodwill is acquired, the heart is chastened; when the heart is chastened, man is cultured; when man is cultured, order reigns in his family; when order reigns in his family, it reigns also in his country; and when order reigns in every country, peace reigns in the world."

Perhaps it is over-optimistic to believe that truth and wisdom have in themselves sufficient power of irradiation to spread themselves abroad; but it is for the very purpose of helping them to do so that the League is attaching increasing importance to the work of intellectual co-operation. It is an immense field, in which progress will be slow, in which the ground won day by day will be almost imperceptible; perhaps even — for human progress has never been continuous — we may experience momentary setbacks, apparent failures. Yet we believe — and the resolutions which your Sixth Committee is submitting to you are evidence of it — that the results already obtained must inspire confidence. We believe it essential in every country to protect the mind against the material obstacles which would hamper its free scope, and moral disarmament will so become possible. We refuse to admit that the human intellect is turning its efforts against itself so far as to become a destructive element through the moral isolation of each individual nation. We believe that the idea of collaboration, which already links the loftiest minds together, will gradually penetrate into every social sphere and will spread through its own irradiation; for mankind, like the earth, must gain its light from its top-most peaks.

The draft resolutions which I have the honour to submit to the Assembly are as follows:

The Assembly,

After taking note of the report (document A.14. 1933.XII) of the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation on the work of its fifteenth session:

(1) *Fully shares the views expressed by the Council in its resolution of September 22nd, 1933 (document A.VI/1.1933), as to the value of the work performed by the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation during the past year, and expresses its gratification at the excellent results of the work of the Plenary Committee, of the various Committees under it and of the International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation;*

Wishes to emphasise the importance of the method of exchanges of correspondence and the value of the "conversations", such as that held at

Frankfort on Goethe and at Madrid in May 1933 regarding the future of civilisation ;

Trusts that this experiment will be continued ;

(2) Fully recognises the value to the League itself of disinterested studies based on a spirit of scientific impartiality, such as those carried out with regard to State intervention in economic life ; approves the continuation of this work and the execution of the plan adopted by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation on Professor Shotwell's proposal for the co-ordination of studies in the field of social and political sciences ;

(3) Approves the programme of work for 1933-34 based on the resolutions of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the Sub-Committee of Experts on the Instruction of Youth ;

(4) Requests the Governments to assist the Committee in carrying out its lofty task by supporting those organisations and persons who in the various countries are helping to carry out the programme ;

(5) Endorses the resolution of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation drawing the attention of Governments to the regrettable effects that further budgetary restrictions weighing particularly heavily on national educational and scientific research organisations might have on the level of contemporary culture ;

(6) Adopts the Committee's resolution concerning the preliminary draft Convention on mutual assistance between Governments with a view to the return of works of art illicitly removed from the respective national artistic heritages ;

Requests the Secretary-General to transmit this preliminary draft to the Governments for their observations ;

(7) Recommends to the various Governments the proposal of the International Museums Office that an International Historical Monuments Commission be set up ;

(8) Requests the Secretary-General to draw the attention of States signatories to the Rome Act of June 2nd, 1928, which have not yet ratified it, to the importance of the prompt application of that Convention ;

(9) Congratulates the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation on the action taken by it in pursuance of the resolution of the twelfth Assembly regarding the study of the international aspects of broadcasting, considers that the work in progress is of real value, thanks the broadcasting undertakings and the International Broadcasting Union for their assistance, and trusts that the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation will shortly be in a position to submit to the Governments, as a basis of discussion, the draft text contemplated by the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation ;

(10) Approves the addition by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation of atlases and dictionaries to the list of books to which the procedure laid down in the "Casares Resolution" on the revision of school text-books (1932 text) will be applicable ;

(11) Notes the proposals relating to moral disarmament framed by the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and, considering their great importance and practical scope, asks the Conference for the Limitation and Reduction of Armaments to use them, as far as possible, as a basis in establishing the final texts to be adopted.

The President. — Mademoiselle Hélène Vacaresco, delegate of Roumania, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Hélène Vacaresco (Roumania) :

Translation : Every year, almost to a day, and from this same platform, I venture to exalt before you the power of the spirit. The rights of the spirit, though sometimes ill understood, remain imprescriptible. You have just heard M. Mistler's magnificent eulogy of them. I am under no illusion as to the weight and authority of my own words. Other voices more resounding than mine, and equipped with more telling arguments than any I can possibly adduce, are being raised, and will continue to be raised, in emulation to proclaim far and wide a loftiness of thought beyond my range. You have a host of merits to which I can lay no claim ; and to win your approval I can, I feel, but convince you that my words are an echo of your own, and my thoughts a reflection of your own beliefs. My means are small indeed, but my faith is unbounded ; and faith moves mountains, though I will not ask it to do as much. The peaks that lie around Geneva and enframe our toil with their beauty may rest reassured. All we need is to prove that faith triumphantly surmounts the worst obstacles. In affirming here the power of the spirit, let us realise that, in the present times, that power must be affirmed at all costs.

The crisis — that hundred-headed hydra of a hundred names — is heavily retarding the movement of the world. Since the war, we have been passing through an enchanted period, when nothing seemed impossible — when societies, sentiments, distances amalgamated, contracted or expanded at our will. There was a firm faith in the coming of justice and in the eternal reign of goodness. We can judge of the intoxication we felt then by our stupefaction now at our rude awakening from our dreams, which yet seemed based on the solid fabric of everyday things. Now, with the monster Crisis hard upon them, the nations, the whole of mankind, have had an awakening indeed. Hatred still lives ; sharp tooth and claw are ready ; prejudice is once more rearing its head. And all this because we are unhappy, because the man who but yesterday worked and reaped his reward can find no more to do. He is earning less and has thus no means wherewith to seek amusement or even instruction or the pleasures of travel. Is our globe, which the frenzied energies of its inhabitants have covered with a network of vital activities, to revert to the aspect it wore in the ages that knew nothing of the aeroplane and little of the ship ?

To the succession of crises, the abstract effects of which we realise here, we must add one more crisis : that of the adaptation of man to new conditions of existence. While we fondly believed that men and societies had come of age and were in full possession of their faculties, they were really reverting to a sort of retarded adolescence, in which they had to be taught to live, to ply a trade, to justify their existence. The characteristics of adolescence — doubt, anxiety, a riot of seething but still captive forces — those familiar characteristics are typical of our time. At once spectators and actors in an age of transition which will carry us far from all that was the — scarce dead — age of yesterday, we are suffering from what I can only describe as growing pains. Let us frankly admit that the various material crises for which you are so earnestly seeking a remedy form but one of the aspects of the problem before you. New conditions of existence have come into being. Those conditions are hard and we must be wary. So long as individuals and societies persist in living in a new world with the conventions and habits of the old, so long as we use the errors of the past

to prop up the present, so long will our well-meant efforts be vain, and vain our desires.

In the last resort, it is the re-education of men and of societies to which we must apply ourselves, and their re-adaptation through the spirit to the new conditions of existence to which we are committed.

These new conditions of existence may be characterised in a word: they are subject to the idea of the universal. We are fast bound by the tyrannical laws of solidarity. If, in the intellectual and moral sphere, these laws of solidarity make their inexorable power felt less acutely and less perceptibly, they are nevertheless themselves felt. An outstanding discovery in pure chemistry, for instance, or in physics sooner or later modifies the habits of thought of all men, not only in the scientific circles where it was born, but in all human circles, and not only among *savants* capable of understanding its full scientific significance, but also among amateurs, the merely curious and even the ignorant. Similarly, the creation of a beautiful work of art or literature is in itself an act connoting the renewal, progress or change of man's mind as a whole.

A beautiful poem or novel contains in essence a particle of the spiritual future of mankind.

Men must learn from this an elementary lesson in wisdom and must consciously seek to live in the universal; but from a unanimously accepted theory to its effective and reasoned application is a far cry. In this domain of the impalpable, where errors sometimes bear so strong a resemblance to truth, there are so many hidden traps, so many dangerous corners, so many unsuspected cross-roads. The League of Nations has foreseen these difficulties and has provided an organisation to solve them. That organisation is the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, which has the ungrateful task of distinguishing truth from error and dream from reality; of discovering the path of the future in the maze of blind alleys in which we find ourselves at present; and of facilitating and organising spiritual intercourse in the world.

Let us glance at the general report by the Director of the Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, M. Bonnet, to the Committee of which that Institute is the instrument. A perusal of that report will leave our minds greatly reassured. We see from it that the Institute has extended its sphere of action, and — what seems to me essential — it has established a system of work which enables it to take up the various problems before it with every prospect of success. Whereas, during the first few years of its existence, its youth and prudence forced it to cling to a kind of compulsory formalism to the modest role of a liaison agent, and to act — as has been remarked here — as a kind of intellectual tourist office, we now see it gaining in authority and going to the heart of problems, for which it seeks to find, not purely theoretical solutions, but real solutions fully consonant with facts. As you know, a beginning has been made with the scheme for correspondence between the most eminent men in the world on subjects concerning the future of mankind, and conversations between *savants* and artists are beginning to elucidate certain burning and highly controversial questions.

Correspondence; conversations: it is difficult to exaggerate the significance of this initiative, which is so admirably adapted to the exigencies of our time. Action has been taken in other directions and has, to some extent, been attended with the same success. A Conference of Higher International Studies, held under the auspices of the Institute, has endeavoured to determine what relations should exist between States and economic life. Then the social and political sciences are claiming

the attention of the Committee and of the Institutel and it must be admitted that, if international co-operation is desirable and necessary in practically all fields, it is nowhere more so than in the sciences which aspire to regulate the life of societies and States.

These various efforts are based on one and the same idea and use the same technique. The object is to state and define essential problems, and stimulate around them discussions calculated to throw light on the most rational solutions. These solutions often seem contradictory. The eminent men who formulate them represent divergent conceptions, a different spiritual training, a different past and different environments. But it is here that the importance of these conversations and exchanges of views lies. Before our time, each individual professed only his own doctrine and conceptions and ignored as far as possible what his foreign *confrères* thought on the same subjects: hence, the irreconcilable differences between specialists in the same field. To bring these men together, to enable them to meet one another and compare their views, constitutes a very considerable and definite achievement.

It is always useful to stimulate discussion, especially when the subject seems of burning interest. Truth is born of the clash of opinion.

Far more than we imagine, the world is peopled with undesirables and with the thoughtless. Enough for them a catchword that will serve them for gospel and relieve them of all need to act or speak. Of these catchwords, adapted to their meagre needs, there is one which especially delights them, which has gone round the world and become almost a proverb: "People talk too much." "The League of Nations talks and talks." Yet we here all know, and the best minds of our time know, how necessary it is to talk incessantly, without respite, but with conviction and ardour, to drum individual truths into the universal conscience. The maze of crises which is stifling us — the financial crisis, the wheat crisis, the cotton crisis, the coal crisis, the currency crisis, and how many more — are all contained in the one great, significant and terrible crisis which I would call the crisis of confidence. We are perishing for lack of faith in ourselves and in others. This lack of faith is being met by acts of faith, which will overcome it. Acts of faith alone can create a properly equipped international body such as the Paris Institute. If any still doubt the efficacy of its work, they need only read the magnificent *Index Translationum*. A bibliography of that kind, for which a crying need has so long been felt, could not have seen the light without the assistance of the Institute, without, that is, the enlightened efforts and untiring labour of its Director, M. Henri Bonnet. The *Index Translationum* marks an appreciable step forward in the matter of international relations.

That group of activities which I will term co-ordination work is an act of faith. Whether it be broadcasting, the cinema, the standardisation of terminology in different fields, collaboration between museums, libraries, archives, literary and artistic societies, the cinema — that realm where the International Institute of Rome and its enlightened and energetic Director, M. de Feo, are doing such brilliant and successful work — everywhere we find the same method and the same conception: the endeavour to bring order out of chaos, to supersede unguided effort and ungoverned endeavour by a beneficent unity of view, agreement of policy and harmony of plan.

Then again, the Madrid meeting of the Committee on Arts and Letters is an act of faith, and what a compelling and far-reaching one! The

old Castilian grace informed the hospitality offered to the Committee by the Spanish Government, itself composed largely of intellectuals, some of whom could have collaborated on an equal footing with the eminent persons (I except myself) who composed that meeting.

An act of faith, indeed, transcending all divisions, a triumphant exaltation of the sovereign spirit, illuminating and lofty discussions of the future of that culture which is to souls what civilisation is to morals. A *Magnificent* of thought which cannot be ignored or kept in leash, a Franciscan gaiety of conversation, maintained on the joyous plane of the ideal — that was what our meetings in Madrid had to offer us. A sympathetic and loyal public assured us that these meetings, which were rendered possible, thanks to the Spanish Government, were neither obscure nor tedious. Then M. de Madariaga was there. Need I say more? M. de Madariaga, who brings us with his every word a promise of peace, reminds us of the saying of Bacon: "Learning taketh away the wildness and barbarism and fierceness of men's minds", which is to say that a high culture robs the human spirit of what savagery, barbarity and ferocity might be left in it.

I only speak of M. de Madariaga and of the Committee on Moral Disarmament, for I need hardly remind you that Roumania was the first country to make war propaganda an offence under its Penal Code. We owe this tribute to the participation of the spirit in the work of peace to a motion introduced by M. Pella, delegate of Roumania on the Committee for Moral Disarmament, who also gave it a legal form and a prominent place in the memorandum drawn up at the request of the Committee for Moral Disarmament. I confess that, in spite of my admiration for the mind which conceived it, the work of this Committee seemed to me fated to remain bereft of contact with realities or to be reduced to those mere paper considerations which remain buried in the pages where they are written, or are lost in the quickly hushed echoes of the meetings at which they are enunciated.

But it has not been so for moral disarmament. That is one of the ideas which, immediately they are born, take wings and fly forth unchecked. Such an idea is that which, as you will remember, Senator Ciruolo put forward from this platform in favour of assistance by nations overcome by disaster, and which has since been brought so successfully to fruition by the League and in every country. Another such idea was that which led to M. Pella's proposal on the Committee for Moral Disarmament, when he declared his conviction that, with the help of legislative provisions for suppressing war propaganda, it would be possible to counteract the evil influence exerted by certain elements on the masses of the population. He added:

"These elements have often succeeded in arousing in the masses a reckless state of mind which has given rise to so many violent demonstrations";

and again:

"We are convinced that their action, so harmful to the development of international life, can be vigorously combated when war propaganda is made an offence under all Penal Codes."

Article 213, paragraph 1, of the Roumanian Penal Code does indeed provide for the "infliction of a sentence of detention in custody not exceeding one year and a fine upon anyone who, by disseminating false or fictitious news (or forged or distorted documents), in any manner imperils the international relations of Roumania with another country."

This applies only to Roumania; but, under the auspices of the Committee for Moral Disarmament, it will, it must, be introduced in all countries which, having adhered to the Covenant and to the Paris Pact, recognise that that Covenant and that Pact are legally binding.

The theme: "Away with calumny, away with false rumours, and, above all, away with spite and racial hatred" inaugurates a series of measures which the Committee for Moral Disarmament will make it a point of honour to carry through. We can only be grateful to it for having brought them to the fore. It is this aspect, in particular, of its work which brings the Committee for Moral Disarmament into touch with the International Institute of Paris; and, in speaking of the first, I have by no means ceased to refer to the second. The Institute represents the idea of order *par excellence*, and of organisation — pre-eminently a tendency towards unity and unification. It also affirms — and daily more clearly — its rôle as the intellectual mentor of our time. It has no ambition to invent dogmas or to harness the spirit. On the contrary, it respects the creative autonomy of the spirit and seeks to canalise the results of its researches and to spread their influence.

The power of the spirit is infallible, and the confidence we feel in it is boundless.

The President. — If no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Sixth Committee's report and the draft resolutions accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

51. — CO-OPERATION OF THE PRESS IN THE ORGANISATION OF PEACE: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on the co-operation of the Press in the Organisation of Peace (document A.36.1933, Annex 12).

(On the invitation of the President M. de Tesson, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President. — M. de Tesson, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. de Tesson (France), Rapporteur:

Translation: The Sixth Committee has the honour to submit to you a resolution on the co-operation of the Press in the organisation of peace. This resolution is at once theoretical and practical. It is theoretical inasmuch as it corresponds very closely to the spirit of the League of Nations, which demands the mobilisation of all the intellectual and moral forces of the world in the cause of peace. How, at a time like the present, can a country fail to realise the value of the printed word, of daily publications, of the telegraph and telephone and of wireless, bringing us as they do from all parts of the world the news which we receive each day for our recreation and instruction and which gives the nations certain spiritual elements that are indispensable. The question before us is whether it is possible to place these powerful means at the service of peace and the ideal of solidarity, which is the ideal of this Assembly.

Both from the point of view of the education of the masses and from that of the moral disarmament which should result from that education, this Press work has already formed the subject of important discussions in the Sixth Committee and from this platform itself, where, last year, Lord Cecil

submitted a number of valuable proposals and recommendations with a view to enabling the great power of the Press to be used to promote mutual understanding. The opinion was then expressed that a serious and strenuous effort should be made to prevent the dissemination of news calculated to disturb international harmony, and our discussions on the Sixth Committee and here were concerned with the means of rectifying those errors which are so harmful to the community of mankind. An attempt was made to devise practical means of enabling the Press to issue prompt denials of harmful rumours and statements and to replace them as far as possible by accurate news. But, as you know, it is often easier to state truth in words than to translate it into deeds. We must allow for human passions, for the diverse characters of Governments and for a number of widely differing psychological factors. That is why the problem of false news is so difficult to treat and why it is so hard, in view of the variety of newspapers in all countries, to attain that spiritual agreement which we are all trying to realise here.

The co-operation of the Press in the problem of peace may however be approached from a practical angle. Naturally, this problem includes a number of technical questions, with which I cannot deal here, connected with the internal legislation of the various States, the professional standing of journalists in their respective countries, facilities for international transport and communications, duties on printing paper, facilities accorded to journalists to travel and make enquiries designed to enlighten the public on important events of universal interest.

This brief list will give you an idea of the wide scope of the Press problem and the complexity of the Press co-operation which we claim for the organisation of peace. That is why we are glad to welcome and express our good wishes for the success of the Madrid Conference to be held at the beginning of next month. It will be attended by all the experts who can approach these questions in the spirit of mutual comprehension which we all desire to promote. There will be in Madrid, not only editors of newspapers, owners, managers of agencies, organised and free-lance journalists and writers from all parts of the world, but also representatives of the great international associations. Their work may, if carried on in the spirit of co-operation without which no progress is possible, yield important results, which we shall examine next year in the Sixth Committee and in the Assembly. For the moment, the Sixth Committee can do no more than state its approval in principle of a fresh attempt at intellectual and moral *rapprochement*, and to give expression to its special interest in Press work and the treatment of journalists.

It is in this spirit that we have proposed the adoption of the following resolution :

The Assembly,

Having learnt with great satisfaction that the Government of the Spanish Republic has convened a Press Conference to be held in Madrid on November 7th next to formulate concrete proposals to give effect to some of the principal suggestions offered by the Press organisations during the enquiry into the problem of the spread of false information which may threaten the peace of the world and the good understanding between nations,

Wishes this Conference every success and expresses the hope that the next Assembly will be able to note its satisfactory results ;

And renews its recommendation that the Secretariat should continue to devote its attention to the development, by all the means at its disposal, of the swift supply to the Press of the fullest possible information concerning the work of the League of Nations.

The President. — M. Doussinague, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. Doussinague (Spain) :

Translation : I should like to thank M. Mistler, Mlle. Vacaresco and M. de Tessan for their very friendly references to the Spanish Government and to the first delegate of Spain, M. de Madariaga.

Spain regards it as an honour to have been requested to organise the International Conference of Press Bureaux and of Press representatives which is to open in Madrid on November 7th. The principal aim of the Conference — the collaboration of the Press in the organisation of peace, mainly through the campaign against the dissemination of incorrect news — constitutes one of the firmest foundations of moral disarmament. The Press, a powerful constructive instrument by virtue of its ability to spread noble ideas and thus to promote progress, will, we hope, one day definitely set its face against instruments of destruction and war. The Spanish Government, which is always ready and eager to collaborate with all its power in the work of the League of Nations, especially in such work as concerns the organisation of peace, will take all necessary measures for the success of the Press Conference, success which we may regard as certain.

The President. — As no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Sixth Committee's report and the draft resolution as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fourteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11TH, 1933, AT 10.30 A.M.

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52. — SIMPLIFICATION OF THE PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President. — The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the First Committee on the simplification of the procedure of the Assembly (document A.49.1933.V, Annex.13).

The First Committee has asked its Chairman, M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, to submit to the Assembly its report on this question and to give some verbal explanations.

(On the President's invitation, M. Motta, Rapporteur, took his place upon the platform.)

M. Motta (Switzerland), Rapporteur :

Translation : I shall claim your attention for a few moments only. The First Committee's report and the draft resolution which follows being already in your hands, I think I need not read them. What we propose is an experiment, and, for the time being, that experiment will be limited to the next ordinary session, that of 1934.

After consultation with the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission, the President of the Council will be empowered to summon the Finance Committee a few days before the Assembly. He will not take such a course unless convinced that it will prove genuinely useful, and I would add in passing that this year's experience does not seem likely to encourage the President of the Council to make any excessive use of his powers.

The First Committee was not unanimous. There were abstentions and, indeed, a considerable number of negative votes. But even the scheme's opponents allowed themselves to be influenced by the consideration that we are proposing nothing more than an experiment, and I venture to urge you to attempt that experiment.

On the other hand, that it is desirable for the plenary Assembly's procedure to be modified is, to my mind, self-evident. Whenever a Committee unanimously decides that, in its opinion, a discussion before the plenary Assembly is unnecessary, the President of the Assembly will merely announce that he has received the report and will have it placed on record. Such reports will be distributed at least twenty-four hours in advance, and any delegation will be entitled to call for discussion, notwithstanding a unanimous vote of the Committee. The rights of all parties are therefore safeguarded, but delegations will presumably avail themselves of this possibility only in exceptional cases and for important reasons. The Assembly's work will thus be rationalised; it will be made more elastic and less cumbersome.

A purely personal suggestion which I venture to make to the Secretary-General, in whom I have the most complete confidence, is that he should not lose sight of the problem of the relation to be established between the work of the Assembly and that of the Committees. I feel sure that improvements and simplifications, the importance of which are greater than might appear at first sight, are feasible. Experience, I consider, has shown that the general discussion during the first few days of the Assembly is useful and necessary. This fact has been evident even this year, in spite of the difficult times and of certain inhibitions which may have been at work in the conscience of each of us. It is, however, clear that, once the general discussion has been concluded and the delegations have been able to state their views on the League's policy, and the work of the Committees has begun, matters take on a different aspect.

The discussions of the Committees allow for the expression of opposing points of view, and it is in this fact that their chief value lies. I hasten to add that the spirit of the League demands that this expression of opposing views should be couched in the most courteous terms and that each delegation should evince its understanding of the points of view expressed by other delegations; but I would repeat that the distinctive feature of discussions in committee is this confrontation of opposing views, the object of which is to clarify and illuminate the debate.

After the conclusion of the Committees' discussions, the reports are submitted to the Assembly, and, as a general rule, the Assembly has to come to a decision on the resolutions, which must be unanimously adopted. Consequently, the expression of opposing points of view, characteristic of the Committees, does not take place in the Assembly. The debates in the latter are rather in the nature of declarations and sometimes even of monologues. It is in the interests of the League that this unavoidable state of affairs should not lead to pointless discussions. For this reason, it is

essential to find a system whereby no regular discussion will take place on any subject already discussed in a Committee, except in very special circumstances — namely, when the wide interest of the problem, its importance and its scope demand that it should be discussed in circumstances of peculiar solemnity.

I request you to be good enough to give your accession to the following draft resolution drawn up by the First Committee:

The Assembly decides that the following procedure shall be applied, as an experiment, at the ordinary session of 1934:

1. *The President of the Council, after consulting the Chairman of the Supervisory Commission, may convene the Finance Committee for a date preceding by not more than one week the first meeting of the ordinary session of the Assembly. The Committee shall be composed of the representatives accredited for the purpose by the Members of the League. It shall appoint its Chairman, who shall thereby become a member of the General Committee of the Assembly under the terms of Article 7 of the Rules of Procedure. The establishment of the Committee shall be reported to the Assembly at the first plenary meeting of the Assembly.*

2. (i) *When the reports and resolutions submitted by the various Committees of the Assembly are brought up for adoption in plenary session, the President, in the cases indicated below, shall read the titles of the reports and put forthwith to the vote the resolutions which are proposed.*

(ii) *The procedure provided for in paragraph (i) shall only apply in cases where the Committee has unanimously declared that it does not consider a discussion of the report in plenary session to be necessary and where no delegation has subsequently asked the President to open a discussion on the report. The report must be circulated to the delegations twenty-four hours before it is brought up in plenary session.*

The President. — If there are no observations, I will consider the report of the First Committee, together with the resolution, as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

53. — NATIONALITY OF WOMEN: RESOLUTION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the resolution adopted by the First Committee on the nationality of women (document A.48.1933.V). In this connection, the Chairman of the First Committee has sent me the following letter, dated October 5th, 1933:

"I have the honour to inform you that the First Committee, in approving the draft resolution on the nationality of women, which it submits to the Assembly, was unanimous in considering that this draft did not call for discussion in a plenary meeting of the Assembly.

"Consequently, the Committee is of opinion that it should propose that you apply, as far as the draft resolution is concerned, the simplified procedure for the adoption of resolutions which was envisaged in the First Committee's report with regard to the simplification of the procedure of the Assembly.

(Signed) MOTTA,
Chairman of the First Committee."

The text of the draft resolution is as follows :

The Assembly,

Having regard to the resolution voted by the Assembly on October 12th, 1932, on the question of the nationality of women ;

Having examined the suggestions made by the delegation of Chile in regard to this question, which, at the request of the Chilean Government, had been placed on the agenda of the Assembly ;

Having regard to the fact that a certain number of States give in their law a very wide application to the principle of the equality of the sexes ;

Expresses the hope that, before the next session of the Assembly, the Governments will have put the Secretary-General in a position to communicate to the Council information as to the effect which they have found it possible to give to recommendation No. VI of the Codification Conference.

If there are no observations, I shall consider the draft resolution as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

54. — SLAVERY: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on the question of slavery (document A.51.1933. VII, Annex 14).

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Madariaga, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and, in the absence of the Rapporteur, M. Finat y Rojas, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — M. Finat y Rojas, delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. Finat y Rojas (Spain) :

Translation : In the absence of M. López Oliván, who has been called away from Geneva by other duties, I have the honour to submit to you the report of the Sixth Committee and the following draft resolution for your approval :

The Assembly :

Notes the information communicated by a number of Governments regarding the progressive abolition of slavery, in accordance with the Assembly resolution of September 25th, 1926, and embodied in the Council's annual report.

Whereas, under the terms of the Assembly resolution of October 12th, 1932, the Advisory Committee of Experts on Slavery cannot enter upon its special duties until it has drawn up its rules of procedure and they have received the sanction of the Council ;

Whereas the appropriation made in the budget for the financial year 1934 will enable the Committee to hold, in the course of that financial year, the single meeting devoted to framing the said rules of procedure ;

Whereas the Assembly is anxious both to expedite the execution of the programme laid down by the 1932 Assembly and to hasten as much as possible the examination of the material to be forwarded by Governments :

The Assembly :

Hopes that the Council will proceed as soon as possible, in pursuance of its resolution of January 24th, 1933, to set up the Advisory Committee, and will convene the same at a date early enough

for the rules of procedure to be approved at the Council session in January 1934 ;

Decides that the Committee of Experts shall hold its first biennial session in 1935, and shall devote it to the study of the material to be forwarded by Governments ;

And accordingly requests the Secretary-General to make the necessary appropriation for that session in the draft budget for the year 1935.

The President. — If no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Sixth Committee's report and the draft resolution accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

55. — TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on the traffic in women and children (document A.50.1933.IV, Annex 15).

(On the invitation of the President, Mlle. Hesselgren, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Miss Horsbrugh, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — Miss Horsbrugh, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Miss Horsbrugh (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Rapporteur. — In the report that I have the honour to present, it will be seen that we are dealing here with the traffic in women and children, about which I have already had the honour to present a report, in connection with the convocation of the Diplomatic Conference for the preparation of the final text of the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Women of Full Age.

The fact that there has been almost complete unanimity in our discussions on the traffic in women and children in the Fifth Committee made the work of the Rapporteur very easy and also showed, I think, that we are in agreement with the work done in the past and that which will be done, we hope, in the future.

The main points dealt with concerned the Commission of Enquiry in the Far East, and we decided that the work of that Commission should be considered at the next session of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee, since its report came into the hands of the Advisory Commission only a very short time before its last meeting. The volume runs to five hundred pages and is of an interest that cannot be exaggerated. There is, therefore, a great deal of information deserving of very detailed discussion.

In noting this point, I should like to emphasise that the Committee was unanimous in agreeing that we should, if possible, be provided with an abridged edition of the Commission's report. As I have said, the present edition is voluminous, as well as expensive. In the beginning of that report, the Chairman urges the necessity of very wide publicity, both in the East and in the West. I cannot think we shall get that wide publicity if we do not have some form of abridged edition. As the Committee did not discuss that report in any detail, I will say nothing more about it, except to extend our thanks to those who made the Commission possible.

The draft Convention for the Suppression of the Age-limit in the present Conventions on the traffic in women and children was also discussed, and, as

I have said before, the Advisory Committee was unanimous in agreeing that the time had now come for such a step to be taken. This question has been discussed for many years (I believe since 1928), and I am perfectly certain that the Fifth Committee was in agreement with me when I pointed out that the world looks to the League for decisions. We do not ask for decisions before any matter has been discussed in detail, for we do not want hasty decisions; but, when a subject has been discussed fully for many years, we must decide whether we are going forward or else clearly state that we have rejected the Convention that was brought before us.

I am glad to say that, with almost overwhelming support, the decision was reached to send the draft Convention to a Diplomatic Conference, and it is with the utmost pleasure that I announce that the Convention will, we hope, be signed before many hours have passed. With the signature of the Convention, however, we have not completed our work, though I feel that we have reached a measured agreement for a step forward in the elimination of this lamentable traffic, which is a blot on our civilisation.

I would therefore ask the Assembly to accept the resolution of the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows:

The Assembly,

Wishes again to place on record its recognition of the importance of the campaign against the traffic in women and children and its appreciation of the services rendered by the Advisory Commission dealing with this work;

Draws the attention of the Governments concerned to the report of the Commission of Enquiry on Traffic in Women and Children in the East and expresses its gratitude to the New York Bureau of Social Hygiene, which supplied the funds necessary to the investigation;

Welcomes the decision that has been taken to hold a special conference for the adoption of the draft Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women of Full Age procured in one country, even with their consent, for immoral purposes to be carried out in another country;

Invites the Governments to continue their efforts for the suppression of the traffic in women and children.

The President. — If no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Fifth Committee's report and the draft resolution accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

56. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President. — The next item is the discussion of the Sixth Committee's report on the protection of minorities (document A.52.1933.I, Annex 16).

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Madariaga, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and M. Holsti, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — M. Holsti, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Holsti (Finland), Rapporteur. — I have the honour, on behalf of the Sixth Committee, to submit for the approval of the Assembly the

report on minorities, and the resolutions accompanying it.

I do not think that, as Rapporteur, I should make comments on the subject-matter of the report, and therefore consider it my duty to abstain from any remarks beyond those I have already made in the report.

The draft resolutions are as follows:

"I. The Assembly,

"Reiterating the recommendation which it passed on September 21st, 1922:

"Expresses the hope that the States which are not bound by 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."

"II. The Assembly considers that the principles expounded in resolution I, which reaffirms the recommendation of 1922, must be applied without exception to all classes of nationals of a State that differ from the majority of the population in race, language or religion.

"III. The Assembly requests the Secretary-General to communicate to the Council the discussion which has taken place in the Sixth Committee on the question of minorities as a whole."

The President. — M. von Keller, delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

M. von Keller (Germany):

Translation: In accordance with my statement yesterday at the Sixth Committee, the German delegation will vote for the first and third resolutions and against the second resolution.

The President. — M. Holsti, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Holsti (Finland), Rapporteur. — In view of the declaration made by M. von Keller, I think it would be right to have two votes, the first on resolutions I and III and the second on resolution II.

The President. — In accordance with the Rapporteur's proposal, resolutions I and III, which read as follows, are put to the vote:

I. The Assembly,

Reiterating the recommendation which it passed on September 21st, 1922:

"Expresses the hope that the States which are not bound by 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."

III. The Assembly requests the Secretary-General to communicate to the Council the discussion which has taken place in the Sixth Committee on the question of minorities as a whole.

Resolutions I and III were adopted.

The President. — As regards the second resolution, the German delegation having declared that it is unable to accept it, I shall consider that this resolution is not adopted by the Assembly.

Resolution II was rejected.

57. — PROTECTION OF CHILDREN: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on child welfare (document A.54.1933.IV, Annex 17).

(On the invitation of the President, Mlle. Hesselgren, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Mme. Hubicka, Rapporteur, came to the platform.)

The President. — Mme. Hubicka, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Mme. Hubicka (Poland), Rapporteur:

Translation: The report before you contains a brief account of the Fifth Committee's discussions on child welfare. I should like to draw your attention to the fact that the main subject of the discussions on child welfare during the last few meetings of the Committee was that of the effects of the economic crisis and unemployment on children and young people.

This question is no new one; it was discussed last year, and it will be remembered that the thirteenth Assembly adopted a resolution on the subject, whereby Governments were strongly urged to assist those children who are suffering most from the effects of the economic crisis and from the unemployment of their parents. This problem was discussed by the Child Welfare Committee also, which adopted a resolution urging the necessity of obtaining information on the effects produced on children by unemployment and the special measures which are or should be applied. Unfortunately, the information given up to the present has not been adequate, and the Fifth Committee therefore endeavoured to amplify it as far as possible by requesting the members of the delegations to give it any information at their disposal. Several delegations responded to this appeal by giving a brief description of the methods employed in their countries and the results obtained on which the Fifth Committee based resolution No. I.

During the general discussions on the question of the present work of the Child Welfare Committee, the Fifth Committee expressed the opinion that, so far, the Child Welfare Committee and its Secretariat had proved most useful as an information bureau. Also, while not proposing to enter upon a detailed discussion of the rôle of the Committee, which had already been held, the Committee took that opportunity of emphasising its importance in resolution No. II.

Finally, as it became clear, in the course of the discussion, that the funds at present allotted to child welfare work were inadequate for the execution of the Advisory Commission's programme of work, approved by the Fifth Committee, the latter devoted chief attention to the question of those funds. These deliberations resulted in resolution No. III, which expressed a hope, modest enough, but the only one it was thought possible to express in the present circumstances. The three resolutions read as follows:

The Assembly,

I. Desiring to emphasise the importance of efforts to protect children and young people from the consequences of the economic depression and unemployment:

Considers that it would be desirable, with a view to future practical action, for the Child Welfare Committee to study, in conjunction with the International Labour Office, and bearing in mind the

statements made in the course of the discussion, the experiments made by certain countries;

II. Recognising the need of centralising information relating to the various aspects of child welfare, recommends that the social work of the League in this field be facilitated;

III. In view of the exceptional importance of the questions submitted to the Child Welfare Committee, recommends that, as soon as circumstances permit, the Committee should be provided with the funds it requires in order to develop its activities.

Finally, it seems to me that our generation — the one which is governing to-day — has not adequately fulfilled its duty of protecting its children from the effects of a war which broke out before they were born. These children are, fifteen years after peace was signed, enduring sufferings which exceed their power of endurance and are the result of events in which they had no part. If we wish to avoid fresh disasters, it is high time we endeavoured to make them appreciate the value of peace, which, with stability, can alone ensure effective protection for the rising generation.

It seems to me scarcely possible to over-emphasise the helping in every possible way the children and young people who are now growing up, until improved economic conditions make it possible adequately to assist those whose demoralisation bears the seed of greater dangers than are produced by poverty among adults; for the adults will pass away, and the future is with the young.

The President. — If no delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the report and draft resolutions submitted by the Fifth Committee as adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

58. — ORGANISATION, ON AN INTERNATIONAL BASIS, OF ASSISTANCE FOR REFUGEES (JEWISH AND OTHER) COMING FROM GERMANY: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the report of the Second Committee on the question of the organisation, on an international basis, of assistance for refugees (Jewish and other) coming from Germany (document A.53.1933.II, Annex 18).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Parra Pérez, Vice-Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Guani, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — M. Guani, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Guani (Uruguay), Rapporteur, submitted his report and the following draft resolution:

The Assembly,

Having regard to the situation created by the fact that a large number of persons, Jewish and other, coming from Germany have, in recent months, taken refuge in several countries;

Considering that their presence in those countries constitutes an economic, financial and social problem, which can be solved only by international collaboration;

Suggests that the Council should nominate a High Commissioner to negotiate and direct such

collaboration, and particularly to provide, as far as possible, work for the refugees in all countries which are able to offer it;

Requests the Council of the League of Nations to invite States and, if it thinks it advisable, private organisations best able to assist these refugees to be represented on a Governing Body of which the duty will be to aid the High Commissioner in his work, the High Commissioner having to submit periodical reports on the development and fulfilment of his task to the said Governing Body, which would forward them to the States likely to be able to assist in the action contemplated;

Suggests further that the expenses of this collaboration and of the High Commissioner's office should be defrayed by funds contributed voluntarily from private or other sources;

Recommends to the Council that, in accordance with Article 33, paragraph 2, of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League, it should approve that a sum not exceeding 25,000 francs should be advanced to the High Commissioner from the Working Capital Fund, it being understood that this advance will be refunded to the League out of the funds placed at the disposal of the High Commissioner;

Is convinced that all Governments will assist the High Commissioner to the best of their abilities in the tasks defined above; with this object, the present resolution will be communicated to States Members and to non-members of the League;

Finally, the Assembly expresses the firm hope that private organisations will collaborate in every way with the High Commissioner for the success of this relief action.

The President. — M. von Keller, delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

M. von Keller (Germany):

Translation: I shall abstain from voting.

The President. — If no other delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the report of the Second Committee, together with the draft resolution, as adopted. The German delegate's abstention is noted.

The draft resolution was adopted.

59. — TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs (document A.55.1933.XI, Annex 19).

(On the invitation of the President, Mlle. Hesselgren, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and M. de Vasconcellos, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President. — M. de Vasconcellos, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. de Vasconcellos (Portugal), Rapporteur:

Translation: In the first place, you will see from the report that this question is one in which the League has recorded a very great success. You will see that the falling off in manufacture has been progressive, and that all the other steps taken against the traffic have had satisfactory results.

Nevertheless, the traffickers, attacked on all sides, are changing their tactics and, forced to give up secret trading, are going over to secret manufacture, against which very severe measures will have

to be taken. I appeal to Governments in the name of the Fifth Committee, which was unanimous on this point, to supply the Supervisory Organ with the information required to arrive at a proper estimate of the consumption of drugs; and I insist, if I may, on their taking care that their executive authorities apply the Model Code which has been sent them.

You will find two draft resolutions in the report. One deals with a draft Convention for the suppression of illicit traffic, which you are now considering. It is, indeed, indispensable that additional forces be brought to bear. At present, the traffickers are having an easy time. They are earning millions and run very little risk; a few trifling fines and perhaps, in the legislation of some of the States concerned, a few days' imprisonment — that is all. To the unscrupulous, the attraction of huge profits with so little risk is very strong. Smugglers of opium and drugs must therefore be punished more severely; but a distinction must undoubtedly be made between the trade in opium and that in drugs. Opium traffickers are encouraging a vice; but drug traffickers are criminals of the worst sort, who kill thousands of people to earn their millions. On them we must have no pity; they must be punished with the severest penalties.

The Advisory Committee is now examining the possibility of convening a Conference for the limitation of raw materials. Such a Conference will be indispensable if the attempts at secret manufacture continue. Against secret manufacture the principal weapon will be, in fact, this limitation of raw materials. This Conference will be difficult to organise and will have to be well prepared. The Advisory Committee now has the matter in hand, and I appeal to Governments to follow its work with the interest it deserves.

I will now read the draft resolutions which the Fifth Committee recommends for your approval:

I. The Assembly,

Expresses its warm appreciation of the results achieved in the campaign against the traffic in narcotic drugs by the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs and by the Permanent Central Opium Board;

Welcomes the entry into force of the Convention for the Limitation of Manufacture and the constitution of the Supervisory Body provided for by this Convention, and issues an urgent appeal to the Governments not yet parties to the Convention to ratify or accede to it as soon as possible, in order that it may produce its full effects;

Draws the attention of the Powers signatory to the Bangkok Agreement to the importance of ratifying this agreement with the least possible delay in order to bring it into force, and invites them to give effect, as they have begun to do, to the recommendations of the Bangkok Conference;

Invites the Governments to consider forthwith the draft Convention for the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic, the purpose of which is to combat the international organisation of the illicit traffic by means of an international organisation for prevention and punishment;

Emphasises the need for a thoroughly adequate preparation of the proposed Conference for the Limitation of Raw Materials, which it considers more necessary than ever, in view of the extension of clandestine manufacture, and expresses the desire that a first step should be taken by the conclusion of a limitation agreement confined to the producing countries concerned;

Takes note of the report submitted by the Fifth Committee and adopts the resolutions and the conclusions of the report.

II. Noting that, in conformity with the Council decision of May 26th, 1933, the Secretary-General communicated to the Governments by Circular Letter No. 159.1933.XI, of August 29th, 1933, a draft international Convention for the Suppression of the Illicit Traffic in Dangerous Drugs, together with a memorandum drawing their immediate attention to the importance and urgency of adopting this draft Convention;

Noting that, in conformity with the procedure to be followed in the negotiation of all general Conventions under the auspices of the League of Nations adopted by the Assembly on September 25th, 1931, the preliminary draft Convention and the observations of Governments should be communicated to the Assembly, which shall decide whether the subject appears *prima facie* suitable to the conclusion of a convention, in which case the Council shall arrange for the preparation of a new draft convention on the basis of the replies received and shall undertake a second consultation of Governments in regard to the new text;

Considering that, in these conditions, the replies of the Governments could not be submitted to the Assembly until its session in September 1934, and that the second consultation would thus be considerably delayed;

The Assembly,

Desirous of facilitating the adoption of the said draft Convention, the urgency and importance of which have been emphasised by the Advisory Committee and the Council, and having regard to the preamble to the Assembly resolution of September 25th, 1931, relating to procedure, which enables the Assembly and Council to adopt more appropriate methods when special circumstances render this desirable:

Delegates to the Council its right of deciding whether the draft Convention should be taken into consideration with a view to the conclusion of a Convention and of proceeding to the second consultation, without prejudice to the final decision of the Assembly as to the advisability of concluding the said Convention and convening a Conference in accordance with paragraph 5 of the aforesaid resolution.

The President. — If no delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Fifth Committee's report and the draft resolutions accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

60. — RE-ORGANISATION OF THE ADVISORY COMMISSION FOR THE PROTECTION AND WELFARE OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on the re-organisation of the Advisory Commission for the Protection of Children and Young People (document A.57.1933.IV, Annex 20).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Gajardo, Rapporteur, came to the platform.)

The President. — M. Gajardo, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Gajardo (Chile), Rapporteur, submitted his report and the following draft resolutions:

I. The Assembly,

Referring to the programme drawn up by the Child Welfare Committee at the time of its creation, and adopted by the 1924 Assembly;

Having taken note of the report presented to it by the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People, and fully appreciating the work already performed:

Approves the conclusions of the said report, and asks the Child Welfare Committee to submit to it, if possible during its next session, more particularly in regard to the work of its secretariat as a "documentation centre", a plan of work which will enable it to continue to the fullest extent the task contemplated at the time of its foundation.

II. The Assembly considers that the budget of the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young People is not sufficient to enable that important body to deal with the duties devolving upon it in the present difficult circumstances which entail the gravest dangers for children, and recognises the need for increased funds as soon as this may be possible.

The President. — If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the Fifth Committee's report and the draft resolutions accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

61. — CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREAR: REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fourth Committee's report on contributions in arrear (document A.56.1933.X, Annex 21).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Fotitch, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, and M. Castillo Najera, Rapporteur, came to the platform.)

The President. — M. Castillo Najera will address the Assembly.

M. Castillo Najera (Mexico), Rapporteur:

Translation: In submitting to you the report on contributions in arrear, I will simply quote its most important passages. Before doing so, I must inform the Assembly that a correction must be made in Annex II of the Appendix, to the effect that Colombia, which had promised to make a payment, yesterday paid 34,000 dollars — that is to say, 105,000 francs — and thus reduced her arrears by more than half.

The Fourth Committee desires to draw the special attention of the Assembly to the two following extracts from the Sub-Committee's report:

(a) "The Sub-Committee wishes specially to point out that, among the cases under review, there is not one State which could not have paid at least a part of its contribution even if it was not capable of paying the full amount. Where a situation arises making it absolutely impossible for a State to fulfil its financial obligations in their entirety towards the League, a payment corresponding to its utmost capacity in this respect ought nevertheless to be made."

(b) "It expresses the fervent hope that the States in question will render any further measures of a general character unnecessary efforts towards the liquidation of arrears during by their the coming year."

Certain delegates pointed out that the taking of measures against the debtor States as a whole would be justified, even in time of economic crisis, were it not necessary to take into account the factor

of prohibitions and restrictions on the import of raw materials, which in many countries has considerably aggravated the natural effects of the crisis and which the League of Nations has not yet succeeded in remedying, despite the appeal addressed to the Economic Conference by the thirteenth Assembly.

The Fourth Committee considers that the true figure of the total arrears actually due should be taken as being less than ten million francs. This amount is arrived at by the exclusion of consolidated arrears, which are payable over a number of years, and the arrears ascribed to the Argentine, the situation of which country is of a special character.

The Fourth Committee believes that the amount mentioned above can be collected in the course of time by means of arrangements with individual States, which, however, should only be made on the condition that the States regularly pay their current contributions.

The Fourth Committee associates itself with the view of its Sub-Committee that the question of the collection of current contributions is even more urgent than that of arrears. In order to ensure a greater regularity in the payment of contributions, the Fourth Committee has approved certain amendments to the Regulations for the financial administration of the League proposed by the Supervisory Commission.

The Fourth Committee firmly believes that, if all States Members would agree to make it a primary duty to continue contributing towards the expenses of the League, the question of contributions in arrears will eventually cease to occupy the attention of the Assembly.

The following draft resolution is submitted to the Assembly :

The Assembly,

Notes with regret that the amount of unpaid contributions has once more increased this year ;

Appeals to the States having arrears to make every effort during the coming year to liquidate part, if not the whole, of these arrears and at least to pay their current contributions to the League ;

Considers that, unless the situation has distinctly improved during the course of the next year, the Assembly will be obliged to study measures of a general character to enforce the fulfilment by certain States of their financial obligations to the League ;

Decides, as a mark of sympathy for the Dominican Republic, which is still suffering from the effects of the great disaster of 1931, to excuse the payment of the contributions for that year ;

Requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts for the recovery of arrears and to report to the Assembly at its next ordinary session.

The President. — If no delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Fourth Committee's report and the draft resolutions accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolutions was adopted.

M. Castillo Najera (Mexico), Rapporteur :

Translation : The representative of the Dominican Republic, who has been obliged to leave Geneva in order to attend an international congress, has asked me to thank the Assembly for its token of sympathy in exempting that State from payment of its contribution for the year 1931. He asked me to add that the Government and people of the Dominican Republic cordially appreciate this kindness and will do their best to respond to it.

62. — FINANCIAL QUESTIONS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President. — The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fourth Committee's report on general financial questions (document A.58. 1933.X, Annex 22).

(On the invitation of the President, Mr. Lester, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President. — Mr. Lester, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Lester (Irish Free State), Rapporteur. — The Fourth Committee is notoriously the last to finish its work, but this year we have been able to finish at the same time as the other Committees. This has been due, not to the fact that there has been less interest taken by the Governments in the finances of the League, but merely because the more political questions, which have in the past been dealt with by the Fourth Committee, were, to a large extent, absent this year.

In my view, it is a very healthy sign that the Governments take such a keen interest in the welfare of our three great machines — the Secretariat, the International Labour Office and the Permanent Court. Upon the smooth working of these organisations depends to a considerable extent the success of the efforts of the Assembly in other directions.

The Fourth Committee showed its appreciation of the efforts made during the year by the responsible heads of the various administrations to maintain and increase the efficiency of their respective organisations, and they will enter upon another year with the knowledge that they have behind them the complete confidence of the Assembly. No one who has followed the work of the Fourth Committee or has read the excellent reports of our invaluable Supervisory Commission can fail to be grateful for the efforts made during the past year to combine efficiency with a reduction of expenditure. The need for economy, in view of the financial difficulties of the world, has been in the forefront of our discussions ; but, thanks to the combined efforts of the Supervisory Commission and the heads of the administrations, we had before us evidence of substantial economies effected during the past year and plans for a continuation of those efforts. The Committee asks that the Assembly should thank them for these efforts and bid them go ahead with their plans and, if possible, multiply their efforts. Valuable suggestions were made by various delegations, and these, where they could not be accepted at once, will be fully studied, and we hope to see the fruits of that study at the next Assembly.

The Fourth Committee is able to report a substantial reduction in the budget for 1934. This will be welcome news to all our Governments, more especially as the economies proposed will not hamper the carrying out of the essential duties of the League of Nations.

The question of non-payment of contributions, which is of vital importance, has already been dealt with by my colleague, who is Rapporteur on this matter.

The report of the Fourth Committee contains, I hope, a fair summary of our work and conclusions, and I have the honour to submit it for your approval and to propose the adoption of the resolutions with which it concludes. They are as follows :

1. *The Assembly, in virtue of Article 38 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League of Nations, finally passes the audited*

accounts of the League of Nations for the fourteenth financial period, ending on December 31st, 1932.

2. *The Assembly,*

In virtue of Article 17 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League of Nations:

Passes for the financial period 1934 the budget of the League of Nations to the total sum of 30,827,805 francs;

And decides that the aforesaid budget shall be published in the Official Journal.

3. *The Assembly, in conformity with the recommendation of the Committee on the Allocation of Expenses, maintains at ten the number of units assigned to Turkey.*

4. *The Assembly adopts the conclusions of the various reports of the Supervisory Commission, submitted for its consideration.*

5. *The Assembly:*

Takes note of the report of the Administrative Board of the Staff Pensions Fund for the year 1933;

Adopts the accounts of the Fund as submitted by the Auditor;

Decides that the pensions of members of the Fund who contribute to the Fund in currencies depreciated in relation to the Swiss franc shall be paid in the currency in which they receive their pensionable emoluments;

And decides, having regard to Article 7, paragraph (1) (a), of the Staff Pensions Regulations, that the contributions of the League to the Pensions Fund for 1934 shall be 9 per cent of the pensionable emoluments of the members of the Fund.

6. *The Assembly appoints for the period ending on December 31st, 1936, as regular members of the Supervisory Commission:*

*His Excellency M. Stefan Osuský,
M. Jean Réveillaud.*

7. *The Assembly appoints for the period ending on December 31st, 1936, to the Administrative Board of the Staff Pensions Fund:*

(1) *As regular members:*

*M. C. Fotitch,
M. A. Hoel,
M. W. Rappard.*

(2) *As substitute members:*

*Mr. Sean Lester,
M. Jean de Modzelewski,
M. C. Parra Pérez.*

8. *The Assembly adopts the present report of the Fourth Committee.*

The President. — If no delegate wishes to speak, I shall consider the Fourth Committee's report and the draft resolutions accompanying it as adopted.

The draft resolutions were adopted.

63. — SIGNATURE OF THE CONVENTION PREPARED BY THE DIPLOMATIC CONFERENCE FOR FACILITATING THE INTERNATIONAL CIRCULATION OF FILMS OF AN EDUCATIONAL CHARACTER.

The President. — I have the following announcement to make. The Diplomatic Conference for facilitating the International Circulation of Films of an Educational Character concluded yesterday,

October 10th, an international Convention. The delegations concerned are informed that this Convention will be open for signature this afternoon after five o'clock at the Secretariat, as well as the Final Act for those delegations which did not sign yesterday.

64. — CLOSING SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President. — Before performing that somewhat melancholy duty which falls to me as one of the privileges of this Chair, of formally declaring this fourteenth session of the Assembly of the League of Nations closed, it is also my privilege — now become by long use a duty — to perform over the ashes of our work that valedictory ceremony which marks at once the end of my own brief term of office as your President and the conclusion of our annual labours.

With regard to my Presidency, the duties of which I most rashly undertook — but it is to be remembered in my favour at your behest — duties, I fear, too inadequately fulfilled, I wish at once to express my sense of deep appreciation of and thankfulness for the generous assistance and unfailing courtesy which I have at all times had from all delegates to this Assembly. Your undoubted authority has been a constant support to me in the many perplexities of my situation. Your experience of affairs has made light for me the burden of my duties. I would therefore express again my feelings of real gratitude for the great and undeserved honour which you have done me by elevating me to this high place. My Prime Minister has cabled me to affirm the deep impression made upon his Government and upon the people of South Africa by the Assembly's action.

I think this is an opportune moment — and, indeed, it would be a great discourtesy on my part were I to fail to do so — to hasten to extend in your name our most genuine admiration to M. Avenol and his capable and experienced assistants of the Secretariat for the ability which they at all times bring to bear upon the work of the League, for their devotion to their duties and to the ideals of the League, and for their patience and untiring courtesy in the face of our importunities, and of the many difficulties and aggravations in their daily work.

M. Avenol has had that unenviable experience for any man of succeeding to an office held by a predecessor whose so brilliant conduct of that office has led him directly to the highest diplomatic honours in his own country — a well-merited reward for which I would, in your name, extend to Sir Eric Drummond our most sincere felicitations. But after my own personal experience of the ripe judgment which M. Avenol brings to bear upon his work, the authority of his decisions and the unfailing courtesy with which they are accompanied, I may acclaim him a man worthy in every respect to succeed his admirable predecessor and to carry the burden of this high office *cum otiosa et dignitate*.

Finally, I may be permitted by you to single out from this admirable group of men round the Presidential Chair for a special compliment the man who with signal restraint and unfailing patience had to bear the more intimate burden of my own inexperience.

The Assembly would now wish me to review briefly the work of the committees, and it is to be noted at once that in this field our work has been performed expeditiously and in a most workmanlike manner. The Chairmen and Rapporteurs of the committees are to be congratulated on the efficient manner in which they have carried out

their duties. They have earned our gratitude. Such, I feel sure, are the feelings of this Assembly.

In the sphere of the constitutional organisation of the League, the Assembly has brought to a satisfactory solution the question of the composition of the Council. It is a provisional solution, but it has been welcomed by all the States as corresponding to the needs of the League in present circumstances.

The Assembly has also shown itself anxious to improve its own procedure, and the new system of simplification which it has adopted will, I am sure, render the Assembly's work easier and smoother in future. It might appear to be a question of detail, but it is none the less important, as the expedition with which the Assembly does its work has a certain significance in connection with the collaboration brought to it by the eminent statesmen who attend its annual sessions.

It is important also to emphasise the continuous progress made by the technical organisations of the League, such as the Health Organisation and the Communications and Transit Organisation. As regards the latter, the Assembly has particularly noted the activities in relation to the much-debated question of international public works, a question which Governments will now be enabled to study more thoroughly with the assistance that the League organisation can give them.

In the humanitarian field, the work of the League is developing favourably, an indication that the States Members are alive to the present need to fight the common scourges which ravage mankind. This work of the League, it is universally agreed, must therefore be pursued with even greater energy, as in times of depression such scourges tend to become more dangerous. In the field of drug traffic, also, the year has been marked by a considerable progress. The new Convention for the Limitation of Manufacture has already become one of the most widely ratified of all League Conventions, and has offered valuable analogies for the use of the Disarmament Conference in its attempt to limit the manufacture of armaments. Again, by extending the agreements between Governments to combat the traffic in women, and to improve the measures for the protection of children, the League is rendering an immeasurable service to humanity.

When receiving on behalf of the Assembly representatives of the various private international organisations whose work is devoted to the League by spreading its ideals throughout the world, I have been struck by the importance which these men and women of goodwill attach to the work of the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation. This Organisation has for some years rightly taken a high place in the activities of the League, for it is in these realms that the thinker, the scholar, and the educationalist is able to make his contribution to the work of the League, widening its scope and contributing a wisdom and experience which hitherto has never been pooled in the interests of humanity. The institutes attached to the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation have accomplished notable work and deserve both our thanks and every encouragement.

This year, again, our attention has been devoted to the question of the protection of minorities. The Assembly not only dealt with the question of the procedure to which minorities' petitions are submitted, but a frank exchange of views on much more general issues has taken place during which, you will allow me to mention, it was not possible in all respects to reconcile divergent points of view. At the same time, the hope was expressed that in every State all racial, religious and linguistic minorities might enjoy such treatment as is referred to in the minorities treaties.

For many years the League has dealt with the question of refugees, and it has amply demonstrated the efficacy of the assistance it can give to Governments which have to handle these difficult national, economic, humanitarian and sometimes political problems. To recall to mind the beginnings of the League's work in regard to refugees is to evoke the memory of Dr. Nansen, whose work will remain as a noble example to all who have to deal with this problem in the future. New questions regarding refugees have come before the Assembly and have been discussed with a marked desire to put aside all feeling. By agreeing that the Council shall set up the necessary organisation to deal with the problem, the States Members of the League will have shown a praiseworthy desire to deal with this problem in a helpful manner.

As a representative of a mandatory Power, I am happy to note the interest with which the committees of the Assembly have discussed the mandates question, and have approved the results of the League's work in this domain and the system by which they have been attained. The mandatory Powers have heavy duties and responsibilities which they only fulfil successfully by reason of their close collaboration with the Mandates Commission, the great authority and experience of whose members is so generously placed at the disposal of the Government concerned. I am able to speak personally in the highest terms of praise of the tact, courtesy and helpfulness of the Chairman and members of this most admirable organisation of the League.

I have noted, too, as a representative of an African country, the importance attached by the Assembly to its action regarding a problem which interests various areas of the African continent: I mean the suppression of the last form of slavery. By agreeing to the creation of a Committee of Experts, the League has moved forward another stage in the struggle to abolish finally the last vestiges of this evil practice.

The finances of the League have once more engaged the earnest consideration of this Assembly. In this regard it is to be noted that the financial year 1932 ended with a net surplus of over one million francs. While, as to the present year, the situation was indeed serious, it now appears that there will not be a deficit — a result of the considerable economies which have been made.

As to the future, the non-payment of contributions on the part of certain States has been a matter of much concern to the Assembly, but an unduly pessimistic attitude should not be adopted in view of the encouraging statement made by the representatives of most of the States in arrear. The question of the collection of current contributions has become even more urgent than that of arrears. A system has therefore happily been devised which will make it easier for these particular States to effect their payments. In conformity with the general desire for economy, it is to be observed that the budget for 1934 is considerably lower than that for the current year, and it is also to be recorded that the budgetary system of the League will be re-examined before the next Assembly. It is earnestly to be hoped, therefore, that the contributions which, as a result of these reforms, will be more within the capacity of the various States Members of the League will for the future be regularly and fully effected.

In times of difficulty and depression, institutions, like men, learn to know their true friends. Here I would avail myself of the opportunity of again referring to the return of the Argentine Republic to the League as one of the most important and happy events of this session of the Assembly. Every delegation has felt the greatest satisfaction, and has

expressed it in the cordial welcome given to the Argentine Government, a welcome which has been given concrete expression in the election of this great South American Republic to the Council.

Proceeding, then, from this rapid survey which I have just completed of the work of committees to the debates which took place in this Assembly last week and the week before, perhaps, if one fact emerged more clearly from these discussions than another, it was the obvious hesitation shown by delegations to express again through their leaders those feelings of anxiety in regard to the ills of the world, those remedies for these distresses, and those urgent hopes for restoration and recovery, which it has been their custom to stress in past years and to repeat and to emphasise again and again. As M. de Madariaga said, in the brilliant speech to which it was our pleasure to listen on the last day of the debate, in the past it has been the tradition in this place to put forward the most heroic efforts to create confidence by means of words. To-day, this hesitation to speak, this unusual phenomenon, appears to me to have its origin in a dawning knowledge. It is the knowledge, so it seems to me, that, while we have been laboriously seeking the answer to our overwhelming and apparently insoluble economic and political problems, while we have been organising our conferences, while we have been making our speeches and failing and despairing, the world itself most amazingly has not despaired. To the doctor's discomfiture the patient has suddenly shown a will to revive, a determination to live, and the doctor grows strangely silent. That, I repeat, is my own hopeful interpretation of this phenomenon of hesitation and silence. The will to live has asserted itself among the nations of the world. Defeatism is, in turn, being defeated before our very eyes by those powers of innate recovery which many of us have not sufficiently discounted in our gloomy prognoses.

This, then, in simple terms, is my own hopeful view of the state of the world in this most difficult year which is already so rapidly drawing to its close.

Perhaps — if I may digress for one moment — no more important result emerged from the Geological Museum, to which place all roads led in this year of grace, than that the peoples of all nations, despite the threatening prophecies of their statesmen foregathered there on that momentous occasion — prophecies of collapse and ruin were they to fail in finding their formulæ of agreement — the peoples of all countries have continued to proceed on their hard way still more courageously, and with an even greater determination, to find the way out of the gloom.

I invite you to draw your moral from this observation, which I believe to be truly founded. You will therefore permit me to reject wholly the theory of "the anarchy of the spirit". This, if I may say so with the utmost respect to the brilliant creator of the phrase — for I stand back to no man in my admiration for the learning and eloquence of M. de Madariaga — is the eloquence of Europe turned introvert. The spirit of the world is not anarchical. It rejects this over-morbid declaration. Rather, I say, the world, under our eyes, is straining at, and, if I read the signs aright,

is succeeding at last in bursting the strait-jacket in which it has been shackled ever since the great war.

Let there be no mistake in our outlook. Is it an unhealthy sign that we are all of us, each and every one of us, first a Frenchman, first an Englishman, first an Italian, first a Spaniard, and in my own case, first a South African? Is it an unhealthy sign that each country, according to its own genius, is striving to advance the science of government, to evolve with the advance of the times? Is this anarchy, or are not the nations groping forward to new authority and invigorating discipline, to a new spirit of national self-sacrifice? Rather, I say, let us go back to our countries from this place to help on by acts, and again by acts, the recovery of our own peoples, and by bold and resolute precept, give that lead, each to his countrymen, which will inspire and revive; for, until each nation, by its own genius, restores its own economy, how can there be fruitful collaboration among the nations, the successful issue of which is the desire of each one of us? For that purpose we are here, for that collaboration which is at the same time the earnest of international security and peace.

As things are to-day, can there be security for all nations? And until there is security for all nations, can there be peace? If, in this simple thesis, I place national regeneration in the van, if I make it the condition precedent to the success of international collaboration, there remains yet, so it seems to me, an essential which beyond all others is needed to resolve the tangled web of international misunderstanding into reason and order.

It is generosity.

When I look into the history of my own country — and I pray that you will not tire at my insistence on this strange and interesting parallel — I see that there, for generations, war destroyed all endeavour, threatened ultimately to pervert the very character of our people, and succeeded in separating the two races in my country by a gulf which no device of man seemed able to span. All policies were tried — the policy of might, the policy of conciliation. They all failed. And then, as it were by a revelation, generosity — a new factor in our political life — entered into our policies. To-day my country has recovered that which it lost by war. It stands an independent nation, the equal of other nations, with its peoples united within its borders; for generosity breeds a reaction which is the solvent of all disputes.

Let the nations of the world, let the nations of Europe — that continent from which all cultures of the Western world have sprung — let the leaders of the great Powers change their policies, from the policy of fear, and of resentment, to one of generosity. Thus will be achieved that spirit of neighbourliness of which the British Foreign Minister spoke so wisely and so eloquently from this platform. Will not the great nations go forward in this new spirit, so that the peoples of the earth may have peace?

I now declare the fourteenth ordinary session of the Assembly closed.

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH, 1934, AT 10.30 A.M.

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Chairman: M. BENEŠ (Czechoslovakia),
President of the Council.

1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

M. Beneš, delegate of Czechoslovakia, President of the Council, took the Chair.

The Chairman:

Translation: Ladies and Gentlemen — In my capacity as President of the Council, I have the honour to declare open the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

2. — ELECTION OF THE COMMITTEE TO REPORT ON THE CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES.

The Chairman:

Translation: The first item on the agenda is the election of the Committee to report on the credentials of the delegates.

According to the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, this Committee should be elected by secret ballot. There have, however, been frequent exceptions to this rule; and, in view of the precedents, and in accordance with established usage, I feel that the Assembly will have no objection to my endeavouring to facilitate its decision without in any way attempting to influence its choice.

I therefore feel that I shall only be anticipating the wishes of the delegations in submitting a list consisting of eight names as follows:

Mr. M. H. T. ANDREWS (Union of South Africa);

His Excellency Count CARTON DE WIART (Belgium);

M. N. ANTONOFF (Bulgaria);

His Excellency M. WUNSZ KING (China);

His Excellency M. A. SCHMIDT (Estonia);

His Excellency M. Ladislav DE TÁHY (Hungary);

His Excellency Dr. Enrique JIMÉNEZ (Mexico);

His Excellency Dr. Augusto César BADO (Uruguay).

As no objection has been raised, I think I may conclude that the Assembly has decided that the Committee on Credentials shall consist of the delegates whose names I have just read.

The list proposed by the Chairman was adopted.

The Chairman :

Translation : My intention in proposing that the Assembly should proceed immediately to constitute the Committee on Credentials was to expedite the proceedings and to allow the Committee to accomplish its work in the most favourable conditions possible. The members of the Committee on Credentials will therefore be good enough to meet at once in order that they may submit their report at the earliest possible moment.

3. — OPENING SPEECH BY M. BENES, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.

The Chairman :

Translation : In opening the fifteenth session of the Assembly of the League of Nations I shall, in accordance with custom, first pass briefly in review the activities of the League of Nations and its consistent bodies, its difficulties and successes, its disappointments and apprehensions, its aspirations and its hopes for the future.

But it is not my intention to go into details. You have before you the two reports drawn up by the Secretary-General, in which you will find the fullest information and such comments as will enable you to form an opinion of the number and variety of questions which the League has studied, discussed and settled. I prefer to offer for your consideration a few brief — and I think objective — remarks on the international political situation in direct relationship with the League's work and its problems.

There can be no denying that the world of to-day is passing through a deep-seated crisis comparable to the greatest crises which the history of mankind has ever known : it is a crisis in ideas, morals and religious beliefs, a crisis in world economic affairs, a crisis in internal political and social conditions and systems, and a far-reaching crisis in international relations, with threats of wars and revolutions of all kinds — in short, a state of general instability and anxiety as to what to-morrow has in store in all these fields.

All that is merely a statement of fact which may be related to two categories of factors : on the one hand it is the realities of life or, if you prefer it, the actual conditions of material existence which manifest themselves in the manner I have just described. On the other hand it is the atmosphere, the state of mind in which our luckless society is living ; and already the mere realisation of this gloomy atmosphere is impelling the majority of men to greater pessimism of mind and soul than the circumstances of present-day society really warrant.

As indeed is always the case, the general state of affairs throughout the world, to-day considered from the point of view of League policy, shows items on both the credit and debit sides. It will be highly instructive to attempt this morning to strike a balance and draw our conclusions.

The League is generally debited with a number of international occurrences unfavourable to the policy of Geneva. Rightly or wrongly we are blamed for the present state of the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments. I have always been of opinion that it was wrong

to place the responsibilities which belong primarily to individual States upon the shoulders of an international institution which, as a collective international organ unprovided with any direct executive authority of its own, can only be held responsible indirectly and in a secondary capacity. It must nevertheless be realised that public opinion — I think wrongly — blames the League, at least in part, for the present failure of the Disarmament Conference.

On the debit side of the League's account there is unquestionably the recent departure from Geneva of two great Powers, permanent Members of the Council — first Japan and then Germany. In certain quarters that was interpreted as an obvious symptom of the gradual weakening of the League, a weakening which in the near future would culminate, if not in its total discredit, at least in the necessity for more or less fundamental changes in its structure. Without wishing to join in these discussions or to deny the great importance of these two facts, I am nevertheless bound to affirm that I do not share that opinion.

The League of Nations is a collective organ the life of which is of necessity subject to variations on the part of its individual Members, and especially of the most important among them. Like that of every individual nation and State, its history will inevitably show both ups and downs, both advances and retreats. In such cases its only course is to carry on. Carry on is what it must do in the case I have just mentioned, and carry on it will. It must have faith in its own destiny, and the absence of one or other of its more important Members should merely lead it, when the time is ripe, to make such preparation as may be necessary for the co-operation of its lost children to be resumed.

A real weakness in the League's record is the fact that for two years two South-American States — Bolivia and Paraguay — have been at war over the territory of the Chaco ; that during that time the Covenant has indisputably been violated, and that, though the Council has been acting in the matter, we have not succeeded in putting an end to the conflict. The question has just been referred to the Assembly, which will now have to face its responsibilities. It must face them conscious of its high duty, for it still has the possibility of saving both the honour and the moral and material strength of the League. Will it do so? It is my belief and hope that it will.

Another item which is generally placed on the debit side of the League's account is the present position in the Far East. The situation obtaining between China and Japan, the "Manchukuo" question, the prevailing tension between Japan and the Soviet Union — these are facts of exceptional gravity. But when history comes to write an impartial account of the long battle fought over this problem at Geneva in the past few years, the League will not emerge dishonoured, nor will it be denied that it has achieved very valuable tangible results. But though, through the conditions now prevailing in certain parts of the world, the League's activities have not yielded all the results which might have been expected, and though, moreover, these happenings have put it to a supreme test, there can be no doubt of the lesson to be drawn from them. They have indeed proved that if in the future any Power were to provoke similar events in other parts of the world — for example, in Europe — it would inevitably lay itself open to direct sanctions applied by a large number of the other Members of the League, or else assume the crushing responsibility of having brought about the final disappearance of the League and the outbreak of an unexampled general catas-

trophe in which it might itself be engulfed. For us, this certitude is not a result to be despised. We are forewarned, and to be forewarned is of great importance, especially in the present state of the world.

Another item with which the League may be debited — though quite indirectly — is the failure of the London Economic Conference. I say "indirectly" because the League did no more than lend its assistance to an undertaking for which it was not directly responsible. Similarly, the League is often held responsible for certain sins of omission. It is blamed for not taking up certain questions with which it ought to deal. That charge also is not always just. Except in certain special cases, it is no easy matter to embark upon the examination of such questions when the State concerned, regarding the moment as unsuitable or the ground insufficiently prepared from the point of view of its own particular interests, either refuses or is unwilling to consent to such action. That, I think, has to be made clear in regard to some particular cases and to all similar cases as an answer to those who frequently saddle the League with responsibilities which do not belong to it. Responsibilities it has of its own. They are quite enough.

The debit items which I have just enumerated are certainly of the first importance. But let us now look at the credit side of our account and see which aspects of our work at Geneva and of the present international situation can be set off against them.

To set off against the present difficult situation both of the League and the world there is, in the first place, the undeniable fact that, in spite of the crisis which has overtaken international institutions, several great countries and a large number of the secondary and smaller Powers have latterly shown even greater enthusiasm in their sincere and genuine attachment to Geneva and the policy which we jointly pursue. In the second place, I should like to emphasise the fact that, in a manner and in circumstances with which you are all familiar, the United States of America have undoubtedly drawn nearer to the Geneva organisations and that their co-operation has been much closer than in former years.

Finally, I note the efforts now being made by a very large number of countries to bring the Soviet Union into the League — a country without the co-operation of which conditions in Europe and the world will never return to normal. I am aware that in certain quarters there are misgivings on this subject and that there is an inclination to maintain that such an eventuality would not strengthen the League. I may say, with the greatest respect for that opinion, that I take a contrary view. But, in any case, this fact is indisputable proof that the League is still a force in the world and a highly important means to its political organisation, that it is a force with which the world of to-day cannot dispense, and that its undue weakening or its disappearance would bring the international organisation of the world to complete chaos. The door would be thrown wide open to upheavals, revolutions and violent conflicts of every kind.

Against the lack of success in the Chaco question I would place the success of the efforts made by the League of Nations jointly with the Government of Brazil in the serious dispute between Peru and Colombia regarding the territory of Leticia. I would emphasise the success of the negotiations on the Saar plebiscite, which were so ably conducted by our Italian colleague and which undoubtedly prevented any aggravation of a perilous situation fraught with risks that caused very serious and

profound anxiety. The second stage in these negotiations will soon begin. If the results are once more satisfactory, the League will have accomplished a task the importance of which for the peace of Europe can never be overestimated.

But in addition to this direct activity of the League we must also reckon as credit items in the present situation certain steps which, though carried out or initiated by the great Powers in an individual capacity or by other States, and not undertaken immediately by the League itself, nevertheless constitute measures of essential importance for safeguarding peace and for the work of the League — that is, measures designed to ensure respect for the international undertakings and the principles of our institution. Thus, for example, the signature last year of a number of pacts of friendship or special co-operation and non-aggression, particularly of pacts containing a definition of the aggressor, certain joint steps taken by three great Powers since last spring with a view to ensuring the independence of Austria, undoubtedly represent in my opinion a development of the idea of international solidarity and constitute a recognition, on the part of certain important States, of a political fact of vital significance — namely, that certain great European problems are indissolubly bound up with the general maintenance of peace in Europe.

An event of equally decisive, if not indeed of still greater, importance, and one which may likewise contribute largely towards the stabilisation of peace in Europe, is represented by efforts undertaken during the past few months — as we were informed at the Disarmament Conference — to conclude a pact of mutual assistance for Eastern Europe. The signing of such a pact might react profoundly on the relations of the most important European countries, might directly or indirectly influence conditions in Central Europe, and constitute a first step towards the conclusion of one or two similar pacts in the other parts of Europe.

Regional pacts must obviously be based on the Covenant, and must even be designed to facilitate and strengthen the enforcement of the Covenant. It is also obvious that miraculous results cannot be anticipated from diplomatic instruments of this kind alone, unless these instruments correspond to genuine political realities. None the less they must, according to circumstances, be regarded as important steps towards the definite establishment of peace.

On striking a balance between the whole of the debt and the whole of the credit items in the present general situation, I thus find that the result is not discouraging for the League. There are doubtless many destructive forces at present at work in the public life of the world and they are acting with extraordinary violence and energy. They are, however, being opposed and neutralised by positive and beneficent forces and tendencies which are no less energetic and effective. The first and most important of these vital forces is the League of Nations itself, the efforts it is making, and the ties it has established between the nations — ties which cannot merely and simply be destroyed. We must frankly admit that in some cases the League is not strong enough to prevent errors or misfortunes, but it nevertheless remains an indestructible force and an insurmountable barrier to the powers of darkness.

In recording this conclusion, which is in the main encouraging and holds out hope for a favourable and steady if slow development in the future, I have certainly no wish to harbour illusions or to offer you a kind of *interested* optimism, the fleeting and deceitful reflection of personal wishes entirely divorced from any political and social reality. I

wish to remain in touch with actual facts that can be constantly checked and verified in our daily experience. On the other hand I am strongly opposed to any kind of *interested* pessimism, which in general pursues aims that are personal, special and sometimes unavowable, and which are therefore opposed to the general interest.

I am aware that certain circles from time to time express a fear that war will break out. Some even think that war is perhaps in the air and is looming immediately over our heads. When I reflect again on what I have just stated and the experience we have gained since the last war, I believe that, even if these fears can to some extent be explained by the present situation, it is none the less true that war is in no sense to-day an ineluctable fatality, that responsible men and those who guide the world to-day now possess, to a greater extent than ever before, appropriate means to prevent it, that it is more than ever necessary to proclaim to the world that the responsibility for a war falls on the men who are responsible in their respective countries, and that we must have the courage to say so unhesitatingly, and ruthlessly insist on that responsibility.

We are also aware that the present state of the world in general, as I pointed out in my opening observations, is far from satisfactory. The severity of the economic depression has, it is true, slightly diminished, though this is more noticeable in the national economic activity of the various countries than in international trade. We are also aware that this is a period of internal political, economic and social upheavals in a large number of States, that this period will in all probability be a protracted one, and that, consequently, perhaps the entire present generation is condemned to witness a long, sad and painful struggle for the slow and progressive reconstruction of the present-day economic, social and political system. Abnormal international relations are the inevitable consequence of this abnormal state of affairs.

As regards the entire post-war situation, including what is known as the League crisis, a careful study of history shows us that mankind has already and repeatedly, gone through similar experiences before. After great catastrophes—let us look, for example, at the condition and the evolution of Europe after the Napoleonic wars and the Congress of Vienna—there was first of all a period rich in idealist experiments and altruistic aspirations, the object of which was the establishment of a universal, lasting and guaranteed peace. But immediately those who felt themselves injured by the catastrophe had regained some of their lost strength, a period of discontent, disturbances, revolts and general confusion returned. The society of that time then passed through a period of discouragement, lassitude and exhaustion. It was not until the psychological moment came that the constructive forces still remaining perceived the abyss into which they were slipping, summoned up their energies and resumed the forward march. Then society moved slowly, painfully and gradually towards more normal conditions, perhaps with less enthusiasm but with greater prudence and sobriety and a truer sense of realities.

If I am not mistaken we may perhaps, as regards the general political position and the evolution of the League itself in the next few years, be about to enter on this third period. We shall then doubtless be better able to appreciate how fortunate it was that the League existed in that troubled time. We should, however, be greatly mistaken if we failed to see that we are still beset with the gravest difficulties and dangers. Nevertheless we might successfully enter on this more fortunate period if we are fully conscious of the

present state of affairs, if we are firmly resolved to prevent war by means appropriate to the present critical and disturbed time, and if we are prepared to sustain in every way all the positive and constructive forces that are available around us and some of which I indicated to you a moment ago.

Thus my commentary on the League's activities and the general political situation is not discouraging on the whole. In my observations, I neither defend nor criticise our organisation. I have merely endeavoured to lay before you a balance-sheet. This fifteenth session of the Assembly will perhaps be called upon to take extremely important decisions and thus to initiate a new period in our work. I have, therefore, sought to represent the situation as it is and to indicate our path for the future. Above all, I want you to find in my words an absolutely unshakable trust in a better future, an unfailing faith in the strength and practical effectiveness of our principles, our ideals and our institutions, and, finally, an absolutely indestructible conviction that our fate is in our own hands, that we have the means, if we so desire, of emerging from the present crisis, of safeguarding peace and of overcoming all difficulties and thus continually crushing all the evil and destructive forces that might be in a position or might wish to disturb it.

In that spirit, I declare the fifteenth session of the Assembly of the League of Nations open.

(The Assembly adjourned from 11.20 a.m. to 12.15 p.m.)

4. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The Chairman:

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

I call upon the Chairman of the Committee, M. Bado, to read his report.

M. Bado (Uruguay), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials:

Translation: The Committee appointed by the Assembly to report on the credentials of delegates met to-day, September 10th, 1934, at 11 a.m., in the President's office. I was elected Chairman and was entrusted with the duty of drawing up the report.

The Committee examined all the documents submitted to it by the Secretary-General. It found that the following States Members are duly represented by delegates in possession of full powers accorded to them by the heads of their respective States or powers or credentials conferred by the competent authorities of their States:

Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, United Kingdom, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, India, Irish Free State, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Panama, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

The Committee also found that the following States Members have accredited their delegates either by a letter or telegram from the Minister for Foreign Affairs or else from permanent delegates accredited to the League of Nations, or from other authorities:

Abyssinia, Union of South Africa, Argentine Republic, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia,

Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Iraq, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Persia, Peru, Portugal, Roumania, Siam, Turkey.

Although several delegations have not strictly adhered to paragraph 2 of Article 5 of the former Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, whereby each representative is required to present his credentials to the Secretary-General, the Committee considers that the delegates of the above-mentioned States are duly accredited to take part in the work of the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League.

I venture, however, to draw attention to the recommendation contained in the report of the Committee on Credentials adopted by the Assembly in 1933, in which it expressed the hope that in future delegates would present full powers in good and due form.

The following States Members have not yet submitted documents accrediting delegates to the Assembly:

Germany, Honduras, Japan, Salvador.

The Chairman:

Translation: I beg to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report.

Does anyone wish to speak on the conclusions of the report?

M. Cantilo (Argentine Republic):

Translation: Mr. President. — I should like to rectify a slight and obviously unintentional error which has crept into the report. The delegation of the Argentine Republic was accredited by credentials from the President of the Argentine Republic, which were communicated by a telegram submitted to the Assembly.

The Chairman:

Translation: I note the statement of M. Cantilo, delegate of the Argentine Republic.

If there are no other observations, I shall regard the report as adopted.

The report was adopted.

5. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE FIFTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly. In conformity with the Rules of Procedure, voting will be by secret ballot.

May I call upon His Excellency M. Titulesco, first delegate of Roumania, and His Excellency M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, as former Presidents of the Assembly, to be good enough to act as tellers?

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

The Chairman:

Translation: In the first place I wish to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

The result of the voting is as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting . . . | 52 |
| Valid votes | 51 |
| Blank voting paper | 1 |
| Absolute majority | 26 |

M. Sandler, first delegate of Sweden, obtained 49 votes.

I have the honour, therefore, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, to declare that M. Sandler, delegate of Sweden, is elected President of the Assembly.

I do not intend to make a speech setting forth the qualifications and merits of our new President. You chose him on account of them. I must, however, mention the fact that M. Sandler has taken an active part in the work of international organisations, the Disarmament Conference and the League of Nations itself.

I congratulate M. Sandler on behalf of you all and call upon him to take the Chair as President of the Assembly.

(M. Sandler took the Presidential Chair.)

6. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The President:

Translation: I accept the results of the voting with all the respect due to this Assembly. I am sure you will forgive me for not producing from my pocket a ready-made speech. But I should like to express my profound gratitude to you for having elected me. The honour is an honour paid to my country; I can only ask you to credit me with some slight experience, for what that is worth. I must therefore count on your indulgence and kind assistance in the accomplishment of the important task entrusted to me by this Assembly.

I will do my best. Let us now pass to the agenda.

7. — AGENDA: EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION.

The President:

Translation: In accordance with precedent, I have just approved a note which will be communicated to the delegations. Its object is to give some idea of the proposals which I intend to submit to them with regard to the various questions on the agenda of the present session.

Since the members of the Assembly have before them the note which has been circulated, I will ask them to take a decision on the first question on that list — namely, the adoption of the agenda of the session (document A.2(1).1934).

In view of the procedure followed by my predecessors in 1932 and 1933, and for the same reasons, I propose that the Assembly refer to its next session Item 4 on its agenda — namely, "Amendment of the Covenant of the League of Nations in order to bring it into Harmony with the Pact of Paris". This question was referred to a special Committee composed of the representatives of all the Members of the League. Since the last session of the Assembly, the Council, as the Assembly will have ascertained from perusing the annual report on the work of the League, has also communicated to the Committee the Treaty of Non-Aggression and Conciliation concluded, on the initiative of the Argentine Government, at Rio de Janeiro on October 10th, 1933. This Act, which is of very great importance and was signed by a number of States, has the same general aims as the Covenant and as the Pact of Paris.

On account of the relationship between the work of the Committee and certain aspects of the work of the Disarmament Conference, it has not been possible to convene the Committee. The Assembly is therefore unable to deal with the important questions referred to this Committee. The adjournment proposed will, of course, in no way affect the arrangements made to convene the Committee at a suitable moment.

In the circumstances, if the Assembly shares the views I have submitted to it, it will decide without

further formality to refer this question to the next ordinary session.

In order to shorten the procedure, and unless any delegation asks for a division, I will now request the Assembly to decide *en bloc* on the whole of the questions appearing in the agenda — that is to say, those enumerated in document A.2(1).1934. Nos. 1-21, with the exception naturally of the question withdrawn.

To this must be added the supplementary list of items. There is only one question of this kind indicated in document A.2(1).1934 — namely, the proposal of the Council relating to League Committees, Item 22.

If there is no objection, I shall regard the agenda of the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly, as thus proposed, as adopted.

The agenda, as amended, was adopted.

8. — DISPUTE BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND PARAGUAY: APPEAL BY THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT UNDER ARTICLE 15 OF THE COVENANT: INCLUSION OF THIS QUESTION IN THE AGENDA ON THE BASIS OF THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION OF SEPTEMBER 7th, 1934.

The President :

Translation : The delegations will have read document A.23.1934.VII, in which the Secretary-General communicated to the Assembly the resolution adopted by the Council on September 7th, 1934, concerning the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay. The resolution reads as follows :

" I. The Council,

" In view of the report of the Committee, dated June 14th, 1934 (document C.263.M.112.1934.VII) ;

" Seeing that the request of the Bolivian Government, under the provisions of paragraph 9 of Article 15 of the Covenant, that the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay be referred to the Assembly was made within the period of fourteen days provided for in the said paragraph :

" Decides that the said dispute is referred to the Assembly, in accordance with Article 15, paragraph 9, of the Covenant.

" II. The duties which the Council may have to fulfil in accordance with the Covenant remain unaffected by the present decision. "

The dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay is thus referred to the Assembly on the basis of a request from the Bolivian Government under Article 15, paragraph 9, of the Covenant.

In accordance with this Council resolution, the Assembly is thus called upon to add this question to those already on the agenda of the present session.

If there are no observations, this will be taken as agreed.

Agreed.

9. — CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the constitution of Committees.

The procedure established at previous Assemblies used to be to set up six Committees ; but, for reasons of expediency, the Presidents of the thirteenth and fourteenth sessions of the Assembly

proposed that only five should be formed. The circumstances which gave rise to these decisions exist to-day.

The Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments suspended its work in circumstances which must necessarily lead the Assembly to consider it preferable again this year not to ask one of its Committees to discuss the same subjects as those still before the Conference.

I therefore propose to the Assembly, as was done at the last two sessions, to suspend the constitution of the Third Committee, on the understanding that, if it subsequently proves desirable to constitute this Committee, I shall immediately lay proposals to that effect before the Assembly.

Thus, if there is no objection, I propose that the Assembly should immediately set up five committees, which will keep the same numbering with reference to their work as at previous sessions — the first to deal with constitutional and legal questions ; the second, with the work of the technical organisations ; the fourth, with the organisation of the Secretariat and of the League's finances ; the fifth, with social and humanitarian questions ; and the sixth, with political questions.

In order to depart as little as possible from the procedure adopted at previous sessions, I propose that the Assembly should arrange for the meetings of the Committees to alternate as follows : the First, Second and Sixth Committees would meet at the same time, and so would the Fourth and Fifth Committees.

If there is no objection, I shall consider these proposals adopted.

The President's proposals were adopted.

The President :

Translation : The delegations have doubtless already been requested to send to the Secretariat the forms on which they have entered the names of their representatives and substitutes on each Committee. The lists of members of Committees will be drawn up as quickly as possible, and the Committees will meet in this hall this afternoon to elect their respective Chairmen.

10. — AGENDA COMMITTEE: APPOINTMENT.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the constitution of the Agenda Committee. Following the practice of my predecessors, I propose that a small Committee of seven members be set up to formulate proposals for the procedure to be followed as regards the placing of new questions on the Assembly's agenda.

If the Assembly is agreed, and if no delegation desires to suggest names for this Committee, I will, in accordance with precedent, venture to propose a list of names as follows :

Mr. W. E. BECKETT (United Kingdom) ;
M. MAYARD (Haiti) ;
M. KÜNZL-JIZERSKÝ (Czechoslovakia) ;
Mr. John HEARNE (Irish Free State) ;
M. PIOLA CASELLI (Italy) ;
M. LOZORAITIS (Lithuania) ;
M. Camille GORGÉ (Switzerland).

The proposed list was adopted.

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

The President :

Translation : At its last seven sessions, the Assembly has decided that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should sit as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly, together with the Chairmen of the six ordinary Committees of the Assembly, and the six Vice-Presidents elected by it.

I would ask the Assembly whether it agrees, in accordance with precedent, that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should, at the present session, also sit as a member of the General Committee of the Assembly.

The President's proposal was adopted.

12. — APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly expressed the opinion during its last session that, as the result of the absence of the Chairman of the Third Committee, it would be well, in order to maintain the number of members of the General Committee, to call on the Chairman of the Credentials Committee, as an exceptional measure, to serve on the General

Committee. The circumstances which led to the President's proposal last year are the same this year, and I would therefore suggest to the Assembly that it should act on the precedent established, while pointing out that its decision is of an exceptional nature and is taken for reasons of expediency.

Consequently, I propose that the Assembly should invite M. Bado, who has already been elected Chairman of the Credentials Committee, to sit on the General Committee of the Assembly as soon as it is constituted.

The President's proposal was adopted.

13. — ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : I would like to remind the delegations of the programme of work for this afternoon. The Committees will meet successively at intervals of twenty minutes, in this hall, to elect their Chairmen :

First Committee at 3.30 p.m.

Second Committee at 3.50 p.m.

Fourth Committee at 4.10 p.m.

Fifth Committee at 4.30 p.m.

Sixth Committee at 4.50 p.m.

Agenda Committee at 5.10 p.m.

(The Assembly rose at 1.15 p.m.)

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH, 1934, AT 5.30 P.M.

CONTENTS:

14. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NAMES OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.
15. ELECTION OF SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.
16. COMPOSITION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.
17. AGENDA: DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.
18. REQUESTS BY CHINA AND SPAIN FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL.
19. PROTECTION OF MINORITIES.
Draft Resolution submitted by the Hungarian Delegation.
20. MANDATES.
Draft Resolution submitted by the Norwegian Delegation.

President: M. R. J. SANDLER.

14. — ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NAMES OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

The President:

Translation: In pursuance of the programme which I submitted to the Assembly this morning, and which it approved, the five Committees and the Agenda Committee met in turn this afternoon and elected their Chairmen.

The results of those elections were as follows:

| Committee | Chairman |
|-----------|----------------------------------|
| First .. | Count RACZYNSKI (Poland); |
| Second. | Mr. BENNETT (Canada); |
| Fourth. | Count CARTON DE WIART (Belgium); |
| Fifth .. | M. LEVILLIER (Argentine); |
| Sixth .. | M. DE MADARIAGA (Spain). |

The Agenda Committee has elected as its Chairman M. LOZORAITIS (Lithuania).

15. — ELECTION OF THE SIX VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President:

Translation: In application of Rule 7, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the next item on the agenda will be the election of the six Vice-Presidents of the Assembly.

At its meeting on September 30th, 1933 (fourteenth session), the Assembly, on the proposal of its General Committee, adopted for future sessions the following rule, with a view to facilitating the voting of the delegations:

"When proceeding to the election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly, in application of Rule 7, paragraphs 1 and 4, of the Rules of Procedure, the voting papers should not bear the names of individuals but should be marked 'the first delegate' of such and such a country."

Further, under Rule 21, paragraph 3, of the Rules of Procedure, this election must take place by voting a list of names.

I call upon Count Raczynski, Chairman of the First Committee, and M. de Madariaga, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, to be good enough to act as tellers.

I would remind the Assembly that the voting-papers must contain, not the names of persons, but the words "the first delegate" of such and such a country.

As there are six seats to be filled, the voting papers, to be valid, must not mention more than six delegations.

In the absence of M. de Madariaga, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, I will ask Count Carton

de Wiart, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, to be good enough to act as teller.
The vote will now be taken.

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of States voting | 50 |
| Blank voting papers | 6 |
| Voting papers valid | 44 |
| Absolute majority | 23 |

The analysis of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|--|----|
| The first delegate of the United Kingdom | 42 |
| The first delegate of Italy | 42 |
| The first delegate of France | 41 |
| The first delegate of Austria | 38 |
| The first delegate of India | 35 |
| The first delegate of Yugoslavia | 31 |

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

I wish on behalf of the Assembly to thank the Chairmen of the First and Fourth Committees for their kind assistance in acting as tellers.

16. — COMPOSITION OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The General Committee of the Assembly is therefore composed as follows :

Vice-Presidents of the Assembly :

The first delegates of the United Kingdom, Italy, France, Austria, India and Yugoslavia.

Chairmen of the five Committees of the Assembly :

First Committee : Count RACZYNSKI (Poland);

Second Committee : Mr. BENNETT (Canada);

Fourth Committee : Count CARTON DE WIAERT (Belgium);

Fifth Committee : M. LEVILLIER (Argentine);

Sixth Committee : M. DE MADARIAGA (Spain).

Chairman of the Agenda Committee :

M. LOZORAITIS (Lithuania).

Chairman of the Credentials Committee :

Dr. BADO (Uruguay).

17. — AGENDA: DISTRIBUTION OF ITEMS AMONG THE COMMITTEES.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has now to decide on the distribution of the items on the agenda among the Committees set up at this morning's meeting.

The members of the Assembly have already had an opportunity of seeing, in the note communicated to them, the proposals I intend to make in this matter.

The various items might be distributed as follows :

Second Committee : Items 5, 16, 17 and 18;

Fourth Committee : Items 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15;

Fifth Committee : Items 19 and 20;

Sixth Committee : Items 6, 9 and 21.

I must draw the attention of the members of the Assembly to the fact that, contrary to what I intimated in the note communicated to them, Item 5 (Co-operation of the Press in the Organisation of Peace) is referred to the Second Committee instead of the Sixth, the latter's agenda being too heavy.

The above proposals were adopted.

The President :

Translation : After reading to the Assembly this morning the Council resolution referring the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay to the Assembly, I stated that I would submit later suggestions as to the procedure to be followed. I therefore propose that this question be referred to the Sixth Committee, which is examining political questions.

If there are no observations, it will be so decided.

The President's proposal was adopted.

The President :

Translation : There are two items on the agenda of the session which I have not proposed to refer to a Committee and which I suggest should first be referred to the General Committee for proposals as to the procedure to be followed. These items are :

Commission of Enquiry for European Union (Item 8).

League Committees (Item 22).

There are precedents for this procedure. At its last session, in similar circumstances, the Assembly referred to its General Committee, for a preliminary examination, the question of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, and it will no doubt think fit to adopt the same procedure this year.

The question of League Committees forms the subject of an extremely detailed report by the Secretary-General (document C.287.M.125.1934), which will necessitate careful examination before the adoption of any procedure for giving effect to it.

In these circumstances I think that consultation of the General Committee is also calculated to facilitate any subsequent decisions which the Assembly may be called upon to take.

If there are no observations, these two questions will be submitted to the General Committee.

The President's proposals were adopted.

The President :

Translation : Item 3 of the agenda is the election of three non-permanent Members of the Council.

In accordance with a rule followed by the Assembly for several years, this election will take place on the Monday following the date of the opening of the session. Consequently, the election will take place on September 17th, at the afternoon meeting.

18. — REQUESTS BY CHINA AND SPAIN FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : I have received the following letter, dated September 7th, 1934, from the Chinese delegation :

"In accordance with the resolution making Rules dealing with the election of the nine non-

permanent Members of the Council, their term of office, and the conditions of re-eligibility, adopted by the Assembly on September 15th, 1926, I have the honour to ask you to be good enough to submit to the Assembly the request of my Government that China be declared re-eligible.

"(Signed) Quo Tai-Chi,

"First Delegate of China to the Fifteenth Assembly of the League of Nations."

I have also received the following letter, dated September 10th, 1934, from the Spanish delegation:

"In accordance with the Rules for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, adopted by the Assembly on September 15th, 1926, and particularly of Rule II, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly, through you, my Government's wish to continue to serve as a Member of the Council, and to request it to proceed to a vote on my country's re-eligibility, which, according to the above-mentioned Rules, must precede the election.

"(Signed) S. DE MADARIAGA,

"First Delegate of Spain."

These two letters will be printed and circulated to the delegations.

The Assembly has before it two requests for re-eligibility, drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, making rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office, and the conditions of re-eligibility.

Paragraph 3 of Rule II of the resolution provides that the Assembly may not decide upon the re-eligibility of a State, except upon a request in writing made by the State itself. The request must be handed to the President of the Assembly not later than the day before the date fixed for the election; it shall be submitted to the Assembly, which shall pronounce upon it without referring it to a Committee, and without debate.

The requests of the Chinese and Spanish Governments having been submitted in the form prescribed in the 1926 Rules, the Assembly will have to vote upon them at the meeting to be held on Monday, September 17th, the day fixed for the election of non-permanent Members of the Council, without reference to a Committee, and without debate.

19. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES: DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE HUNGARIAN DELEGATION.

The President:

Translation: The Hungarian delegation, in a letter, dated September 8th, 1934, has requested me, in accordance with precedent, to submit the following draft resolution to the Assembly:

"The part of the report on the work of the League of Nations since the fourteenth session of the Assembly (pages 38 to 45) dealing with the question of the protection of minorities is referred, in accordance with the practice of previous years, to the Sixth Committee."

The draft resolution will be printed and communicated to the delegations. I shall in due course make suggestions as to the procedure to be followed.

20. — MANDATES: DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION.

The President:

Translation: The Norwegian delegation, in a letter dated September 10th, 1934, has requested me, in accordance with precedent, to submit the following draft resolution to the Assembly:

"The Assembly,

"Following the precedents already established for several 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 documents dealing with the question of mandates which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the last session of the Assembly."

This proposal will be printed and distributed, and I shall in due course make proposals concerning the procedure to be followed.

The Assembly rose at 6.40 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1934, AT 4 P.M.

CONTENTS :

21. CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES.
Second Report of the Committee on Credentials.
22. PROTECTION OF MINORITIES : MANDATES.
Adoption of the Draft Resolutions submitted by the Delegations of Hungary and Norway.
23. TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF M. DOLLFUSS AND OF M. SCIALOJA.
24. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.
Opening of the General Discussion.
Speeches by M. Cantilo (Argentine Republic), M. Schuschnigg (Austria), M. de Valera (Irish Free State).

President : M. R. J. SANDLER.

21. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES : SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : Before passing to the agenda, I call upon M. Bado, delegate of Uruguay and Chairman of the Credentials Committee, who has a communication to make to the Assembly on behalf of that Committee, to speak.

M. Bado (Uruguay), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : The Committee entrusted by the Assembly with the duty of verifying the credentials of the delegates met again to-day to examine the documents accrediting the representative of the Republic of Honduras to the present session of the Assembly.

The Secretary-General of the League of Nations submitted to the Committee a telegram dated September 10th, 1934, from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Honduras, stating that the Government of the Republic had appointed as its delegate to the present session of the Assembly M. Luis Alonso Baeter, Consul of the Republic of Honduras at Berne.

After examining this telegram, the Committee considers that it should be regarded as a credential, within the meaning of Rule 5, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, and that the delegate of the Republic of Honduras is duly accredited to take part in the work of the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : I beg to thank M. Bado for his report submitted on behalf of the Committee on Credentials, of which the Assembly takes note.

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

22. — PROTECTION OF MINORITIES : MANDATES : ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE HUNGARIAN AND NORWEGIAN DELEGATIONS.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will recall the draft resolutions submitted to it at the last meeting by the delegations of Hungary and of Norway.

The draft resolution submitted by the Hungarian delegation suggests that the part of the report on the work of the League of Nations since the fourteenth session of the Assembly dealing with the protection of minorities should be referred to the Sixth Committee.

The draft resolution submitted by the Norwegian delegation suggests that the reports and other documents relating to mandates should be referred to the Sixth Committee.

In accordance with precedent, I propose that the Assembly adopt immediately these two draft resolutions and decide without further formality to refer the documents and parts of documents in question to the Sixth Committee.

The President's proposals were adopted.

23. — TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF M. DOLLFUSS AND OF M. SCIALOJA.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Motta, first delegate of Switzerland, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : I desire, on behalf of the Swiss delegation, to pay a tribute to the memory of Chancellor Dollfuss, who fell a victim to a dastardly attack on July 25th at Vienna in the exercise of his duties.

He took part in the work of our last Assembly and I can still see his smile — the smile of a sincere and strong man. He won all our hearts by his high intellectual qualities and his virile character.

He had set himself a lofty ideal — the maintenance and defence of the integrity and autonomy of his country, and for that ideal he paid with his life. He had no doubt realised that death threatened him, but he looked it in the face and, as a devout man and a patriot, accepted it without flinching.

All honour to the martyr in so noble a cause ! Everyone, irrespective of opinions, beliefs or party — even those against whom he fought — must pay tribute to the man who was prepared to sacrifice even his life for his principles.

May such a sacrifice, moving and glorious as it is, henceforth prove a guarantee of order and peace in Austria, and may it help Chancellor Dollfuss's successor, whom we respectfully welcome here, to achieve his mission and lead his country to prosperity in independence.

I should not like to leave this platform without evoking the memory of another great and fine figure, who was a master of law and a true inheritor of the Roman tradition. You have already divined whom I mean — Vittorio Scialoja.

I can see him too, with his fine face and piercing eyes, and I can still hear the sparkling, incisive, subtle words he would utter. When we looked at him, we could not help thinking of those jurists of ancient Rome, of Ulpian and Papinian, who achieved a place among the immortals by virtue of their gems of the intellect.

He has left to us as his testament the series of speeches he delivered here. In that volume are to be found the most solid arguments in favour of that diplomatic collaboration of which the League of Nations is the expression, and those who can hear souls speaking through books know that the voice of this noble son of Italy was and remains, in spite of its occasional scepticism, one of the great voices of idealism.

Vittorio Scialoja will not have spoken and acted in vain ; we will remain faithful to the institution which he constantly defended.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Pflügl, delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

M. Pflügl (Austria) :

Translation : The Austrian delegation, which has been very much touched by the tribute just paid to the memory of our deceased Chancellor, by whom it had the honour to be led at the last Assembly, desires to express its sincere gratitude.

The words spoken in this Assembly will find an echo in our country, which will be very deeply touched by the tribute paid by the eminent representative of the Swiss Confederation, a neighbouring country and, like our own, a mountainous one, with which we have so many affinities and points of contact in our common love of liberty.

The Head of our Government will have the honour of thanking the Assembly, and M. Motta in particular, on behalf of the country which is now, as we are, thinking of M. Dollfuss, a stalwart and loyal fellow-worker in the cause of the League, and the founder of the new Austria.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency Baron Aloisi, first delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

Baron Aloisi (Italy) :

Translation : I should like to express to the eminent head of the Swiss delegation the most sincere thanks and the gratitude of the Italian delegation for the tribute he has just paid to the memory of Vittorio Scialoja.

It is with feelings of deep emotion that the Italian delegation listened to the touching picture drawn of the eminent man whose loss Italy deploras.

He devoted all his powers to scientific work, which is in itself one of the most typical and fruitful forms of international collaboration. His work was all the more fruitful in that it consisted of the study of one of the essential bases of European civilisation — Roman law. Vittorio Scialoja revived the study in our country of this law — the tenets and principles of which have been universally applied for a thousand years — by imbuing methods of research and interpretation with a wide understanding of its historic value and of its human elements.

To the highest and most varied public duties, as senator, minister and representative of our country at international meetings, Scialoja, thanks to his intellectual training, always brought profound wisdom and a wide experience of human feelings and events.

It is thus with the greatest satisfaction that we note that, in the League of Nations where he worked, collaborating in the original drafting of the Covenant and devotedly participating in the work of the League over a period of ten years, he has left a memory which does honour, not only to himself, but to the country of which he was one of the most illustrious sons.

Allow me also to associate myself with the tribute paid by my Swiss colleague to Chancellor Dollfuss, who died in such tragic circumstances, and of whom the Italian people will always cherish an imperishable memory.

The President :

Translation : I feel sure I am interpreting the feelings of the whole Assembly in associating myself with the tributes just paid to two of our colleagues who have gone from us since our last session — the eminent Italian jurist and statesman, Vittorio Scialoja, and the Austrian Chancellor, Dollfuss. I would ask you, ladies and gentlemen, to stand in token of respect for their memory.

(The Assembly stood as a sign of mourning.)

24. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE FOUR-
TEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY:
OPENING OF THE GENERAL DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : I will now open the general discussion on the report on the work of the League of Nations since its last session (documents A.6. and A.6(a).1934).

His Excellency M. Cantilo, first delegate of the Argentine Republic, will address the Assembly.

M. Cantilo (Argentine Republic) :

Translation : In addressing you on behalf of the Argentine delegation, I desire at once to express the sentiments with which my Government associates itself with your work, and I should like the first words of my speech to be an expression of our high appreciation, addressed to the States Members of the League, to the League itself and to the ideal of international co-operation for which it stands.

These are not mere expressions of empty courtesy ; they are for us Argentinians the affirmation of a faith and a policy which we have never failed to maintain and of which we intend to remain the faithful and convinced protagonists.

Situated as we are at the southern extremity of the American continent, far from Europe, we feel we have close affinities of all kinds with our brothers of the New World ; but the strength of this attachment has never had the effect of limiting our horizon or weakened the innumerable close links that bind us to Europe and to the other members of the international community. Opposed as we are to every limited American organisation of a political nature, as was made clear at the Conferences of Rio de Janeiro and Montevideo, where our present Minister for Foreign Affairs set forth the policy of the Argentine Republic, we have always interpreted in the widest sense the American ideal of friendship with all nations, and have never accepted the existence of an exclusively American international law.

In other words, the principle underlying the League of Nations, the principle that has brought us together here for a work of peace and *rapprochement* between nations and Governments, is in full accord with the trend of our traditions and the character of our policy.

It is none the less true, however, that we have our particular point of view by reason of our geographical position and our history, and this explains the broad and frank sentiments I expressed at the beginning of my speech. In our continent, we have no conflicts of race or of religion ; no discordant memories. We do not suffer from the constant need for balance and counter-balance, and we have always preferred to seek our security in arbitration. Although, unfortunately, disputes still arise in the New World, they are family quarrels about our immense but ill-defined heritage. We can be certain that, once peace has been established, there will no longer be any gulfs between the nations.

That is why the League of Nations, whose birth recalls the memory of a great American President, caused such lively interest and awoke such great hopes in our part of the New World. Therefore — why deny it? — in our country, more than elsewhere perhaps, public opinion fell into a kind of indifference born of disappointment when the first flush of hope faded away and the slow and halting nature of the advance towards co-operation and

peace, which still seems to hesitate in spite of the League, began to be realised.

It is sufficient to read the Secretary-General's report to appreciate the diversity of the work which is being done, often in semi-obscurity, in our institution, and everyone who has participated in the League's work has been able to appreciate the spirit of high impartiality in which that work is done, with the collaboration of persons from the most diverse countries. It is, however, in the political field that the results are open to the greatest discussion and are, in fact, most discussed. Nevertheless, there again, while admitting the inadequacy of the results achieved, it may be asked whether the League is not of great value even when it fails, and whether the taking up of difficult tasks again and again does not, thanks to the contacts between men and ideas and even passions, produce a kind of friction which gradually and without violence smooths off the corners of the roughest problems.

Moreover, our institution cannot be blamed for the poor results sometimes achieved. As M. Beneš said in his opening speech, the League is what it is made by its component parts, and, if anyone is to be held responsible for its shortcomings or failures, it is not in the body as a whole that such responsibility must be sought, but in the difficulties with which particular Members are faced.

It is to be hoped that, in a world where progress is often halting but never stops, a day will come when there will be no difference between the ideal aspiration and the results actually achieved — in other words, between the letter and the spirit of the League Covenant. It is towards this ideal that the international policy of the Argentine Republic is directed. It is a policy of *rapprochement* with all countries in all spheres where there are mutual interests of a material or moral order to be reconciled.

We have just signed a number of treaties with our great neighbour and friend Brazil. We have also signed treaties with Chile, Switzerland, Italy, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Denmark. Others are being negotiated, or are about to be concluded, and shortly an economic conference, convened on the initiative of the Argentine Republic, is to be held at Buenos Aires to speed up this realist policy.

It is the spirit of the League Covenant which is reflected in my Government's patient efforts to put an end to a conflict which for months past has locked our two immediate neighbours, Paraguay and Bolivia, in strife together on the battlefield of the Chaco. This conflict is now in your hands. It is the same spirit which, before the spectacle of this lamentable war, and in the hope of creating a better future, gave rise to the pact of non-aggression and conciliation, conceived and proposed by M. Saavedra Lamas, and signed at Rio de Janeiro. This pact was of a universal character, and many American and European countries have already acceded to it. It develops and supplements the existing legal system for the pacific settlement of international disputes.

I will not take up any more of your time or attention. I have already said enough to make clear the co-operation, modest though it is, which our delegation offers you, and to prove the cordiality and sincerity of the wishes formulated by the Argentine delegation for the success of the League and of the various tasks it has set itself — tasks to which the Secretary-General's soberly and concisely worded report bears such convincing witness.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency Dr. Schuschnigg, delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Schuschnigg (Austria):

Translation: When, just a year ago, Engelbert Dollfuss, my predecessor at the Federal Chancellery, spoke from this platform in defence of the interests of my native land of Austria, no one could have foreseen that the next Assembly of the League of Nations would provide a setting for an obituary tribute to the memory of that valiant champion of order and peace who has been taken from us so suddenly and in such tragic circumstances. I take this occasion to thank, on behalf of my country, those who have expressed their condolence and their kind sympathy. The tributes paid in this hall were undoubtedly addressed, first and foremost, to the late representative of Austria in this august Assembly, who has been torn from us by murderous hands. They were addressed to the memory of the great chief and the great reformer of a country which has from the outset placed a high value on its membership of the League; to a man who always tried to promote and support the League's work, based as it is on so lofty an ideal. They were addressed, too, to the fervent Austrian patriot whose great work of reconstruction was followed with such deep interest by the public throughout the world, especially by those concerned with economic problems.

But these tributes were also addressed to the memory of Dollfuss the good European, who never failed to emphasise his country's community of interests, both cultural and economic, with Central Europe and with Europe as a whole. This line of conduct was, moreover, fully consonant with his fervent patriotism and his tireless efforts to preserve the national traditions to which he was bound by the ties of language and origin. As one of a generation that knew and remembered the war and the collapse of the Central Powers that followed it, Dollfuss was certainly not what is termed a pacifist in the ordinary sense of the word, nor was he a mere doctrinaire. But he was a champion, bold and faithful unto death, of the ideal of European peace. As a courageous and eloquent advocate of the vital interests of his country, he defended also those of all other countries. Thus he had personal relations, bearing the impress of sincere friendship, with the authoritative representatives of the other Powers, provided that they were prepared to do justice to his intentions and his aspirations. Austria has lost her son Dollfuss, and she therefore sends you in his place another Austrian, who, using the same arguments and the same language, puts before you the case which his unforgotten predecessor and friend would have advanced had he been able.

I can quite well imagine, indeed, that the grave and manifold anxieties which weigh upon every State at the present time might lead the great ones of the earth to neglect Austria now that she has become a small State and to regard her henceforward as only a last negligible vestige of a great historical past. Perhaps Austria, with her area of only 73,000 square kilometres and her 6½ million inhabitants, is now regarded as an unimportant factor in international life; but I cannot conceive for a moment that in any genuine policy of peace — and therefore any real policy of recovery which duly applies principles of justice in Central Europe — the burning question of Austria can be ignored.

We are firmly convinced that Austria's importance cannot be determined wholly by the size of her territory or by her population, or by her economic capacity or military potentialities. I still feel that this Austria is a bright flame in the fire of European thought; and she is the meeting-point and the regulator of the great currents that, meeting and merging, pass ceaselessly between

East and West and between North and South. Many who are separated by vast distances and by a complete divergence of interests from what is happening in the heart of Europe will perhaps find it hard to understand why Austria should be so constantly under discussion. But no one should overlook the capital fact that, in Europe at all events, there is no country which is not in some degree interested in preventing, as far as possible, the emergence of points of direct contact which might be sources of conflicts, or in welcoming the existence of a common ground of understanding on which conflicting forces may be balanced.

This is not the time to look back in retrospect and ask whether Austria was really bound to become what she is to-day; but what must be affirmed is that Austria must be maintained as she is now, and that not only in her own interest. It is this elementary truth and nothing else which constitutes the fundamental principle of the internal and external independence of Austria. The Government of Dollfuss's successor is firmly resolved to abide by that principle. It considers that it has a sacred duty to define and defend that independence and to do all in its power to secure respect for it. By so doing, the Federal Government feels that it is contributing much towards the proper development and progressive consolidation of Austria, not merely as a safeguard of Austria's true interests, but also in practical application of that great ideal of humanity which finds its finest expression in the work for the protection of European peace.

The question you may ask me is this: Can Austria live on her own resources, and is the internal structure of the country such as to afford a lasting guarantee of order and tranquillity? To put the question is to answer it. Austria can live provided she is allowed to live. She can survive by her own strength and effort even the deepest depressions, provided she is left free to put forth her strength, and provided the Austrian people and their Government are allowed to work in peace. Unfavourable circumstances which have affected all countries, the economic crisis and all its unavoidable consequences, have undoubtedly placed little Austria in a difficult situation. Nevertheless, she has been able to cope with the situation. She might even hold her own if this natural crisis were aggravated by the action of hostile and normally unpredictable forces, provided that the balance of the forces involved is not so far changed as to create a case of *force majeure*. In that event, we should have to see how far the strength shown by Austria and her people is still adequate to safeguard the interests of the country. On the whole, I think I may say that Austria has not only evinced goodwill, but has shown herself capable of coping with even the most difficult situations.

During the current year, Austria has been the scene of important political developments, including the establishment of a new Constitution the value of which can be appreciated only by those who are familiar with the evolution of Austria during the past fifteen years of its new history, from the profoundly disturbed time that has followed the collapse of the old Empire. Hence it would be a great mistake merely to attempt to apply to Austria old, deep-rooted ideas and institutions, in themselves admirable, which have proved their value in other countries that have been spared a catastrophe such as Austria has suffered and are entirely different in their economic, social and political structure.

The Government of the old regime, which was at once constitutional and authoritarian, was superseded without any transition by a purely parliamentary democracy which left no scope for

personal initiative and merely maintained its existence by the fluctuating interplay of majorities and consequently by constant endeavours to reach compromises. In theory, the principle of popular government found expression in an electoral system carefully devised for the purpose. From the top to the bottom of the social scale the voters had equal rights. Consequently, numbers alone mattered, and the sole object was to obtain a majority and the support of the masses. There was no corrective instance such as a second chamber, a senate or a head of the State holding wide powers.

Admittedly this form of Government might have stood the test of experience at a time of peaceful evolution and economic stability. Under the guidance of the late Monsignor Seipel, who more than once spoke from this platform in defence of the vital interests of our country, Austria showed that she could live even under that new Constitution. Nevertheless, political crisis was latent even then. In Austria earlier than elsewhere, there began discussion of the reform of democracy. At first these discussions were indeed purely on theoretical lines and confined to intellectual circles, but they subsequently found a stronger and growing echo, particularly among the younger generation, which was anxious to make its way in the political field and which, rightly or wrongly, considered the new forms of the State as likely to hinder its entry to that field. Opposition within the State was not confined to slogans barely concealing the true object — namely, to proclaim a class dictatorship. It went further and proceeded to organise more or less disguised military formations, which it used to add weight to its claims. The inevitable consequence was the spontaneous reaction of the elements which were determined to protect the country against the dictatorial tendencies of an opposition whose leaders so clearly evinced their intention of reaching power at all costs.

These extremist aims and these slogans would not have been unduly dangerous in Austria, because the kindly and conciliatory character of the Austrian people would have triumphed provided the general situation had remained normal. Normal development, however, was precisely what was denied us. The economic depression, which hardly any of the European States escaped, had been prevalent in Austria even before 1930. This phenomenon is not due to the fact that Austria is not viable in herself. The real reason is that the economic reconstruction of the country after the partition of the former great economic unit needed time and could be carried out only with the sympathetic help of other States well disposed towards Austria, and in a calm political atmosphere. Here let me gratefully acknowledge the help that the League of Nations, in accordance with its mission of conciliation, has more than once given Austria in her hour of need, thereby showing a true understanding of the importance of our country. Austria would be making a great mistake, particularly as regards her true national interests, if she were to disregard that fact.

The new Austria, which was not in a position herself to determine her own area, should at least have been put in a position to defend her own territory. Austria to-day is more fully determined than ever to do so. She has proved by strict observance of all her contractual undertakings, no matter what they are, that, despite all the difficulties — and they are far from negligible — she is still a loyal partner on whose entire good faith the other contracting party can count without fail. Austria knows that any treaties she may be asked to conclude are always bilateral in character. She feels also that her interest as a State and as a

nation is identical with those of all the States for whom the pacific development of Europe constitutes the fundamental principle of policy.

It is not surprising that the world depression should have struck Austria, which was in the midst of economic reorganisation, more severely than richer States whose economic existence rested upon older and more solid foundations. The unemployment problem, which, during the last ten years, has been the burning question of internal politics, is sufficient to show that political extremism was really inevitable. In these circumstances, it was realised that the constitutional regime and the political institutions which in normal times might pass muster were inadequate to cope with an acute crisis and had to be reformed. Moreover, Austria had no means of preventing political movements originating beyond her frontiers from having their effect within the country, or external political forces, direct or indirect and of varied kinds, from making themselves felt, sometimes in response to definite appeals, by attempting to influence the solution of Austria's internal political problems. Thus, partisans of extremist political views, national and international, strengthened by moral and material support from outside, engaged in a desperate struggle for power in democratic and parliamentary Austria, whereas the only common-sense course to follow in Austria's, real interests was simply to keep Austria alive and prevent a lapse into chaos, which, from the Austrian standpoint, would have left neither victor nor vanquished.

The late Chancellor Dollfuss and those working with him, who, conscious of their responsibilities, tried to keep Austria alive at all costs, realised that it was their imperative duty to concentrate their efforts on eliminating disintegrating tendencies of whatever kind and retaining as their sole aim the preservation of Austrian unity. To achieve this object it was necessary to put an end to the quarrels of political parties, their frenzied demagoguery and their ultra-radical slogans. There was, of course, no question of establishing an absolutist regime, which would be alien to the Austrian mind; the aim was simply to seek new forms of political and social organisation assuring respect for the Austrian idea, and bringing about, under a regime of true modern democracy, which does not lose itself in mere formulæ and figures, the participation of the people in public affairs, under the direction of a head who should be personally responsible and therefore authoritarian.

It has been shown that the transition period was only of a provisional character, and, on November 1st of the present year, the entry into force of the co-operative Constitution will mark a great step forward. It would be a mistake to regard this new Constitution as having reactionary tendencies. The new Constitution adopts the fundamental principle of the equality of all citizens before the law, and undertakes to protect individual liberty apart from certain restrictions imposed in the interest of the common weal. The new Constitution also recognises the principle of tolerance. Austria is a country which is largely Catholic. It was therefore natural that the late Chancellor — whose views I fully share — should have referred in this hall to His Holiness Pope Pius XI, whose encyclical "Quadragesimo Anno" has had a profound influence on the framing of the new Constitution. It would, however, be a mistake to infer from that that we have started from a purely confessional basis. All the religions recognised by the Austrian State still enjoy the full protection of the laws and public authorities. This new Constitution is based on social considerations and makes due allowance for political needs; it seems to us calculated to

ensure, with the greatest possible rapidity, the peaceful development of the country.

As you are all aware, the reorganisation of Austria has not taken place without regrettable disturbances. Imbued with aims which were anti-Austrian and therefore dangerous to the very existence of that State, irresponsible elements entered upon armed struggles in February and July last, with the help of illicit arms, the origin of which I will not stop to ascertain. In both cases peace and order had to be restored and secured, not in order to uphold any particular political system but simply to safeguard the very existence of Austria. In both cases a revolutionary minority was faced with the overwhelming majority of the Austrian people, which arose spontaneously against this movement, thereby evincing its sound conception of the true interests of the country. Unfortunately blood had to be shed, and it should be observed that the number of those responsible who had to pay the just penalty in expiation of their crimes was small indeed compared with the number of those who were victims of duty or misled by frenzied propaganda.

It was in July that the Chancellor, who created the new Austria and stood as the symbol of his fatherland, fell a victim to a premeditated and treacherous crime, committed with unparalleled brutality. If Austria had been allowed to continue her work of reconstruction unhampered, and if the right of Austrians to organise their own State in full liberty and independence had been respected on all sides, it would not be I who would be speaking to-day from this platform, but Dollfuss himself. Many lives would certainly have been spared among those who allowed themselves to be led into an attempt to settle political differences by violent means.

But let us not dwell upon the past. In order to understand the cause of the whole development, we must not forget the *via dolorosa* which the new Austria has had to follow since 1919. It would be the greatest mistake to think that the rulers of Austria are inspired with any desire for vengeance upon their internal adversaries of yesterday. The actual punishments inflicted for the crimes committed against the State and the lives and property of citizens never exceeded the limits imposed by the need to maintain order and security within the country.

There is one point, however, which I must ask you to regard as finally settled: political parties, having lost all their significance on account of the special organisation of our State, belong definitely to the past. To look back to the past would be to evince a reactionary spirit, and we are not reactionaries; we are realists enough not to allow ourselves to be wholly dominated by the past. The men who once played a rôle in party politics, and particularly the workers, for whom fresh forms of organisation have already been established or will be so shortly, can of course count on absolute equality of rights, and their practical collaboration will be welcomed in the new Austria. Whatever the ideas of these men may have been in the past, it is enough that now they are rallying to the Austrian idea. Intestinal political strife may possibly be tolerated by States having more solid political foundations, but even in those States it must keep within the bounds set by the need to safeguard the vital interests of the country. Obviously, then, little Austria, engrossed as she is in her task of economic reconstruction, cannot at such a time afford to allow any disintegrating forces whatever to attack the foundations of the State. Consequently there exists a community of interests among all who have at heart the continued existence of Austria, whether it be the overwhelm-

ing majority of the Austrian people themselves, who are firmly attached to the national and patriotic ideal, or those for whom Austria forms an important political factor, not, of course, for reasons of political hegemony, but because this conception is a European conception and aims essentially at the maintenance of European peace in the interests of cultural and economic development.

We are therefore convinced that our true interests definitely run parallel with those of our immediate and our more distant neighbours in Europe. We realise that doubtless every country in the world has reason to murmur at the harsh lessons of the world economic depression. The nervousness and sense of insecurity are indeed largely due to this depression, which has taken the form of a loss of confidence wherever unemployment has assumed serious proportions.

Recourse to a system of autarchy in the economic field was at most calculated to shelve the solution of the most urgent economic problems, but it could not solve them. We should beware of falling again into errors which are now recognised as such. The far-reaching change of economic structure in the national and international field must bring a new equilibrium and result in an increase in international trade. On the other hand, whoever tries to establish a complete autarchy in the economic field will probably fall into greater impoverishment and, sooner or later, sustain increased unemployment.

For these reasons, we have long been endeavouring to extend our range in the economic field and thus secure new markets for our products.

Here I should like to point out that Austria is ready to enter into negotiations with all the States which are prepared to negotiate with her and that she will agree to employ whatever methods may seem desirable to the other contracting party. The negotiations instituted with two neighbouring States have happily led to successful results, thanks to the energetic initiative of the head of the Italian Government, working in close conjunction with my predecessor, Chancellor Dollfuss, and with the Hungarian Prime Minister. Other States which are neighbours of Austria and several States which have no common frontiers with our country have signified their goodwill in this matter. In point of fact, Austria is in a not unfavourable situation for such negotiations. She buys much more from abroad than she sells; yet despite the deficit in her trade balance, she is paying her debts and, as regards many States, she is owed far more than she owes. Nevertheless, under the tried leadership of that eminent economist, the late Chancellor Dollfuss, Austria succeeded in making a notable though slow improvement in her economic position. Yet the sense of instability and insecurity still exists in spheres other than the purely economic one and is poisoning the international atmosphere. This mistrust, and the reservations which the State chancelleries make in their relations with each other are arousing anxiety which, though in itself baseless, nevertheless often engenders hatred between peoples; and there lies the real danger to peace.

The representative of Austria realises that he is speaking on behalf of a country whose territory forms a particularly vulnerable spot for European peace. In opposing to the utmost terrorist outbreaks on the part of fanatics or egoists, or mere irresponsible elements, Austria is not only fighting for her own existence; she realises that she is at the same time defending the true interests of all her neighbours. She is safeguarding the interests of the branch of the German stock which she has sheltered and protected for centuries, and she is in very truth serving the cause of world peace.

The geographical situation and structure of our country have from time immemorial singled it out for one particular task. An Austrian can say without presumption that his country is and has always been an important factor in European civilisation, whatever her constitutional regime may have been. In our view, the mission of a nation and State cannot be fully fulfilled within the limited span of a movement, whether it be called a front or party or by some other name. No political form can claim to be absolute or valid for all time or the best for ever. We Austrians are convinced that each generation, if it is to find its right course, must have the courage to follow steadfastly, in all simplicity and without laying any claim to eternity, its age-long mission, whose origins lie in the past. Austria believes that a common culture, uniting the peoples in the true interests of mankind, is a necessary thing. She knows the difficulties that stand in the way of the full and complete realisation of that ideal. But no difficulty, however insurmountable it may appear, must deter us from following this path.

I would therefore ask you to take note of this profession of faith in the lofty ideal of the League of Nations — a profession made by a State which, though small, is conscious of and proud of her traditions. In making this profession of faith before you in the German tongue, which is the speech of my country, I would also ask the States you represent not to refuse Austria their moral support, and above all to accord her the understanding which her situation requires. My country has a reputation for a certain *joie de vivre* which some people describe more or less kindly as Austrian *Gemütlichkeit*, but which is really the expression of an undying optimism. Strong in the strength of that optimism and buoyed up by this deep conviction, I will say in conclusion that the task that devolves upon us all must always be to watch over the preservation of life — that is to say, the maintenance of peace.

Yet our supreme ambition is that the language which, from the city on the Danube, the heart of our fatherland, radiates out in its rich variety of forms expressive of a civilisation that is part of the world's heritage and needs no toilsome study to acquire it — that that language should be appreciated and understood throughout the world. Let us serve the League idea in its ideal conception — that lofty idea which places faith in the conciliatory power of a community of mankind above the mere cares and anxieties of daily life; and after the events of the troublous past, may this sublime ideal find its highest realisation in the erection, in the very heart of Europe, of a *monumentum pacis* which will leave its impress upon the future of the community of mankind.

Long live international collaboration! Long live human civilisation! Long live peace!

The President :

Translation : M. de Valera, first delegate of the Irish Free State, will address the Assembly.

M. de Valera (Irish Free State). — It was with a feeling of no little anxiety that I ventured to put my name on the list of speakers for this evening. Many of the delegates present will remember that, on a former occasion, I availed myself of the indulgence which is usually given to a newcomer to the seat of the League to make some frank comments, and to give expression to the views of the plain people in my own country, as I understood them — views which I believed were largely shared by the plain people of many countries who desired to see peace reign in the world. My remarks were

received not unfavourably, in the belief that they were prompted by a sincere desire for the welfare of the League. May I claim the same favourable consideration for the remarks which I am now about to make on an even more delicate subject?

Not a single delegate to the League but must be aware that the dominant issue at this Assembly is the question of the entry of Russia into the League. That was known before we came to Geneva. Since we came here it has been the sole topic of conversation, I might say, between delegates, and it is, in my opinion, in the interests of the League, in view of the suspicions and the distrust which have been aroused, not merely among delegations here but among our peoples at home who receive the Press reports, that this subject should be dealt with frankly and plainly in the Assembly.

I do not want anyone to imagine that I am not fully aware of the difficulties, or that I do not realise that there are many questions which have to become the subject of private negotiations and conversations before a public arrangement can be reached. I fully realise that, but I am convinced that a continuance beyond a certain period of those private negotiations may very well defeat the purpose for which they were entered upon, and if I can judge from what I have heard from other delegations, we have arrived at the time when that danger is a real possibility.

Now what is the position? The position, as I conceive it, is this: that it is believed, the various trends of opinion having been explored fairly carefully, that there is in this Assembly the necessary majority of votes to secure Russia's entry into the League. Of course, not every delegation has at its disposal the evidence which would assure it of that fact, but it is a fact, I understand, which is generally accepted. On the other hand, there is a belief, and those who seem to speak with authority on the matter say they are certain, that Russia desires to enter the League. We have therefore the two necessary factors. On the one hand, there is the readiness of Russia to enter, and, on the other hand, there is here, we understand, the necessary majority to secure her entrance if she applies.

What is it reasonable for Russia to expect? Russia, like any other State — great or small — naturally wants to assure herself, before applying, that she is not to be subjected to the humiliation of having her application rejected. That is very natural. It is a thing we can understand; it is a thing our peoples can understand, and that we can understand in this Assembly hall as well as in some hotel room. That being so, why can we not state it openly here?

On the other hand, the League has also a dignity to maintain, and the Members of the League have a dignity to maintain; and those who talk of issuing invitations must realise that any person who is likely to be a party to such an invitation will need to be assured also that the invitation, if issued, will not be rejected. I think the people of Russia or the people of any State that desired to enter the League would understand that. With regard to this question of an invitation, those delegates who, like myself, for example, would not sign any invitation without first of all having the assurance that the invitation would not be rejected, have another very important matter to consider. It is true probably — I am assured by very many delegates that this is a fact about which there can be no doubt — that the necessary two-thirds majority is available here to support Russia's invitation; but it is well known also that there are States which are not prepared to support Russia's entry. These States have rights too; they have the

right to express their views, and any invitation or procedure that would have the effect of depriving any of those States of this right is a thing, in my opinion, that it would be unworthy of the League even to consider.

The necessary machinery is provided by which, when a certain majority of votes is available, the opposition of a minority can be overborne. There is no humiliation to Russia in coming along in the ordinary way, having been assured that there is no intention on the part of the majority of delegates to attempt to humiliate her in any way. But, as I have said, those of us who are in the League, whether we are in support of Russia's entry or against it, have rights which must not be abrogated. They are provided for, and if a matter of procedure is involved, have we not the Sixth Committee, for example, in which the whole question of procedure could properly be considered in the presence of all the delegations instead of in caucus in an hotel room?

I think there is no real difficulty at all. We have only to face the situation frankly. We can individually make quite clear what our attitude will be when the necessary application is made, or the necessary steps to bring about Russia's application are taken. Russia will have in that way the assurance she requires in advance. She can then make her application. In the nature of things, she must feel in any case that the application is going to be very favourably considered. Why? Because it is obvious that anyone who has the interest of the League at heart and looks upon the League as an instrument for the preservation of world peace must desire to see in the League a nation of the importance of Russia.

Her territory is two, perhaps three, times the size of the rest of Europe; she has a population, I believe, of some 165 millions. Is it not obvious, *a priori*, that there must be a strong feeling on the part of everybody who wishes well of the League in favour of having such a nation participate in the League's work, subject, of course, to the understanding that in entering the League she was entering it in no special privileged position; that she was to be subject to all the obligations which other Members of the League have to undertake? I represent a country which, if you consider its political and religious ideals, is as far apart as the poles from Soviet Russia; but I would be willing to take the responsibility of saying openly and frankly here that I would support and vote for the entry of Russia into the League on account of

the considerations I have mentioned. I admit that I should be much happier, as the representative of a country which has suffered greatly for religious freedom, if Russia, on entering the League, were to make universal those guarantees which she gave the United States of America on resuming diplomatic relations with that country. I hope that the rights which Russia agreed to accord the nationals of the United States, on the resumption of diplomatic relations with that country, will, on Russia's entry into the League, be made universal. I believe that the day has gone when nations that want liberty and peace, or enlightened Governments claiming such ideals, can continue persecution or the denial of religious freedom.

I say, then, that what we should do here in this Assembly is to get at once about this business, and, if it is a matter of procedure — as it now seems largely to be — to bring that matter to the Assembly. And let us not, for the credit of the League, attempt to deprive any State of its rights under the Covenant and of its rights to object and criticise if a proposal is made for a new entrant into the League.

As I said at the beginning, I have ventured on rather delicate ground. I hope that my doing so will be understood by the Assembly. To my mind, if we continue this method of hawking round draft after draft for signature, we shall do nothing but excite suspicion and give an impression of intrigue which will be fatal to the credit of the League. It is not in the interest of the League, nor is it in the interest of Russia, that any special method should be devised for her. It is important that it should be understood that she comes in in no specially privileged position. A special situation is created here by the fact that, because of want of unanimity, you cannot adopt procedures that were adopted recently in a few cases. In the great majority of cases, however, the regular procedure was followed. As far as I know, the regular procedure was departed from only when there was no question of depriving any delegation of its rights — its rights of criticism. When there is unanimity, and all are in agreement, there is no deprivation in passing over or side-tracking (if I may say so) the ordinary procedure; but when there is *not* unanimity, any attempt to side-track that procedure is made at the expense of certain Members of the League, and this I think should under no circumstances be done.

The Assembly rose at 6 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 13TH, 1934, AT 11 A.M.

CONTENTS:

25. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS
SINCE THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.
Continuation of the Discussion.
Speech by M. Beck (Poland).

President: M. R. J. SANDLER.

25. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE FOUR- TEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion on the Report of the Work of the League since the Fourteenth Session of the Assembly.

His Excellency M. Beck, first delegate of Poland, will address the Assembly.

M. Beck (Poland):

Translation: The Polish Government, as the result of the initiative which it took in the spring of this year, is responsible for the debate on the problem of the international protection of minorities which will take place during this Assembly. It is therefore my duty to make a statement before the Assembly on my Government's attitude to the problem. I will endeavour to be as brief as possible.

It is well, I think, to recall here that this question which is before the League, and which imperatively demands settlement, is no new one. It has virtually been in existence since the League's inception. As long ago as 1922 a formal proposal to generalise the system of international guarantees in regard to the rights of minorities was submitted to the third Assembly. The outcome of this proposal was the adoption of a recommendation — and one

that is well known, having been quoted on many occasions since — which might, twelve years ago, have been interpreted as a first step. This promising beginning did not, however, lead to any result.

Yet there has been no lack of initiative in the matter. A number of States have since tried to convince the Assembly of the absolute need of remedying the initial mistake which vitiated the whole system. The Polish Government has constantly and with untiring patience drawn attention to the urgency of radical reform. I will merely mention here the great debate in the Sixth Committee of the eleventh Assembly, in the course of which the Polish Government addressed a pressing appeal to the Members of the Assembly, asking them to agree to the uniform and general supervision of the treatment they apply to their minorities of language, race and religion. That appeal came to nothing.

The Polish Government repeated the appeal at last year's Assembly, and on that occasion submitted a formal motion. The discussion which followed my Government's initiative is so recent that I need not revert to it again. It was profoundly disappointing, save for the attitude of a few delegations, which showed in an entirely disinterested way how their countries interpreted the high duties incumbent upon Members of the League. I desire to thank those delegations very cordially. The Polish Government again met with a refusal as decided as it was inadequately explained. This attitude, dictated no doubt by the fear generally felt lest the League should follow too closely the course of the internal policy of its Members, evinced none the less a regrettable lack of understanding of the international situation and, in particular, the growing uneasiness felt in certain countries to which the system of League guarantees is applied.

The present system of guarantees of the rights of minorities by the League and its organs, if studied as a whole, is seen to be an ill-balanced structure, erected haphazard and founded upon political paradoxes.

If we review the system of guarantees applied to minorities in the various countries to which the guarantees are applicable, we shall see how incongruous the system is. Certain undertakings are embodied in treaties, while others are in the form of simple declarations which, however, are not in any way identical. In some cases provision is made for compulsory reference to the Permanent Court of International Justice, while in others the right of supervision is reserved exclusively for the Council of the League.

This inconsistency may perhaps be explained by fortuitous political circumstances. Certain obligations, for instance, were imposed upon States as a *sine qua non* of their admission to the League. It may even be said that the extent of these undertakings depended on the greater or lesser vigour with which the States candidates for admission discussed the terms of these agreements. In other cases, conditions of this kind were not imposed upon candidate States, no matter what the situation of their various minorities.

The existence of a minority undertaking, or the lack of such undertakings, their scope, etc., cannot plausibly be justified from the actual position of the minorities of States Members of the League or the international situation or the degree of civilisation of those countries. Yet it is these two criteria alone, and not purely fortuitous and no longer existent circumstances, which might in the last resort have explained, if not justified, the existence of an exceptional regime contrary to the principle upon which the League is founded — the equality of its Members.

The application of the system in its existing form has proved wholly disappointing. It has not been beneficial to the minorities; but, owing to the fact that it has too often been applied in an abusive manner and in a spirit foreign to that of the treaties, it has largely served as a means of spreading defamatory propaganda against the States subject to the system, and also as a means of exercising political pressure by States which, without being bound themselves, have used their prerogative to participate in the system of supervision.

The paradoxical situation of an exceptional regime grafted on to the League organisation, which derives its political justification from its

very universality and from the democratic principle of equality at public law, cannot last without doing irreparable harm to the moral foundations upon which the League was erected in 1919.

I address an urgent appeal to this Assembly to-day to remedy the sins of omission of the past and to lay down a sound, clear and uniform basis on which the system of the international protection of minorities can be permanently and durably constructed.

When asking, in the spring of this year, that the motion relating to the general applicability of the international protection of minorities should be placed on the agenda of the fifteenth Assembly, the Polish Government proposed that the Assembly should pronounce upon two questions: first, the immediate recognition of the necessity for a general convention on the protection of minorities, and, secondly, the convening of an international conference for that purpose.

The Polish Government will expect a clear and unequivocal reply to those two questions.

If the reply is in the affirmative, it will collaborate to the full in preparing the necessary texts for a general convention. My Government considers it natural that, when drawing up general rules, the Conference should take into consideration the special conditions existing in the other continents.

The information I have obtained since last year's Assembly is not calculated to make me optimistic. I am assured that the opinion of most of the Governments represented here has not changed. I hope I am mistaken, however, as a solution is obviously necessary.

Pending the introduction of a general and uniform system for the protection of minorities, my Government is compelled to refuse, as from to-day, all co-operation with the international organisations in the matter of the supervision of the application by Poland of the system of minority protection.

I need hardly say that the decision of the Polish Government is in no sense directed against the interests of the minorities. Those interests are and will remain protected by the fundamental laws of Poland, which secure to minorities of language, race and religion free development and equality of treatment.

The Assembly rose at 11.45 a.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH, 1934, AT 10 A.M.

CONTENTS:

26. REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

Continuation of the Discussion.

Speeches by M. Quo Tai-chi (China), Sir John Simon (United Kingdom), M. Barthou (France), M. Yépes (Colombia), Baron Aloisi (Italy).

President: M. R. J. SANDLER.

26. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: CONTINUATION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion on the work of the League since the fourteenth session of the Assembly.

His Excellency M. Quo Tai-chi (China) will address the Assembly.

M. Quo Tai-chi (China). — More than formal congratulations are due to the Secretary-General on this occasion of his first annual report since assuming his high office. He has dealt with the destinies of the League of Nations during its most critical year. He sees it emerge from that year with renewed prestige. The desperations that have led one nation and another to seek for solutions outside the League now make the whole world realise that only within the framework of the League can lie the sanity and safety of international comities. China subscribes to that renewed world sentiment without any reservation. In the name of one-fifth of the world's population, in the name of one of the Governments longest in power in national administration, in the name

of the greatest potentiality in Asia, the Chinese delegation welcomes the clear indications of restored League influence.

But China entertains no undue optimism, even as she deprecates undue pessimism. In his opening speech to the Assembly, M. Beneš made a remarkable survey of the world situation to-day. I cannot aspire to M. Beneš' wide knowledge and clarity of vision, but I shall endeavour to emulate his sober realism and confine myself to those features of the world situation which most nearly concern the Far East and which, in the view of the Chinese Government, vitally affect the prospects of world peace.

In the course of his analysis, M. Beneš drew attention to the menace to peace in the Far East. "The situation obtaining between China and Japan," he said . . . "the prevailing tension between Japan and the Soviet Union — these are facts of exceptional gravity". It is on this situation that I wish to make some comments.

I wish to make clear at the outset that I am speaking, not primarily as a party to a dispute, but as what I might call, by your tolerance, the Far-Eastern rapporteur of the League, on the basis of a report on the nature of and the responsibility for the present tension in the Far East that is accepted by all the loyal Members of the League. That report lays upon the Assembly the duty of following closely the development of events in the Far East. It is in order to help us here to discharge that duty that I am making this statement.

There are three principal points to which I desire to draw the Assembly's attention.

1. The first point is that the whole issue remains open. The fact that the puppet appointed by alien taskmasters to do their bidding in the Chinese North-Eastern Provinces now calls himself an Emperor does not alter the character of the Covenant-breaking military occupation which China endures only while she must. The whole League has passed final judgment on that occupation and remains bound by its judgment.

The Chinese delegate a year ago said on this annual occasion:

"The Chinese Government views the situation in the Four Provinces as a standing violation of the treaties upon which the world is supposed to rely for security, disarmament and peace. It is determined steadfastly to maintain all its rights and claims and not to recognise and acquiesce in the illegal accomplished fact. That accomplished fact will remain only so long as it is physically impossible for my country or politically impossible for the rest of the League to vindicate the sanctity of the treaties. In maintaining this attitude we consider that we are not only doing what lies in our unaided power to preserve China's territorial integrity and political independence against Japanese aggression, but that in so doing we are resisting the attempt to convert the Covenant into a scrap of paper."

Since the Assembly adopted its unanimous report of February 24th, 1933, China has unwaveringly observed the obligations contained in its findings, and has hoped that the recommendations of the report could be enforced without delay. On the question of the non-recognition of the puppet State, China's attitude has remained adamant. She herself has not only upheld the principle of non-recognition, but considers that it devolves upon all States Members of the League and other States which have concurred in this principle to stand by it.

One remote State has, indeed, officially though obscurely, recognised the illegal organisation in the North-East of China, even though that State itself has scarcely any direct contact with the affairs of Eastern Asia. The circumstances of that recognition, as I have said, remain obscure. From China's standpoint as a Member of the League, she considers such action inconsistent with the Covenant — a proper matter for League review and discipline — and believes that no other Member State will ever in a like manner disregard international justice and violate the findings of a unanimous report and its own solemn obligations under that report. Treating this isolated instance as practically negligible, however theoretically serious, it is a very great thing that the judgment of the League has been kept inviolate in the face of opportunistic invitations to act otherwise. We Chinese are not unaware of the efforts to encourage a certain vagueness and uncertainty here and there in maintaining that inviolability. Of late, persistent attempts have been made to frighten States bound by the Assembly report by threatening them with economic penalties and trouble for their consuls in Manchuria if they do not recognise the illegal regime in that part of China, and by efforts to bribe them with specious offers of special economic advantages if they will succumb.

In this connection it may be recalled that the Assembly report contains, not only the obligation to refrain from *de jure* or *de facto* recognition, but from anything that might facilitate the maintenance of the present illegal regime. The Assembly Advisory Committee, in interpreting this obligation, pointed out that no protection could be afforded by Governments to their nationals seeking concessions at the hands of this illegal regime, which in international law is committing high treason in disposing of Chinese State property. Clearly, no claim based on such acts of exploitation can be recognised by China or by any other State bound by the Assembly report. It is equally clear that holders of concessions granted by the treaty-breaking authorities in Manchuria would render

themselves liable to prosecution for damages by the Chinese Government before the courts of any country bound by the Assembly report.

2. The second point I wish to make is that the League has a continuing responsibility in this matter. This responsibility is growing continually heavier with the increasing tension and menace to peace in the Far East. It cannot be affected by the refusal of any State to attend at Geneva. For the Covenant says that a State cannot cease to be a Member of the League until all its international obligations have been fulfilled. That is no accidental provision — it is a vital and fundamental obligation. The League as an instrument of peace would be a broken reed if a State could break the Covenant and then escape the consequences by withdrawing from the League. The Assembly has emphatically declared that the present military occupation of Manchuria is a violation of the Covenant, the Nine-Power Treaty and the Paris Pact. It is for the Assembly, as the guardian of the League's honour, to draw the obvious conclusion from its own declaration and from the provisions of the Covenant to which I have just alluded.

3. The third and most important point to which I wish to call your attention is the far-reaching effect on the whole world of the continuance of treaty-breaking aggression in the Far East. In its report condemning and fixing the responsibility for that aggression, the Assembly pointed out that the continuance of the present regime in Manchuria was incompatible with the maintenance of peace in the Far East.

The Lytton report¹ pointed out that no regime that had not secured the willing co-operation of the Chinese population in Manchuria could restore order and prosperity to that part of China, and added that the population was resolutely hostile to what it rightly regarded as an alien military dictatorship established by fraud and aggression. Events have unhappily proved how right the Assembly was to adopt this view of the situation created by the occupation of our North-Eastern Provinces.

Far from having improved, the situation to-day has drifted farther away from what the League expected of it, and decided in regard to it. In March of this year that illegal organisation actually declared itself an imperial State, and its puppet styled himself Emperor. Although the character and status of this puppet State remain unaltered thereby, the illegality of the issue has thus assumed more menacing proportions.

When the Assembly adopted its report eighteen months ago, it had before it the findings of the Lytton Commission, which drew a terrible picture of the conditions produced by the Japanese invasion, concluding with the statement that "Manchuria for a year past has been given over to strife and turmoil. The population of a large, fertile and rich country has been subjected to conditions and distress such as it has probably never experienced before." That the situation is worse to-day is attested from unimpeachable and independent sources.

The Times, in London, on August 23rd, less than a month ago, published a despatch from its Mukden correspondent which states:

"There have been two attacks by bandits daily on an average since August 6th. A table issued by the 'Manchukuo' newspaper to-day

¹ Document C.663.M.320.1932.VII.

² Document C.663.M.320.1932.VII, page 138.

also lists thirty-one bridges destroyed, sixteen overturnings of trains due to derailments, and ninety-one attacks on stations along the Eastern section of the Chinese Eastern Railway. Reports reaching the foreign authorities here indicate that danger from bandits to foreigners travelling outside the trunk system has increased."

The next day, on August 24th, *The Times* again published a cable as follows:

"The oft-repeated platitude, 'now that peace and order have been restored', which prefaces many of the pronouncements concerning 'Manchukuo', is afforded little confirmation in the list of outrages by bandits in a single day's news. On Saturday, thirty-three out of thirty-six Korean settlers in a village seventeen miles north-west of Chaohotze were slaughtered by bandits near the north mausoleum in Mukden; on Wednesday, three Japanese workmen were killed by bandits on the Kirin-Tumen railway; on Tuesday, an armoured train running between Haiaochiu and Mifeng stations, on the Eastern section of the North Manchuria Railway, was attacked by bandits after the locomotive and four cars had been derailed."

As the lurid list of attacks and disorder just quoted refers to the trunk system, the conditions in the rest of Manchuria may be left to legitimate imagination.

Very recently the palace of the puppet Emperor in his so-called capital was set on fire, and one of the biggest Japanese aerodromes just outside the so-called capital was, at the second attempt, burned to the ground last April, at a loss of many millions of yen.

It is apparent that this is guerrilla warfare on a widespread scale. A convenient name for spreading opprobrium is "banditry", and doubtless there is lawlessness in Manchuria with only such private motivation. But so far as the burning of palaces and aerodromes and the wrecking of railways and the attacks on troops and troop trains is a movement of protest and resistance by a downtrodden population against enormous illegal military oppression, it is in a long and fine tradition of causes that never conceive themselves hopeless and keep up sporadic warfare until the opportunity shall arise for final deliverance.

Manchuria to-day still presents, in essentials, the same picture as it did when the occupation first started — namely, of a Japanese army on active service holding many cities and the railway-lines and endeavouring to cow the population by incessant punitive expeditions. The idea that it is possible to restore law and order, let alone achieve prosperity, under an alien military occupation flies in the face of facts and flouts the lessons of history.

The repercussions of the treaty-breaking occupation of our North-Eastern Provinces are not limited to the Far East. All Europe, every nation anxious about its boundaries or its security, has suffered from what the nations of the League have failed as yet to do, or have been faint in doing — to support the judgment pronounced by the League.

But the spreading consequences have not been purely evil. The impending entry of the Soviet Union into the League and the ever closer co-operation between the League and the United States of America may be ascribed, in part at least, to the impact of events in the Far East. There is, too, a livelier and more widespread recognition of the growing importance of the Far East in world affairs. It might be exaggerated to say that the world's political centre of gravity is shifting from Europe to the Far East. It is only the melancholy

truth that the Pacific is becoming the world's storm centre. Unhappily, there is no doubt at all that the continued military occupation of our North-Eastern Provinces already constitutes in the world to-day the most urgent danger of another great war. It is also becoming evident that the danger of war in the Far East is closely and inseparably linked with the prospects of peace in Europe.

At the Economic Conference, the Chinese delegate drew attention to the potentialities of the Chinese market and to the fact that the Chinese Government has for some time been executing a big programme of national reconstruction with the technical co-operation of the League. That programme, as you see from the report of the League's technical agent, covers every field of national reconstruction, such as the building of roads, the improving of silk, tea and cotton culture, education, health and so forth. At the present time there are only a few League experts in China, and their task is confined to investigations and planning of a technical character entirely dissociated from political issues. The development of air and rail transport, the vigorous campaign against the abuse of opium and drugs, and other aspects of reconstruction, are being pursued by the Government apart from the technical co-operation of the League but within the same general plan of national reconstruction. As to the means of achieving the most beneficial results from this work, that is obviously and entirely a question of domestic policy to be determined and carried out by China in the exercise of her sovereign rights. No other State has any justification or right whatever to interfere with this policy. China is gratified that her position in this regard has the support of all the nations that are interested in the policy of co-operation between the East and West, as testified by the action taken by the leading Chancelleries after the declaration from Tokio last April.

The Chinese Government is still struggling with great difficulties and the work still to be accomplished is immense. But we feel that our feet are on firm ground, that we are advancing in the right direction and that time is on our side. If only international peace can be preserved, we are confident that China's progress will be steady and rapid.

I have now put before you, as clearly and briefly as I can, and in a spirit of sober realism, what appear to the Government of China to be the salient features of the world situation in relation to Far-Eastern problems and to the purpose of the League. China considers herself to be the Far-Eastern outpost of the League and of the whole idea of co-operation between East and West. That feeling has been strengthened by the fact that, through circumstances which were not of our seeking and from which we are the chief sufferers, we have, in the last eighteen months, become the sole representatives of the Far East in the League Council. We wish to strengthen all the links that bind us to the League, both in the technical and political field, in order to help us to withstand the pressure of those who would compel us to turn our backs on the West and to enter some kind of exclusive and unequal partnership in the name of "Asia for the Asiatics". We do not believe that the world should be divided into watertight compartments according to continents and races. We believe that peace can be preserved and civilisation can flourish only through a League that is strong because it is universal and reflects in its organisation all the great geographical areas of the world. The people of China have always believed in international justice, and that is why, in spite of all disappointments and reverses, we cling

to our faith in the League and to our determination to do all in our power to uphold the Covenant and to cleave to the ways of peace.

I will conclude on a note of strength for the League and hope for the future. If China is the foundation of Asia, as she is, Russia is the uniting arch of Europe and Asia. China warmly welcomes the prospect of Russia's immediate entrance into the comity of the League of Nations. Russia's collaborative work in the Disarmament Conference is a happy augury of her influence now that she is about to enter the League membership. She has contributed the most clear and acute definition of the aggressor. China is Russia's neighbour over the longest stretch of continuous boundary anywhere in Asia or Europe. We have a common interest in the preservation of peace in the Far East and the Pacific, and we are glad that, from now on, our joint efforts for peace can be co-ordinated within the framework of the League.

The President :

Translation : The Rt. Hon. Sir John Simon, first delegate of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, will address the Assembly.

Sir John Simon (United Kingdom) : I had not previously handed in my name to take part in this preliminary and general discussion, because I had taken the view (which I think is shared by some other delegations here) that the interest of the League of Nations at this time would be best served if the present debate was limited to those who had special points to make, and if we passed as soon as possible to the real business of the present meetings, which is to carry through to a practical conclusion some immediate and important matters which await treatment and which, when they have been dealt with in a practical spirit, will constitute items of actual achievement. I agree with Dr. Beneš in an observation which he made when occupying your Chair, Mr. President, on Monday, that the true remedy for the serious situation in which the League of Nations undoubtedly stands is to carry on steadily all the practical work we can do.

Taking the view, therefore, for myself, that in present circumstances the League of Nations will not establish its authority or increase its usefulness by general observations addressed to the Assembly from this tribune, I had intended to abstain, but one or two observations made here yesterday by the Polish representative make me fear that silence might be misinterpreted, and I therefore beg leave to make, in three or four sentences, a comment and a declaration on what Colonel Beck said.

My honourable friend, the Polish Foreign Minister, dealt in his speech with two matters. The first was a proposal for the universalisation of international protection of minorities, a proposal which has been embodied in a draft resolution already submitted by the Polish delegation, and, I believe, already referred for consideration to the Sixth Committee. That is one of the two matters with which Colonel Beck dealt.

The second matter touched upon by the Polish Foreign Minister was the particular position of certain States at present bound by minority provisions.

I must point out that these two matters are entirely distinct from one another. The obligations already entered into by any particular State by treaty in relation to this subject cannot be regarded as depending upon the decision which is hereafter reached upon more general proposals. No doubt

the whole matter will be referred to and dealt with in the Sixth Committee. It would be out of place, and it is no part of my intention, to discuss it here. All that I think it my duty to say here and now is that the conclusion which is reached on the first proposal is one which is quite independent of the present position of obligation of the States bound by minority treaties. I shall be excused for intervening to make this simple observation because Colonel Beck, in concluding his speech yesterday, made use of the following words : " Pending the putting into force of a general and uniform system for the protection of minorities, my Government ", he said, " is compelled to refuse, as from to-day, all co-operation with the international organs in the matter of the supervision of the application by Poland of the system for minority protection."

I do not know exactly how the above sentence is to be interpreted. No doubt it will be fully explained in the Sixth Committee ; but the country which I and the United Kingdom delegation represent, together with some other Powers, is a party to the Polish Minorities Treaty. Poland accepted certain treaty obligations with regard to minorities which included the guarantee of the League of Nations. I would add, in this connection, that the terms of Article 93 of the Treaty of Versailles, coming as it does in that part of the Treaty dealing with the establishment of the boundaries of Poland, cannot be overlooked. Poland has further accepted a certain procedure which is laid down in certain Council resolutions as to the manner in which this guarantee should be exercised — a procedure which clearly implies the co-operation of Poland. These resolutions become binding on Poland by reason of her acceptance of them, and it is clear that it would not be possible for any State to release itself from obligations of this kind, thus entered into, by unilateral action.

I am far from suggesting that this was in fact the intention of my honourable friend the Polish Foreign Minister, and I make these few observations with the greatest courtesy for the sake of promoting clearness. The matter is one of such importance to the League of Nations as a whole that I must at once put on record the view of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom which I have just formulated, and the question can then be further discussed, so far as I am concerned, in the Sixth Committee. I feel that silence on our part might contribute to any misunderstanding which might arise, however little Colonel Beck may have intended it, from the actual words which he used yesterday. Having thus discharged what I believe to be my duty and having thus protected the position, so far as His Majesty's Government is concerned, I resume my seat.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Barthou, first delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Barthou (France) :

Translation : I have not come to the platform to take part in a general discussion the value and significance of which have not up to the present lain in the direction of the particular questions to which I myself shall have to devote my attention. My statement, therefore, which will be as brief as it will be definite, will be confined to the one point which has given rise to it.

The Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs yesterday raised a question concerning the future application of the Minorities Treaty concluded between Poland and the principal Allied Powers on June

28th, 1919. As this discussion has been opened, it is only natural that the other signatories to that Treaty should define their attitude. The representative of the United Kingdom has just done so in no uncertain terms. France, which was also a signatory of the Treaty of June 28th, 1919, held the presidency of the Peace Conference during which it was concluded; I therefore consider myself bound in loyalty to associate myself entirely with Sir John Simon's conclusions.

I feel all the more free to say so because France, with the strength that comes of unity, has never been actuated, either directly or remotely, by motives of self-interest when examining the question of minorities. For fifteen years, whether in the Council or on Council Committees, her representatives have been guided by two considerations only: to ensure that the rights of the populations are respected; to ensure that the protection provided by the treaties is not transformed — by abuses to which even those rights that are most worthy of respect may give rise — into an instrument of political interference in the sovereign life of States.

France is therefore being perfectly logical in examining the problem raised before the Assembly exclusively from the point of view of the respect for treaties. She does not intend to preclude any possibility in the matter of modifications, the principle of which is accepted in the treaties themselves, but she does not think that any single Power has the right to make such modifications unilaterally, still less to denounce treaties, outside the procedure provided, or without negotiating with the other contracting Powers. She refuses to believe that that construction is to be placed on the statement made by M. Beck yesterday.

My friend the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs raised two questions to which he expected a "clear and unequivocal reply". He would have been exercising an unquestionable right, in spite of the somewhat unexpected form to which he had recourse, had he not run the risk of confronting the Assembly with a threat or even with a *fait accompli*. Such an example, which other countries might desire to follow, would imperil at once the authority of the treaties and the mandate they have conferred upon the League. France, the friend and ally of Poland, cannot believe that M. Beck's statement carries such consequences in its train. She thinks that this statement, understood in its true sense, will cease to arouse anxiety in some or to bring temptation to others. Thus, Poland's initiative may be in accordance with the respect for principles and with the conditions embodied in the treaties to which the Polish nation gave its free consent, when it recovered the "independence of which it was unjustly deprived".

The President :

Translation : M. Yépes, delegate of Colombia, will address the Assembly.

M. Yépes (Colombia) :

Translation : I desire to say here, on behalf of the Colombian delegation, what an excellent impression was made upon me by the report submitted to the Assembly by the Secretary-General, whose political insight and clear vision of international problems are recognised by us all.

As Colombians, we desire solemnly to register our gratitude to the League of Nations for its effective contribution to the solution of the Leticia dispute, which all but caused two Latin-American nations to come to grips with one another. Thanks largely to the intervention of the League, and thanks also to the pacific spirit of the American nations,

it has been possible to settle this dispute in a manner which respects the dignity of the two countries in question and the general interests of peace. Relations between Colombia and Peru, which last year hung like a great cloud over American politics, have become quite cordial again. Now that the difference has been smoothed out, there is not the slightest feeling of bitterness between the two nations, and collaboration between Colombia and Peru is now consolidated as one of the essential pillars of international politics in the New World. It is one of the characteristics of Latin America that hatred between one nation and another does not exist there. After a dispute, the spirit of fraternity transcends all, since our countries practise moral disarmament as completely as they do material disarmament. That is why it may be said that the New World is a continent, not only from a geographical but also, and more particularly, from a political and moral point of view.

The beneficent intervention of the League in the matter of Leticia has confirmed a legal result which we desire to emphasise here. It is this: the League's jurisdiction now extends to Latin America as well as to all the other parts of the world. Those who maintained that Article 21 of the Covenant and the Monroe Doctrine prevented League action in the New World were mistaken. We Latin-Americans hope that its action may daily become more widespread and more effective in maintaining peace. Our aspirations in regard to the universality of our international organisation can never harmonise with the desires of those who would make of the New World a preserve where the influence of Geneva could not be brought to bear.

May the example given by Colombia and Peru serve to act as an inducement to two sister nations — the only ones between whom there is still any considerable matter of dispute — to settle their differences in a spirit of international solidarity and real American co-operation. That day will be a day of rejoicing for all America. Peace is so great a boon that it deserves that all save national honour should be sacrificed to it.

Naturally, in a document which contains as many facts and is as full of practical information as is the Secretary-General's report, it is perhaps not possible to mention all the international happenings throughout the whole world during the period which has elapsed since the last session of the Assembly. Indeed, when perusing the report, I was surprised not to find the least allusion there to an important fact in international life which we have no right to ignore — I refer to the Pan-American Union and its recent activities in spheres in which it has collaborated in the work of peace and international co-operation which the League is striving to accomplish.

Since the last session of the Assembly, the seventh Pan-American Conference has been held at Montevideo. All the States of the New World took part, most of them being Members both of the Pan-American Union and of the League of Nations. This Conference, for the first time in the history of Pan-Americanism, formally received a Committee sent by the League, and also showed itself prepared to collaborate with the League in the restoration of peace in South America. In this way a bond was really forged between the two greatest international institutions in history. That is a great event, which deserves special mention in the League Assembly.

The time has come to say quite plainly that the League of Nations and the Pan-American Union can no longer ignore one another, as they have done up to the present. Each has much to learn from the

other. The experience acquired by the Pan-American Union during half a century of active life may be extremely useful to the League, and, similarly, the Pan-American Union may derive great advantages from contact with the great Geneva institution. Moreover, the lack of official and continuous relations between the League and the Pan-American Union has been fatal to the maintenance and preservation of peace in South America. The fact that the unhappy civil war between Paraguay and Bolivia — I say "civil war", because we Americans regard wars between our countries as civil wars between children of one and the same fatherland — that this absurd war could go on, in spite of the efforts made to stop it, is largely due to the lack of regular relations between the League and the Pan-American Union. I wonder whether it would not long ago have been possible to put an end to the fratricidal struggle, and whether the world could not have been spared the spectacle of a useless war if, at the outset, these two organisations had been able to combine their efforts for peace. The instrument of co-ordination was lacking, however, and both the League and the Pan-American Union have been powerless to impose peace, because the belligerents used the pretext that the controversy was being dealt with by one or other institution to prevent action being taken by either. The Montevideo Conference, which was anxious and also had the power to put an end to the carnage, was paralysed, because the problem had already been submitted to the League; and at the moment when Geneva will be able to submit an effective solution, a pretext will be found, if so desired, for passing the question back to the Pan-American Union.

In the interests of the prestige of both these great international institutions, it is absolutely necessary that this anomaly should cease forthwith. A permanent connection must be established between the two institutions. The Montevideo Conference itself took an important step in this direction. The resolution it passed on December 16th, 1933, constitutes a real programme of international action. It seems to me the Assembly's duty is to seek a means of completing the work so wisely begun on the other side of the Atlantic. I venture to think this question of sufficient importance to justify the Secretary-General of the League devoting to it a chapter of his report to the Assembly. I should like to think that the Assembly desired to act in conjunction with the Pan-American Union, by giving effect to the latter's noble initiative.

There is another reason which confirms the need for co-ordinating the work of the League and that of the Pan-American Union.

The Pan-American Union has undertaken, with great success, the codification of public and private international law. This work is on the agenda of all the international conferences organised in the New World. The Conference of Havana and that of Montevideo made considerable progress in the work of codification. Thanks to the steps taken at Montevideo by all the American Republics, the work of codifying international law will shortly have received a fresh impetus. It does not seem logical that the League of Nations should hold aloof from the work being accomplished by an important group of its Members in association with other States — Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador and the United States — which do not belong to our Institution.

Since the failure of the Conference for the Codification of International Law, convened by the League in 1930, all codification work has been stopped as far as the League is concerned, and this in spite of the recommendations of the Hague Conference, which constitute a whole programme

— and an obligatory one — for the League. This programme must be carried out, especially as the Pan-American Conference at Montevideo has dealt with at least one of these recommendations.

Now, more than ever in the history of the world, a statement, or a codification, of the great principles of international law is necessary, in order to give mankind, which has lost its bearings and is struggling in the midst of spiritual, intellectual and political anarchy, a number of inviolable rules of law calculated to save it from the disorder into which it has fallen as a result of forgetting the great moral ideas which have always guided nations throughout history.

In the absence of action by the Governments and official institutions, the learned societies which devote themselves to the study of international law have decided to take in hand a statement of the great international principles that must be respected by all nations. These societies have already nominated a single rapporteur¹ and a draft declaration has already been submitted. The International Diplomatic Academy, which carries authority throughout the world, has appointed a commission of eminent jurists and diplomats, which is shortly to meet to discuss this draft. Similarly, the *Institut de droit international* and the International Law Association, whose authority in scientific matters is beyond all question, are also dealing with all these problems.

It is with feelings of the greatest regret that we note that all this vast work of codifying international law is carried on outside the League, which ought to be its centre and its inspiration. The League cannot, without failing in one of its essential duties, maintain its passive attitude in face of a juridical movement which may transform the whole of international life. According to the Preamble to the Covenant, the League was set up for the purpose of the "firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among Governments".

How can it fulfil this duty if it takes no part in the drawing-up of the principles of international law which the Pan-American Union and the learned societies already mentioned are about to adopt? I would ask the Assembly to think very carefully over this grave problem, and to deal with it without delay. Let us give spiritual content to the League. The League is itself an act of faith. It needs a flame, a faith, an ideal. What better ideal could it be given than the codification of international law and the establishment of severe penalties for transgressors, as the only effective means of establishing the reign of justice and peace among the nations?

Much is being said to-day about a so-called League crisis. That is a mistaken judgment. There is certainly a crisis, but it is a crisis of characters, due to the failures of men and Governments. The Covenant is a perfect instrument of human civilisation and peace, provided it is sincerely applied. But — and this must be said quite definitely — it never has been applied integrally, and, what is more, there has never been any serious intention of applying it.

Whether through weakness or through fear of committing themselves for the future, the Governments have constantly evaded doing their whole duty and applying the Covenant in full. The League cannot be held responsible for these failures. We are all responsible — the States themselves are responsible. It is really hypocrisy to criticise the League for being powerless to impose respect for its decisions, when those who criticise it are the very

¹ The eminent Latin-American jurist, M. Alejandro Alvarez.

ones who refuse it the aid of the "secular arm" and the international force which it so greatly needs.

That is why international law must be codified, in order to provide a clear definition of the rights and duties of States. All gaps through which bad faith and fear of responsibility can find an outlet must be filled. The obligations of the Governments must be clearly defined, so that all those may be pilloried before world public opinion who, on account of their breaches of the law, must be placed outside the pale of civilisation.

As long as this essential task remains undone, the peace of the world will be undermined to an ever greater extent, and it will be impossible to say that the work of international organisation undertaken since the inception of the League is founded on solid bases. In conclusion, I will say this, that peace is not merely the physical absence of war; it is, above and before all, the reign of law.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency Baron Aloisi, first delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

Baron Aloisi (Italy) :

Translation : The speech which my eminent colleague, the first delegate of Poland, delivered here yesterday suggests to me a few considerations which do not relate to the substance of the minorities question — especially as that question is not, from a practical point of view, of importance to Italy — but are considerations of a general character.

Poland asks that, in the matter of the protection of minorities, the Assembly should acknowledge the need for a general convention, and at the same time adds that, while awaiting the putting into force of a uniform general scheme for the protection of minorities, she is obliged to refuse all co-operation with international bodies in connection with the

supervision of the application of the existing Convention.

As regards the second part of this statement, I have no doubt that it was intended by the Polish representative to be taken in close relationship with the proposal which preceded it. Indeed, if it were to be regarded as an isolated statement, it would be tantamount to a simple unilateral rejection of an international undertaking. If, on the other hand, this proposal is considered — as is only logical — to be closely bound up with the other proposal, it is really tantamount to a statement suggesting that new regulations, perhaps better adapted to existing circumstances, should replace the former system, which was drawn up fifteen years ago and is now regarded as no longer suitable to the requirements of our time. Such a proposal is really only a proposal for revision.

It is a matter of common knowledge that my country was the first to put forward the idea that treaties should be adapted to the changing requirements of the time, as that was the best means of ensuring the maintenance of peace; but at the same time we have always affirmed that such adaptation must be effected by legal means.

From these governing principles of Italian policy, there emerge two consequences. The first is that existing engagements must be respected until they are replaced by new provisions. The second is that the idea of revision is not an empirical criterion, the application of which depends on circumstances, but a general principle.

Consequently, if it is considered expedient to apply this principle in the case under consideration, it must at the same time be accepted for other questions which are also governed by provisions arising out of the Peace Conference, and which might seem even less adequate to meet the exigencies of the present situation.

The Assembly rose at 12.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH, 1934, AT 4.30 P.M.

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27. — DISPUTE BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND PARAGUAY : APPEAL BY THE BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT UNDER ARTICLE 15 OF THE COVENANT : COMMUNICATION BY THE DELEGATE OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC.

The President :

Translation : Before beginning our agenda, I call upon the first delegate of the Argentine Republic, who has a communication to make to the Assembly with reference to the conflict between Bolivia and Paraguay.

M. Cantilo (Argentine Republic) :

Translation : In my speech on Wednesday, when referring to my country's general policy, I had occasion to recall the constant efforts made by my Government to put an end to the war in the Chaco.

To-day I have to give the Assembly certain additional information on this important question.

Without discussing in detail — that would take up too much of our time — the many steps taken by my Government to bring about a pacific settlement of the conflict, I may say that, ever since the first encounters in the Chaco, in 1932, the Argentine Chancellery has concerned itself with this problem and given it its most serious consideration.

It strongly supported the action of the Commission of Neutrals at Washington ; it then associated itself with the other neighbouring countries ; it maintained the principle that in America territorial disputes cannot be settled by force of arms — a principle which found expression in the declaration signed by nineteen American States on August 3rd, 1932. It called the Mendoza meeting, at which the Argentine and Chilean Ministers for Foreign Affairs agreed on a formula of arbitration to be laid before the belligerents. There followed, among many other efforts, in which the Argentine Republic always played a part, the Conference at Montevideo, the support given to the Commission sent by the Council of the League — a whole series of efforts, inspired by the same feeling of confraternity and good-neighbourliness, which included a comprehensive survey of the economic factors that the conflict has brought into play.

Lastly, on July 12th last, there was the presentation of a plan for peace, generously and loyally supported by the United States of America and by Brazil. That plan, based upon principles solemnly proclaimed by the American countries and fully in keeping with their traditions, was accepted in principle by the two belligerents, who expressed their readiness to submit the subject of the dispute to a procedure of conciliation, and subsequently — should this be necessary — to arbitration by the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague. When, however, the moment came to define their acceptance of principle, the same divergence of views reappeared on either side.

The Argentine Republic, when attempting to find formulas of agreement and when collaborating in other similar efforts, has acted with the greatest impartiality, taking care to secure the approval of the parties and scrupulously respecting their sovereignty, and has always offered its good offices within the framework and in the spirit of the Covenant.

It submitted the plan for peace to which I have just referred, at a moment when neither the Council nor the Assembly was in session, but it duly advised the Council and the Committee of Three semi-officially of what it was doing.

To-day the Assembly is in session, and my country, as a Member of the Council, considers it its duty to lay before you the plan which, in July last, was submitted by it to the belligerents, in collaboration with the United States of Brazil and the United States of America.

The bases of that plan are as follows :

Whereas the Governments of Bolivia and of Paraguay have acceded to the Declaration of August 3rd, 1932, renouncing all territorial acquisitions obtained by force of arms ;

Whereas the two Governments have also subscribed to the Pact of Non-Aggression and Conciliation of Rio de Janeiro, under which the parties renounce war as an instrument for the settlement of international disputes, and the settlement of disputes of any kind must be effected only by the pacific means which have the sanction of international law ;

Whereas, independently of these general declarations, it is an undoubted fact that in America disputes relating to frontier questions have always been settled, in principle, by pacific means ;

Whereas, in consideration of these instruments, which involve the good faith and honour of the signatories, and in consideration of the aforesaid antecedents, the war in the Chaco has no *raison d'être*, since it is incompatible with the obligation assumed and with the antecedents referred to and may not have in view any object inconsistent with the rules of law ;

Whereas the Treaty of Rio was unreservedly accepted during the war and in consequence the dispute that led to the conflict must belong to the category to which it applies ;

Whereas the American Republics, by jointly and collectively entering into an undertaking under the aforesaid instruments, *ipso facto* sanctioned the principle that no war on that continent can be a matter of indifference to them ; and, either singly or in groups or together, they have entered into an undertaking to employ the lawful means at their disposal to prevent or arrest such war, a conception strengthened by the fact that they have ratified the Hague Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, which expressly authorises the employment of good offices or mediation at any stage of the dispute :

The Governments of interpreting the joint will of the American Republics, as expressed in the aforesaid instruments, make the following proposals and submit them for the consideration of Paraguay and Bolivia :

- (1) Bolivia and Paraguay ratify their intention to renounce all territorial conquests ;
- (2) Bolivia and Paraguay declare that in the present war they do not propose to acquire territories which rightly come within the jurisdiction of one or other country ;

(3) They declare also that any dispute still pending and not yet settled that may have been the cause of the conflict shall be settled by legal procedure ;

(4) In virtue of the foregoing considerations, the war in the Chaco shall be concluded at the earliest possible date ;

(5) Bolivia and Paraguay declare that they will appoint at the earliest possible date Plenipotentiaries who will meet in the city of Buenos Aires and come to an agreement as to the final cessation of hostilities and the measures of security necessary to ensure that result ;

(6) The Plenipotentiaries shall be authorised to set up the Conciliation Commission referred to in Article VI of the Pact of Non-Aggression of Rio de Janeiro, and that Commission shall apply, in the solution of the conflict, the procedure established in the said article, since the conflict in the Chaco can, by reason of its special character, be satisfactorily settled by a process of conciliation, which permits of considering factors of equity and mutual utility and other factors difficult to take into consideration under a system of purely legal arbitration.

(7) Should the conclusion arrived at prove ineffective, Bolivia and Paraguay undertake to submit the question to the arbitral award of the Permanent Court of International Justice, such arbitral award to be given within a period of three months, which may be extended by agreement between the parties.

These were the bases of agreement laid before the two countries by the Argentine Republic, Brazil and the United States of America.

I will not say that the negotiations entered into, in connection with the plan submitted to the belligerents, have actually failed, but they have not yet reached a successful conclusion.

I have brought these facts to the notice of the Assembly in order that the latter may take them into account when pursuing, with all the weight of its authority, the work of pacification to which my Government, with the assistance of the two great American countries, has once more been devoting its best efforts.

28. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SINCE THE FOURTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: CONTINUATION OF THE GENERAL DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion of the report on the work of the League of Nations since the fourteenth session of the Assembly.

His Excellency M. Mayard, delegate of Haiti, will address the Assembly.

M. Mayard (Haiti). — In expressing its views on the general statement of the work accomplished by the League of Nations since its fourteenth Assembly, the Haitian delegation feels bound in the first place to draw attention to the distressing international circumstance which has struck public opinion in Haiti and, indeed, throughout all the world.

This circumstance is that, after the fourteen years during which the Covenant, which, as

originally conceived and in its basic aims, was solemnly concluded to guarantee peace and security through active co-operation between nations, has been in operation, an open or latent state of war, either military or economic, exists in every continent.

Everywhere people are anxiously wondering whether, contrary to the hopes which the birth of our institution engendered, real international co-operation is only an unattainable chimera, or whether the form it was given was fundamentally unsuitable, or whether, through changes in its evolution, it has lost all efficacy, whether through the fault of the Members of the League, as Dr. Beneš has aptly suggested, or through customs unwisely established alongside and outside our constitutional rules by our active organs.

There are obviously two group-propelling tendencies in mankind: on the one hand, the synergetic association of their productive and spiritual forces combining to ensure peace and prosperity for all; and, on the other hand, the instinctive and egoistic manifestations, whether held as sacred or not, whether superhuman or merely inhuman, which still form the core of national power. These two contradictory tendencies, instead of balancing each other by means of a satisfactory compromise, as had been hoped since the nineteenth century even by some of the most realist minds, seem now to have reverted to the tragic culminating-point of their millennial conflict, thus bringing civilisation itself into deadly peril.

Small countries like mine, though fortunately not in a position to take part in the dangerous rivalries of world policy, are nevertheless obliged to keep as watchful an eye on those rivalries as if they were their own problems, because, when catastrophes occur, they find themselves drawn into the fray by an inescapable need to defend their culture and civilisation. In any case they suffer from the ruinous and lasting consequences of these catastrophes, which—as we are now painfully experiencing—affect the whole body of mankind.

In these circumstances, since all nations are thus bound together for better or for worse, my Government expresses the hope that within the League of Nations itself constant attention will be paid to the maintenance and strengthening of the organic clauses which ensure that each State Member, whatever its degree of strength, its geographical situation or other national characteristics of race, public wealth, language, custom or form of Government, shall have its full share in the work of peace.

My delegation is convinced that, in order to strengthen the League and devise useful means of facilitating the accession of new Members (for that seems to be a general desire) to overcome fears and susceptibilities in some quarters, and persuade others to act in a spirit of equity and co-operation, it is absolutely necessary that each Member should be actively associated in the accomplishment of the common task, so that none should imagine that, instead of the effective collaboration of States, there has grown up a dangerous government bureaucracy of the kind so strongly criticised in national organisations.

My country believes that the definite aims outlined in the Covenant and the spirit that inspired it can be achieved. It bases this conviction on the changes which have just occurred in the New World, and from which the Republic on whose behalf I have the honour to speak has particularly benefited.

The principles of international equality, compulsory arbitration for the settlement of disputes between nations small and great, mutual respect

for each other's political independence and territorial security, cordial co-operation between the peoples and their Governments—all these principles have just been triumphantly vindicated in America.

In clear and well-chosen phraseology, the first delegate of the Argentine Republic told you at the beginning of this general discussion that, in our part of the world, aggressive racialism transformed into a religious and political system, artificial discriminations that lead to revolution and war, are non-existent, and that even armed conflicts regarding frontier questions appear to be only disputes regarding a succession and, once settled, permit of the revival of a spirit of fraternity.

For eighteen years my country, though never legally deprived of its sovereignty, was in practice entirely debarred from exercising it.

As during the whole of her history Haiti has been engaged in a struggle to ensure, and even to help to ensure for other neighbouring communities, the right of self-determination, she had to resort to all methods, drastic and peaceful alike, in order to regain her full independent political status.

Her claims naturally received the sympathetic support of the whole of Latin America. Liberal opinion in the United States of America echoed and powerfully seconded her demands. Finally, since 1929, under President Hoover's Republican administration, matters began to improve greatly for ourselves and for the other sister-countries known as "countries with an amended Constitution".

On the assumption of office by President Roosevelt, who had belonged to the "Presidential family" of the Democratic President Woodrow Wilson, the main promoter of the Covenant which has brought us together here, everyone felt that the new inter-American policy "of goodwill" would be accentuated and perfected.

It was remembered that the Head of the new administration had some time previously denounced the international isolation of his country and had in set terms criticised the abusive interpretation and extension of the doctrine to which the United States had traditionally subordinated its continental policy.

Mr. Roosevelt, reviving a spirit of optimism in America and, indeed, throughout the world, wrote:

"President Wilson has brought mankind the great hope that, by an association of nations, the world would eliminate armed conflicts and substitute reason and collective action for the old appeal to arms. Regarded by many as a mere experiment, that association, the League of Nations, has, even without America's participation, become for the rest of the world in recent years the principal body for the settlement of international controversies, for constructive action and for the correction of the evils that had become only too common to civilisation. . . . America can collaborate officially and to the full with any body studying and working to abolish the common ills of mankind, and can renounce for ever the practice of intervening arbitrarily in the internal affairs of her neighbours. . . ." (*Dictionnaire diplomatique*, page 856.)

Such statements, read in the light of recent events in the other hemisphere, lead me to wonder why it should be rash to hope that the road from Port-au-Prince, through Havana and Managua, might perhaps lead President Roosevelt one day to Geneva in resumption of the idealist policies

which his master and predecessor, Wilson, inaugurated in the interest of world peace.

When, therefore, at the last Pan-American Conference at Montevideo, the Latin-American nations demonstrated more clearly than ever their attitude of mutual solidarity, and renewed their declarations of faith in respect for the rights of all States, whether strong or weak, the United States of North America was able to proclaim its definite intention not to intervene, in spite of all contrary interests, and the Legislature itself presently incorporated this principle as a rule of the foreign policy of the North-American Confederation.

Thus in practice the Haitian nation has, since October 14th, 1930, once again renewed its free participation in the Government of its affairs.

Gradually United States intervention has been decreasing. In the spring of this year, visits were exchanged between the Haitian Chief of State and the Chief of State of the United States of America. M. Stenio Vincent went to Washington and President Roosevelt came to Haiti in order to reach a final settlement of all matters that were contrary to the aspirations of the Haitian people. On August 15th there was no longer a single United States service or agent in our territory.

Relations between all the countries of America have once more become normal.

Those countries which it has now become customary to call the countries of Latin America have, under the impulsion of Brazil and the Argentine Republic, signed among themselves a system of pacts of non-aggression, to which my country naturally acceded. They have, moreover, concluded numerous trade agreements consolidating the new order.

Thus there exists at present in our hemisphere a community of free national units enjoying equal rights, the most effective, if not the strongest conceivable, international group, because each unit has a positive interest in perpetuating the group and itself remaining within it.

Now that there no longer exist the grounds which have hitherto caused, in some quarters, apprehensions as to the principle of equality between States and their mutual obligations on the basis of justice and honour, as prescribed by the Covenant, and, in other quarters, legitimate misgivings as to the embodiment in the League's charter of the notorious "regional understandings" of Article 21, the event of capital importance which has just taken place in the New World is surely such as to encourage the League itself to hope that it will before long bring within its circle, to the general benefit of world peace, all the American States which are not yet members, including the State whose absence from Geneva has only too often made League action, which all the peoples have anxiously awaited, seem lacking in consistency or courage, or purely illusory.

Haiti itself, whose origin as a free people is due to France's generous assertion and practical observance of the rights of man and of peoples, has always felt it to be an obligation it owes to history to raise its voice — notwithstanding its small population and area — in defence of those rights whenever they have appeared to be flouted in any part of the world.

Accordingly, at the last Assembly, in 1933, at the time when our national claims were entering on a critical phase, the Haitian delegation, voicing the aspirations of Haitian public opinion and the views of the Haitian Government, felt bound to ask the League to embody amongst its fundamental principles the obligation of States to give equal protection to all inhabitants of their territory, and *a fortiori* to their own nationals, without distinction of race, language or creed.

Without going into the special features with which such a postulate, constituting as it does the foundation of modern public law, may have to cope in some continents, we felt that discriminatory treatment, based on a purely political need to arouse the passion of the masses in order to subjugate them, was importing an element calculated to intensify to a dangerous extent forms of competition between nations which are liable to obstruct or delay the aims of peaceful co-operation which we are pursuing here.

At the same time we had to avoid appearing ourselves to take sides in this matter from a racial standpoint, since such was contrary to our true intentions.

It would certainly be a mistake to take such a view. The people of Haiti, who are a mixed race, recognise in their public law the equality of all beliefs, and are proud to think that they are now not one species of men but Man himself, the man of the future, in whom all faces are fused and merged, and no longer strive together because they are reconciled among themselves.

Be that as it may, my Government asked for a world-wide scientific institution, situated in Europe, to formulate with the League our desire that there should be introduced into the international law which you are elaborating the rule, adumbrated more than a century and a half ago, of the equality of all before the law, without distinction, in the national groupings.

This institution — I am referring to the Académie diplomatique established in Paris and working in Paris — has from the moment of its establishment made itself the apostle of this ideal of social and international peace. My Government accordingly invited the permanent Secretary-General of the Académie to join the Haitian delegation for this particular purpose, without concerning himself with our other obligations as an American State belonging to the League, with which I am myself concerned.

We accordingly asked the fourteenth Assembly to summon a conference to study the natural rights of man and their embodiment in a system of international juridical guarantees. The Haitian delegation hopes that this proposal will be taken into consideration in the discussions of the Sixth Committee.

In this connection, I may be allowed to recall with pride that my country, which from its first beginnings has been imbued with this international spirit, has always conformed strictly to all its obligations within the community of peoples. The individual histories of so many nations of the western hemisphere are evidence of this.

In fact, in 1932 a North-American diplomat, highly esteemed for his previous career in Paris, in presenting his credentials to the President of the Haitian Republic, stated for the first time in any American official utterance that Haitians had fought and bled for the independence of the United States of America.

At the beginning of the same year 1932, a further tribute, which we are anxious to place on record, was formally paid us in a message addressed to the Finance Committee of the American Senate by the Secretary of State, Mr. Stimson. In the course of a review of our financial relations with foreign countries, he took occasion to note that the people of Haiti had always scrupulously fulfilled its obligations, even at the cost of the most pressing necessities of its national services — a fact that obviously does not justify all the disappointments we have sustained, but which, on the contrary, places us in the forefront among the States that are conscious of their responsibilities towards other States.

Now that I have shown that the situation in my country is once more normal in every respect, and that a satisfactory view of international co-operation is now taken in the western hemisphere, my delegation desires to express the hope that :

(1) In view of this state of affairs, the League's efforts will meet with a readiness on the part of Bolivia and Paraguay, States Members of the League, to reach at an early date a solution of the regrettable conflict which has lined up these two countries against each other, in such a manner as to justify the saying honoured among the American peoples that "frontiers are made to unite rather than to divide".

(2) Just as in the case of the dispute between Peru and Colombia, solutions may be found for the Sino-Japanese dispute, the Hungaro-Yugoslav incidents and all similar incidents, as also in the case of those disputed territories whose ultimate fate is to be determined by plebiscites — solutions which, peacefully conducted by the League, may enable the parties concerned to accept the resultant legal situation.

(3) Remembering that Léon Bourgeois himself was not prepared to rely on the existing inadequate acceptance of the peace doctrine as a means of ensuring the Gospel promise of peace on earth, my delegation hopes that powers to impose sanctions — powers that may be acceptable to all — will be conferred upon the League as a means of enforcing its decisions.

(4) We trust that the increasingly urgent needs of the world and the universally recognised wisdom and usefulness of the League will lead those Members who, for the time being, have left the League, to return to it, and that those peoples who have not hitherto collaborated with us will join us, whatever their form of Government and whatever feelings of mistrust they may inspire, in order that, having joined the League and become subject to its rules of association, their national activities may develop without injury to those of other nations.

(5) Lastly, my delegation hopes that, in order to consolidate its prestige and universalise its action — which is a consummation at least as indispensable as the universalisation of its membership — the League may have the opportunity to consider more closely the world's economic problems, which are more vital and more imperiously urgent than the political or even the social problems, which are frequently dependent on the economic problems, in respect to both their origin and their solution. We hope that it will be able to evince in its own organisation, as it is endeavouring to do (witness the Secretary-General's admirable report), the principles of equality as between Members of the League in respect of their mutual rights and duties, and that its work may no longer be open to criticism as being costly and of purely academic value, and that world opinion will compel national Governments to evolve from these principles a common international law.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Caeiro da Mata, first delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

M. Caeiro da Mata (Portugal) :

Translation : I should not have come to this platform had there not been a special reason which made it imperatively necessary for me to do so. This is the first meeting of the Assembly since it adopted an important proposal made by Portugal for modifying the composition of the Council of

the League and appointed the Portuguese representative to fill the new vacancy created on the Council. I therefore owe you the thanks of my Government for the mark of confidence you have shown in it. It is endeavouring to show itself worthy of that confidence by its faith in our common task and by its devotion to that task.

The report on the work of the League since the fourteenth session of the Assembly is a remarkable document and does honour to the Secretary-General and his colleagues. It enables us to follow the manifold activities of the League and reveals to us in striking fashion the great difficulties it has too often had to face in the accomplishment of its task.

Political embarrassments, social unrest, inconsistencies of all kinds arising out of the war, financial difficulties, economic malaise, disorganisation of the international machinery for the distribution of credit, a general wave of speculation and a universal tendency towards the expansion of plant, involving tremendous mistakes in the direction of over-capitalisation, severe economic depression throughout the world caused by the constant fall in the price of raw materials — all this constitutes the background of the picture of the present position, which the report faithfully depicts.

The eminent delegate of Czechoslovakia, M. Beneš, in his opening speech at this Assembly, described the general political situation and the activities of the League. On the whole, that objective and impartial study was not unfavourable to our institution, and I associate myself with his conclusions. The League has a source of strength derived from its origin. A great French statesman, whose memory still abides with us, Aristide Briand, often said so, and sometimes in moving circumstances. This source of strength is the Covenant. The Covenant is the constitutional law of the League, which all its Members must honour and respect. No one can be a Member of the League who is not loyal to the letter and spirit of the Covenant. I am in entire agreement with the firm and unequivocal statements made this morning by Sir John Simon and M. Barthou.

As the instrument created to ensure peace, the League has had and still has the onerous task of clearing up the difficult situations which the world war left as its heritage. That work is not finished, and it often complicates the achievement of the two great objects assigned by the Covenant to our institution — namely, the development of co-operation between nations and the maintenance of peace.

I am one of those believers who refuse to admit that war is firmly rooted in human nature and inevitable in the development of communities. I believe that war, like all other human crimes, can be prevented, and that at a more advanced stage of society it will be put down and punished. Nevertheless, in spite of the intense work of propaganda and education already carried out in the most civilised countries of the world, this creative work of solidarity is only just painfully emerging from a crisis which threatened to destroy it. We have anxiously followed this League crisis, which was happily only a growing-pain from which the League will recover all the stronger, and which is largely explained by the relative lack of success attending some of its activities.

The fact that the failure of the Monetary and Economic Conference and the temporary adjournment of the Disarmament Conference happened just at the time when two great Powers announced that they were leaving our institution was what made the crisis so serious. I will not go into the causes of the crisis or the means whereby it may

be overcome. I will merely say that the League's work has become more stable during the last few months, that it has achieved successes in the fields of international security and the maintenance of peace, and these successes are restoring the confidence which was temporarily shaken. Thus, the settlement of the frontier dispute between Hungary and Yugoslavia, the signing of the Peace Protocol at Rio de Janeiro between Colombia and Peru and the organisation of the Saar plebiscite are so many striking achievements which the methods and machinery of the League have rendered possible. The League is thus pursuing the tasks assigned to it by the Covenant, and pursuing them, moreover, in an atmosphere of calm and dignity. It will succeed.

As the crisis is universal, there is a ready tendency to think that the remedy can come only from an institution like the League, whose ideal is universality; but that is a confusion of thought which must be avoided. We must not forget that the League is a collective body whose existence necessarily depends on the condition of each of its component parts. It is not only the collective work which may improve the situation; it is, above all, the efforts of each country to cope with its own crises which will overcome them.

The nationalism of States is sometimes contrasted with the internationalism of the League. That is perhaps a superficial view. If we mean a passionate, destructive and aggressive nationalism, then it is the opposite of the international spirit of the League; but if, on the contrary, we mean an organising, constructive, disciplined, pacific nationalism, not only is there no clash between it and internationalism, but the very life of our institution depends on the existence of such nationalism. Every country which succeeds in overcoming the crisis and ensuring order, peace and social equilibrium at home contributes to the general recovery and becomes capable of ensuring, by its collaboration, the realisation of the collective aims of the League.

We ourselves, modest collaborators though we are, have endeavoured, whenever we have been called upon to contribute our work or our influence, to place them at the service of the common cause. Thus we have concluded commercial agreements facilitating trade and navigation with some of the most important countries, and we have ratified several international Conventions. But we have before all else endeavoured to bring about at home such conditions of peace and security, both political and economic, that not only has our country long since ceased to be an element of unrest, but it has become a model of order, security and efficient administration, and hence a factor making for peace and progress. Perhaps you will allow me briefly to give you some evidence of these affirmations.

I will not go into the work of financial recovery in Portugal carried out during the last six years, thanks to the action of that ardent patriot and able statesman, Professor Oliveira Salazar, President of the Council and Minister for Finance. I will only point out that since 1928 the Portuguese budget has been balanced, and the budget surpluses from that year onwards have amounted to some 700 millions. The Portuguese budget is very adequately safeguarded. I may quote the rule of budgetary unity inserted in the political Constitution of the Portuguese Republic as the basis of the budget itself: payment of all normal State expenditure must be made exclusively from normal revenue; the legal restriction of the conception of extraordinary public expenditure which can be met only by loans (the same principle is embodied in the Constitution); the prohibition of the

financing of private concerns on any pretext of general interest; the strict regulation of payments in respect of previous financial years; protection of the budget against undue financial burdens in respect of the colonies.

The floating debt, which six years ago amounted to more than two milliards, has gradually been reduced and was completely paid off on June 30th, 1934.

The work of national reorganisation is being carried out on the basis of a balanced budget. Thus, a great effort has been made to provide equipment which we lacked almost entirely. High-roads have been reconditioned, secondary roads rebuilt and harbours enlarged or improved. The telephone service has been greatly expanded, many school buildings have been constructed, and public buildings and monuments have been renovated. Various public services have been given fitting accommodation and hospitals are being built in accordance with the requirements of modern science, while large agricultural irrigation works have been undertaken.

The face of the country is entirely changed and we may add, as consequences of sound administration, the following: the ten-year plan, duly financed, for the completion of the road system and the technical progress recently made in road construction; the innumerable local developments, in which the State has participated financially in order to combat unemployment, and the increase in the budget appropriations for productive work.

With regard to the Customs tariff, unlike so many other countries (recent statistics show that the Customs duties have been raised in twenty-nine European and American countries by 100-500 per cent), Portugal's Customs policy may be described as very moderate. This is to some extent linked with the facilities accorded for the export of money, the recent restrictions on which in our country are merely in the nature of supervision.

I may also say that our balance of payments is satisfactory and that the backing for banknotes in circulation amounts to 42 per cent (gold value), 30 per cent of which is gold in bullion.

Fresh possibilities are being opened up in my country; a new spirit is informing it and adapting it to the requirements of progress. No one can deny that the position thus created is good for the community of nations or that by organising its domestic life on the basis of a strong Government, which has known how to use the spiritual forces of the country to carry out and ensure its reconstruction, Portugal has accomplished the first of its duties to the League.

In spite of great difficulties, we have done work in our colonial empire comparable to that done in the home country. All the colonial countries have suffered and are still suffering from an unprecedented economic upheaval, and the same has been the case in the Portuguese colonies.

In spite of this, and thanks to the energy and competence of my colleague, Professor Armindo Monteiro, Minister for the Colonies, and his collaborators, we have been able to reorganise our colonial finances, revise and balance the budget of each colony, carry out much work of public utility and improve and perfect the work of assisting the natives.

The political and administrative organisation has been modified and has been made the subject of two remarkable legislative acts — the Organic Charter of the Colonial Empire and the Law on Administrative Reform — which have earned us high praise by foreign experts.

In spite of the inevitable reduction in revenue, we have undertaken a great deal of scientific study in most of the colonies, and the sums devoted

to the requirements of the natives have by no means decreased.

Our colonial work, the peace we have been able to maintain without difficulty in our eight colonies and the efforts made to ensure their economic and social progress in spite of the terrible world crisis must obviously be regarded as a national work beneficial to the community of nations.

We are at present organising a colonial exhibition at Oporto. Many foreigners have visited it and publicly expressed their admiration of this collective evidence of the remarkable progress made in colonial work during the last sixty years.

We are producing in the colonies raw materials from which many other countries are deriving great benefit; we are establishing new markets there; we are gradually educating the native populations to a new civilisation and, by granting those populations a double personal status, we are allowing qualified individuals immediate access to all the rights and duties of the citizens of the home country. I am fully convinced that there again the work we are doing is to the advantage of the community of nations.

Questions of great political complexity and extreme importance, both for the future of Europe and for the authority of the League of Nations and its normal functioning, are to be discussed in our Committees and then in the Assembly. We shall study them in an atmosphere of calm, our impartiality undisturbed by outside passions. We shall find for those questions solutions which, though they may not give satisfaction to all, will have to be universally respected, if necessary at the cost of sacrifices, as a tribute to the lofty ideal of solidarity which guides us. I hope, without too much confidence, that we shall be able to pursue our task unhindered by any new "solidarities"; but what I do firmly believe is that we shall overcome all troubles and vanquish all difficulties to maintain this peace, which is the supreme guarantee of the existence of our peoples and of the progress of our civilisation.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency Tevfik Rüstü Bey, delegate of Turkey, will address the Assembly.

Tevfik Rüstü Bey (Turkey) :

Translation : The period which has elapsed since the last Assembly has been marked, as far as Turkey is concerned, by continued collaboration and by redoubled efforts for peace and concord with all countries.

I need only refer in this connection to the new treaties with our Balkan neighbours, to the treaties concluded or renewed with our neighbours in the Eastern Mediterranean, and to the ceaseless activity shown in our increasingly close relations with the States of Central Asia. I may be permitted to take this opportunity of declaring publicly from this platform that Turkey has contracted no engagement to any party whatever which has not been published, made known to all and duly registered — or which is on the point of being registered — with the League of Nations.

I have no wish to take up your time by repeating here what everyone has frequently seen in the world Press on this subject. I need only affirm that we have no difference on vital or even important questions with any country in the world. On the contrary, we are steadily strengthening our relations with all.

If the political action of a country is to be judged by its relations with its neighbours, we may say that we, for our part, are prepared to abide by the judgment of our neighbours in Europe and Asia in regard to ourselves, and that we entertain none but the most sincere and friendly sentiments in relation to them.

One of those questions on which every State is most sensitive is, I apprehend, the question of its frontiers; and on this highly delicate question of the delimitation of frontiers, Persia and Afghanistan have had recourse to the arbitration of their friends in Turkey. I can only, as in duty bound, express to them in this place our deep gratitude for this mark of confidence.

We shall, moreover, always make it a point of honour to continue to follow this path of good understanding and international collaboration as resolutely after as before our entry into the League. We are profoundly convinced that this is one of the best uses to which the idea on which the League is based can be put.

We are humble workers for peace; and we are present here to-day, not to submit difficulties to you for solution or disputes for settlement, but solely to contribute with all our strength to the handiwork of those who are at one with us in determining that the conception of international harmony and agreement shall be not merely a vague aspiration but a reality.

In affirming our resolve to contribute as far as lies in our power to the realisation of the League ideal, we have no thought of boasting of what we have done up to the present to promote international *rapprochement*; we venture only to hope we may deserve your cordial approval of what we aspire to do in the future.

Although the League must necessarily seek to develop and improve its rules and procedure in the light of past experience, and although, to that end, it is in every way desirable to promote this evolution by discussing in the Assembly the various proposals for improvements in this connection, I feel it is at the same time of the first importance not to be guided merely by any particular considerations of the moment which might divert the evolution of the League towards anarchy and seriously weaken the League itself.

I myself am prepared to believe that the desire to pursue and attain positive ends by constructive means is very generally felt. In this sense I have great pleasure in noting that, at a time when we still deplore the departure of certain Members of the League, a notable step forward has been taken in the direction of making the League a universal institution by securing the valuable collaboration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, with which my country has always maintained the most amicable relations. I cannot but refer to the effective contribution which that great country has already made in arriving at a definition of the aggressor, which, with the collaboration of our friends — Poland, Roumania and other neighbours — has resulted in the London Treaties.

On the minorities question, which was raised yesterday by my distinguished colleague M. Beck, and has led to interesting discussions, the Turkish delegation takes the humanitarian standpoint. We believe there is a real and urgent need to extend the contractual provisions to all nations instead of restricting them to certain countries and thus giving them the appearance of burdens calculated to excite susceptibilities.

The President :

Translation : M. Berger-Waldenegg, delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

M. Berger-Waldenegg (Austria) :

Translation : If once again a delegate of Austria comes to the platform to address you, it is because Austria desires to explain to you briefly the great value which the present Government attaches to international relations. In virtue of her geographical position, Austria constitutes a centre in the heart of Europe from which either good or evil can radiate out over the whole continent. Hence we consider it our sacred duty to contribute as far as we can towards safeguarding European peace. This central position which we occupy makes it our duty to take an active part in international collaboration, especially with the other States of Europe. Conscious of the noble task before her, Austria took the first opportunity which presented itself to enter the League. Since she has been a Member, she has placed herself entirely at the service of this august institution and has followed with sustained attention the important work with which it is entrusted.

As an Austrian, I am glad to be able to say from this platform that we have always encountered in the League the most generous understanding of our position and the most effective help whenever we have appealed to it. Austria has received this support for the last few years, especially in the financial field. In this connection I venture to mention, with feelings of the greatest satisfaction, the passages in the Secretary-General's report dealing with the economic and financial position of Austria, which so clearly show what good results have been produced by the assistance accorded to my country. I take this opportunity to renew, on behalf of the Austrian Federal Government, our most sincere thanks to the Secretary-General, the Financial Committee of the League and that Committee's representative at Vienna for the valuable work they have done for my country.

The slow but constant movement of economic recovery in Austria has furnished the best proof of Austria's economic viability, which is further demonstrated by the stability of the Austrian schilling. In that respect I should like to express my profound conviction that Austria would by now have travelled much farther along the road of practical achievement had she not been continually obliged to face certain threats from without, made with the obvious intention of sapping the very bases of her independent life. Threats of this kind include all acts and words of third parties likely to engender fear or failure within our country.

Obviously, machinations of this kind must sooner or later undermine the faith of the Austrian population in Austria's internal stability. Nevertheless, during the last few months Austria has given striking proof of her unshakable determination to play the part she has been called upon to play in Europe. She vigorously resisted the attacks made upon her in February and July with the object of shaking the foundations of her existence, and, in the latter case, even jeopardising her independence. She then showed the whole world, by the successful issue of these struggles, that she was not only economically viable but was firmly determined to remain independent. From the dark stormy clouds which enveloped it, the Austrian ideal emerged victorious. This important success is primarily due to the exemplary devotion of the Austrian people to the sacred cause of their inde-

pendence, and we also fully realise that we have to attribute this victory — for it was a victory — to the invaluable sympathy extended to us by a number of European Powers who were good enough to lend us effective aid in the course of the struggle that was thrust upon us.

I should like in the first instance to mention Italy, who has never failed to give noble evidence of her friendship for us at critical moments, and also the fruitful and effective collaboration of M. Scialoja, whose memory has been evoked in moving terms from this platform and will never be forgotten by us.

Our friendly relations with our neighbour, Hungary, to whom we are bound by the beneficial effects of the Pact of Rome, have also assisted us greatly in our task.

I should also like to pay tribute to the political wisdom of France, whose old traditional friendship has afforded us valuable moral support. Moreover, the sympathy and sincere friendship which we have received from the United Kingdom have also powerfully contributed towards the revival of our economic life.

As for our other neighbours, direct and indirect, our close and manifold economic relations with these friendly Powers, the list of whom it would take too long to enumerate, are paving the way for an agreement favourable to a wider mutual understanding of the political requirements of our respective countries.

Unfortunately, Austria's fight to maintain her national integrity is not yet at an end. The final victory of the Austrian ideal seems still to be contested. Our point of view is this : We Austrians, conscious of our duty towards our country, have no desire whatever to brandish the sword ; we should be only too happy to sheathe it. But if we are attacked, from whatever quarter, we shall defend ourselves to the last drop of our blood, and in doing so we shall be conscious of fulfilling our European mission.

The Federal Government is firmly convinced that it can count on the continued support of the Powers represented on the League of Nations, so that Austria may be able to carry to a successful conclusion her mission, the safeguarding of which involves international interests of the highest importance.

It is principally in the economic sphere that the League's work is of peculiar value to my country. It is unnecessary for me to dwell here on Austria's very natural claims with regard to the means of facilitating her international trade. We also hope to be able to count in future on the effective work of the League in this field.

The events of the last few months have, moreover, shown that for the security of Austria certain forces are required if the exceptional internal circumstances are to be adequately coped with. We feel sure the Powers represented here will take account of the special requirements of our country at this time.

As you see, I do not intend to submit to you any specific proposals calling for an immediate decision on the part of this Assembly. I think, therefore, I may be allowed to conclude my statement by requesting the Assembly to accord Austria the support necessary to ensure the maintenance of her security and to facilitate the economic consolidation which is the essential condition of that security.

The President :

Translation : The list of speakers is now exhausted, and I therefore declare closed the discussion on the report of the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly.

29. — SLAVERY : DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The United Kingdom delegation has just transmitted to me a letter containing a draft resolution which reads as follows :

" The Assembly,

" In view of the interest it has shown in the past in the question of slavery,

" Decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the chapter on slavery in the report on the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly."

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, the text of this resolution will be printed and communicated to the delegations. I shall submit to the Assembly at a subsequent meeting suggestions as to the action to be taken with regard to it.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1934, AT 11 A.M.

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30. — QUESTION OF THE ENTRY OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: INCLUSION OF THIS ITEM IN THE AGENDA OF THE SESSION AND REFERENCE TO THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President:

Translation.: The first item on the agenda is the question of the entry of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the League of Nations.

In this connection, the delegations have already received copies of the following communications:

1. *Letter to the President of the Assembly transmitting the Invitation addressed by Certain Members of the League to the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.*

"The delegations of the States hereinafter enumerated:

"Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, France, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, Iraq, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, Persia, Poland, Roumania, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, Uruguay and Yugoslavia,

have the honour to send herewith to the President of the Assembly copy of a telegram which they have just despatched to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs at Moscow.

"They would ask the President to be good enough to communicate this document to the Assembly.

"Geneva, September 15th, 1934.

"People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, Moscow.

"The undersigned, delegates to the fifteenth Assembly of the League of Nations from the States hereinafter enumerated:

"Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, France, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, Iraq, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, Persia, Poland, Roumania, South Africa, Spain, Turkey, Uruguay and Yugoslavia;

"Bearing in mind that the mission of maintaining and organising peace, which is the fundamental task of the League of Nations, demands the co-operation of all the countries of the world :

"Invite the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to join the League of Nations and give the League its valuable collaboration.

"This telegram is being communicated to the President of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

"Teclé-HAWARIATE, Lec KURTI, S. M. BRUCE, E. BERGER, Anthony EDEN, C. BATOLOFF, R. B. BENNETT, Manuel RIVAS-VICUNA, QUO Tai-chi, Eduard BENEŠ, J. SELJAMAA, Louis BARTHOU, D. MAXIMOS, C. MAYARD, G. TÁNCZOS, Denys BRAY, NOURY Said, ALOISI, W. MUTERS, S. LOZORAITIS, F. CASTILLO NAJERA, J. PARR, B. KAZEMI, BECK, N. TITULESCO, Eric H. LOUW, S. de MADARIAGA, Tewfik RÜSTÜ, A. GUANI, Bogolioub YEVTITCH."

2. *Letter addressed to the Council by the First Delegate of Sweden.*

"Geneva, September 15th, 1934..

"In agreement with the heads of the Danish, Finnish and Norwegian delegations, I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden have to-day confirmed to the Soviet Government, through the ordinary diplomatic channel, their decision to vote in favour of the admission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the League of Nations.

"I should add that the delegations in question would have been authorised to associate themselves with an invitation to that effect had such an invitation been issued by the Assembly itself.

(Signed) Richard SANDLER,
"First Delegate of Sweden."

3. *Letter addressed to the President of the Assembly by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.*

"September 15th, 1934.

"The Soviet Government has received a telegram signed by a great many Members of the League of Nations — namely, South Africa, Albania, Australia, Austria, Great Britain, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Spain, Estonia, Abyssinia, France, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, India, Iraq, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, Persia, Poland, Roumania, Czechoslovakia, Turkey, Uruguay and Yugoslavia — in which, pointing out both that the mission of the League of Nations is the organisation of peace, and that this necessitates the general co-operation therein of all nations, they invite the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to join the League of Nations and add its co-operation. Simultaneously, the Soviet Government has been officially informed by the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden of their favourable attitude to the entry of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the League.

"The Soviet Government, which has made the organisation and consolidation of peace the main task of its foreign policy, and has never been deaf to proposals for international co-operation in the interests of peace, considering that, coming as it does from an overwhelming majority

of Members of the League, this invitation represents the real will to peace of the League of Nations, and their recognition of the necessity of co-operation with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is willing to respond to it, and become a Member of the League, occupying therein the place due to itself, and undertaking to observe all the international obligations and decisions binding upon members in conformity with Article 1 of the Covenant.

"The Soviet Government is especially glad to be coming into the League at a moment when the question of the amendment of the Covenant in order to bring it into harmony with the Briand-Kellogg Pact, and to banish completely international warfare, is being considered by it.

"Since Articles 12 and 13 of the Covenant leave it open to States to submit disputes to arbitration or judicial settlement, the Soviet Government considers it necessary to make it clear that, in its opinion, such methods should not be applicable to conflicts regarding questions arising before its entry into the League.

"I venture to express the hope that this declaration will be accepted by all Members of the League in that spirit of sincere desire for international co-operation and for ensuring peace to all nations in which it is made.

(Signed) Maxim LITVINOFF,
"People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs."

Upon receiving the above documents, I immediately convened the General Committee of the Assembly, which met this morning.

The General Committee discussed what procedure might be suggested to the Assembly. It was of opinion that, in this particular case, there was no need to submit the question to the Agenda Committee, but that the General Committee itself could make proposals, and it instructed me to submit to you, on its behalf, the following suggestions :

The question of the entry into the League of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would be, without further formality, placed on the agenda of the present session. Should this proposal be approved by the Assembly, the question would be referred to the Sixth Committee.

If there are no observations, I shall take it that the Assembly, adopting, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, the proposals of its General Committee, decides to place the above-mentioned question on the agenda of the present session and to refer it to the Sixth Committee.

The proposals of the General Committee were adopted.

31. — **APPOINTMENT OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS AS A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL ON THE OCCASION OF HER ENTRY INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS : RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL ON SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1934.**

The President :

Translation : The President of the Council has forwarded to me a letter dated September 15th, 1934, accompanied by a resolution which I will read to the Assembly :

"I have the honour to communicate to you herewith copy of a resolution which has to-day been adopted by the Council regarding the appointment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a permanent Member of the Council as soon as it has entered the League of Nations.

"I should be glad if you would submit this resolution to the Assembly for its approval in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Covenant.

(Signed) Eduard BENEŠ,
"President of the Council.

"Resolution adopted by the Council of the League of Nations on September 15th, 1934.

"The Council,

"Having had communicated to it the letter of September 15th, 1934, which has been addressed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the President of the Assembly with regard to that State's entering the League of Nations:

"Decides, in virtue of the powers which it derives from Article 4 of the Covenant, to appoint the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to be a permanent Member of the Council as soon as its admission into the League of Nations has been agreed to by the Assembly;

"Invites the Assembly to approve this decision."

I also transmitted this communication to the General Committee at its meeting this morning.

I propose, after consulting the General Committee, to take steps later with a view to the necessary action on the decision communicated to me by the President of the Council.

32. — SLAVERY: ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE UNITED KINGDOM DELEGATION.

The President:

Translation: The Assembly will remember that, at its afternoon meeting on September 14th, a draft resolution was submitted by the United Kingdom delegation suggesting that the chapter relating to slavery in the report on the work of the League since the last session of the Assembly should be referred to the Sixth Committee.

In accordance with precedent, I propose that the Assembly immediately adopt this draft resolution and decide, without further procedure, to refer to the Sixth Committee the parts of the report in question dealing with slavery.

The draft resolution was adopted.

33. — REQUESTS OF CHINA AND SPAIN FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FOR ELECTION TO THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the Assembly's decision on the requests submitted by China and Spain for re-eligibility for election to the Council.

The Assembly will remember that I informed it, during the meeting on the afternoon of September 10th, of the requests for re-eligibility

submitted to it. One of these was submitted by China, by letter dated September 7th, while the other was submitted by Spain, by letter dated September 10th. These letters having already been communicated to all the delegations, there is no need for me to read them to you again.

The Assembly will have noted that the requests for re-eligibility submitted by China and Spain have been submitted in the regular form and within the time-limits laid down in the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926. It is therefore for the Assembly to decide on these requests, in accordance with the provisions of the resolution of September 15th, 1926, laying down the rules for such elections.

I think I should remind you of these rules by reading the provisions of Article II, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the resolution, which reads as follows:

"A retiring Member may not be re-elected during the period between the expiration of its term of office and the third election in ordinary session held thereafter, unless the Assembly, either on the expiration of the Member's term of office or in the course of the said period of three years, shall, by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast, previously have decided that such Member is re-eligible.

"The Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting tickets deposited, deducting blank or spoilt votes."

The Assembly is thus called upon to decide by secret ballot on each of these two requests. There will be two successive ballots. As the name of each delegation is called, a representative of that delegation will deposit its voting-card in the ballot-box.

Delegations to the Assembly desiring to vote in favour of the requests for re-eligibility submitted to them will write "Yes" on the voting card, and those desiring to vote against it will write "No". Those not desiring to express an opinion will write "Abstaining".

I will ask Mr. Eden, first delegate of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and Baron Aloisi, first delegate of Italy, to be good enough to come to the platform and act as tellers.

(Mr. Eden and Baron Aloisi took their places on the platform as tellers.)

REQUEST FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY FROM CHINA.

The President:

Translation: The first vote which I propose shall be taken is the request for re-eligibility submitted by China in her letter dated September 7th, 1934.

The roll will now be called.

(The vote was taken by roll-call.)

The President:

Translation: The result of the voting is as follows:

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of votes cast | 53 |
| Blank or spoilt voting-tickets | 1 |
| Number of valid votes | 52 |
| Majority required for acceptance | 34 |
| Number of votes in favour of the request | 21 |

Consequently, the majority required for re-eligibility has not been obtained.

I would ask the tellers to continue to give us their assistance.

REQUEST FOR RE-ELIGIBILITY SUBMITTED BY SPAIN.

The President :

Translation : A vote will now be taken on the request for re-eligibility submitted by Spain.

(The vote was taken by roll-call.)

The President :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of votes cast | 54 |
| Blank or spoilt voting-tickets | 2 |
| Number of valid votes | 52 |
| Majority required for acceptance | 35 |
| Number of votes in favour of the request | 44 |

Consequently, I declare that the majority required for re-eligibility has been obtained.

I desire cordially to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH, 1934, AT 3.30 P.M.

CONTENTS:

- 34. ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.
- 35. CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES TO THE ASSEMBLY.
Proposals of the General Committee.
- 36. DEPARTURE OF M. BADO, DELEGATE OF URUGUAY, AND APPOINTMENT OF M. SCHMIDT, DELEGATE OF ESTONIA, TO REPLACE HIM AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

President: M. R. J. SANDLER.

34. — ELECTION OF THREE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL.

The President:

Translation: The first item on the agenda is the election of three non-permanent Members of the Council.

Before proceeding to take the vote, I will remind you of the various rules applicable thereto.

First of all, I would inform the Assembly that the rules laid down in the resolution adopted by the Assembly on October 2nd, 1933, have been observed. I will read the relevant paragraphs of this resolution:

"No Member of the League shall be eligible to be elected as a non-permanent Member of the Council unless it has proposed itself for election or been nominated by another Member of the League at least forty-eight hours before the election, which shall not be held before the seventh day of the Assembly's session:

"The notice of the candidature shall be given in writing to the Secretary-General, who shall forthwith bring it to the attention of the Assembly. The Secretary-General shall at the time of the election place before the Assembly a list of the Members which have been duly put forward as candidates."

The four proposals for candidatures received from Chile, China, Spain and Turkey were communicated within the time-limit laid down. They were incorporated in a list drawn up by the Secretary-General and submitted by him to the Assembly in document A.33.1934, dated September 15th, 1934.

Following the practice of my predecessors in this office, I would now remind you of the provisions of the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, making rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility

Article 1, paragraph 1, of the resolution reads as follows:

"The Assembly shall each year, in the course of its ordinary session, elect three non-permanent Members of the Council. They shall be elected for a term commencing immediately on their election and ending on the day of the elections held three years later by the Assembly."

Before opening the ballot, I would again remind you of the provisions of Rule 22 (a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, which apply in this case.

The rule reads as follows:

"(1) The Members whose representatives are to sit on the Council as non-permanent Members of that body shall be selected by the Assembly by secret ballot.

"(2) 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.

"(3) 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.

"(4) 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 computing the absolute majority prescribed for the first and second ballots, the Assembly will, I think, agree with me that, as at previous sessions, we should here, by analogy, apply the rule contained in the Assembly resolution of September 15th, 1926, concerning the "rules dealing with the election of the nine non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility".

This resolution provides as follows:

"The Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting-papers deposited, blank or spoilt votes being deducted."

It would appear that, in electing the non-permanent Members of the Council, blank or spoiled voting-papers must not be counted when the number of votes is reckoned. The absolute majority should be calculated on the basis of the total number of valid voting-papers.

If no one has any remarks to make, I shall assume that the Assembly, adopting the precedents of previous sessions, agrees to take the course I venture to suggest.

I would emphasise the point that, to be valid, voting-papers must bear the names of States and not of representatives of States. Further, no voting-paper must bear more than three names; otherwise it will be regarded as invalid.

May I ask M. Lamoureux, delegate of France, and Count Piola Caselli, delegate of Italy, to come to the platform and act as tellers.

(M. Lamoureux and Count Piola Caselli took their places on the platform as tellers.)

The President:

Translation: We will now proceed to ballot by roll-call.

(The ballot was taken by roll-call.)

The President:

Translation: The result of the ballot is as follows:

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of votes cast | 53 |
| Voting-papers blank or spoilt. | 1 |
| Voting-papers valid | 52 |
| Absolute majority | 27 |

The votes obtained by the States are as follows

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Chile | 51 |
| Spain | 51 |
| Turkey | 48 |

I therefore declare Chile, Spain and Turkey, which have obtained the requisite majority of votes, elected non-permanent Members of the Council for

a period of three years. I have pleasure in congratulating these States.

I wish also to thank the tellers for their kind assistance.

35. — CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES TO THE ASSEMBLY: PROPOSALS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is a proposal of the General Committee concerning the credentials of the delegates to the Assembly.

The attention of the General Committee has been drawn by the Committee on Credentials to a question which was raised in 1933 relating to the form and presentation of the credentials of the delegates to the Assembly.

The General Committee was of opinion that it might be advantageous to study the question more fully, so as to be able, if necessary, to supplement the provisions of the Rules of Procedure relating to the conditions with which the credentials of the delegates to the Assembly should comply.

The General Committee has requested me to submit the following proposals to the Assembly:

"The question of the credentials of delegates, as raised by the Committee on Credentials, would be placed, without further procedure, on the agenda of the present session of the Assembly.

"If the Assembly accepts this proposal, the question would be referred to the First Committee for examination, and the First Committee would consider it with the collaboration of the Chairman of the Credentials Committee."

If no one has any remarks to make, I shall take it that the Assembly accepts the proposal of the General Committee and accordingly decides to place on the agenda of the present session the question of the credentials of delegates and to refer it to the First Committee under the conditions which I have indicated.

The General Committee's proposals were adopted.

36. — DEPARTURE OF M. BADO, DELEGATE OF URUGUAY, AND APPOINTMENT OF M. SCHMIDT, DELEGATE OF ESTONIA, TO REPLACE HIM AS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President:

Translation: His Excellency M. Bado, delegate of Uruguay and Chairman of the Committee on Credentials, has informed me that he is obliged to leave Geneva and will probably not be able to return to take part in the work of the present session.

The Committee on Credentials, when informed of M. Bado's departure, met and nominated as its Chairman His Excellency M. Schmidt, delegate of Estonia.

The Assembly will take note of M. Schmidt's appointment as Chairman of the Credentials Committee in place of M. Bado, and M. Schmidt, in accordance with the decision taken by the Assembly at the beginning of its session, will be asked to serve on the General Committee of the Assembly.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18TH, 1934, AT 6 P.M.

CONTENTS:

37. QUESTION OF THE ADMISSION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Proposals of the General Committee of the Assembly on the Procedure to be followed.

38. QUESTION OF THE ADMISSION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Report of the Sixth Committee.
Resolution.

39. CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS.

Convocation of the Committee on Credentials.

40. APPOINTMENT OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO BE A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL.

Vote on the Resolution adopted by the Council on September 15th, 1934.

41. CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS.

Report of the Committee on Credentials.

42. ENTRY OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

President: M. R. J. SANDLER.

37. — QUESTION OF THE ADMISSION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: PROPOSALS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY ON THE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED.

The President:

Translation: The first item on the agenda is the General Committee's proposals regarding the admission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the League of Nations.

The Assembly will remember that, during the meeting held yesterday morning, September 17th, I reserved the right to consult the General Committee again on the procedure to be followed.

The Sixth Committee having accomplished its task and the report having been distributed to all the delegations as document A.36, I convened a plenary meeting of the Assembly, first consulting the General Committee again.

The General Committee met this morning. It instructed me to submit the following proposals to the Assembly concerning the various points of procedure connected with the question of the admission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the League of Nations.

These are the proposals:

(a) The report of the Sixth Committee would be, without further delay, submitted to the Assembly, and, if the Assembly agrees, under the conditions provided for under the Rules, to deal immediately with the matter, a vote would be taken at once on the admission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the League of Nations;

(b) That vote having been taken, and provided it agreed with the Sixth Committee's recommendation, the Assembly would decide, without further procedure, to deal with the Council resolution of September 15th concerning the granting of a permanent seat on the Council to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

(c) If the Assembly so decided, it would immediately proceed to the vote necessitated by the resolution of the Council, under Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Covenant.

On the basis of the General Committee's proposals, I will deal successively with the various matters of procedure which thus arise.

38. — QUESTION OF THE ADMISSION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS : REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : I would ask the Assembly whether, in accordance with the proposal of its General Committee, it is prepared to examine immediately the report of the Sixth Committee on the conditions laid down in the Rules of Procedure.

The proposal of the General Committee was adopted.

The President :

Translation : I will now ask M. de Madariaga, as Chairman and Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, to address the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga (Spain), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee :

Translation : The Sixth Committee, of which I have the honour to be Chairman, has asked me to submit to you for your adoption the draft resolution it proposes regarding the admission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the League of Nations, which subject you had referred to it.

The text of the draft reads as follows :

" The Sixth Committee,

" In consideration of the invitation addressed by thirty delegations to the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on September 15th, 1934, with a view to the entry of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the League, and of the communication on the same subject from the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden ;¹

" In consideration of the communication addressed to the President of the Assembly by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the same day, in reply to those referred to above ;¹

" And in consideration of the fact that the Soviet Government states in its reply ' that it undertakes to observe all the international obligations and decisions binding upon Members in conformity with Article 1 of the Covenant ' :

" Recommends the Assembly to admit the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the League of Nations."

I have very little to add to this text, which is perfectly clear. As for the discussion which took place in the Sixth Committee, you all followed it in various capacities, if I may judge by the number of people who were present in the room. A further vote is to be taken again shortly. As you are aware, thirty-eight nations voted in favour of admission, three voted against and eight abstained from voting. The discussion was carried on in a spirit of moderation and terminated in an atmosphere of calm. The very lack of unanimity only gave greater prominence to the courtesy prevailing at our meetings ; and this I believe to be the precursor of the spirit of co-operation which will, I hope, enable us to solve, also in a spirit of calm and moderation, the serious problems which await our attention elsewhere.

For my own part, I can only express my satisfaction that I, who, as representative of Spain, was

called to this platform to take part in the admission of, first, Mexico and then Turkey, should, through the combined agency of chance and of the confidence you repose in me, have come here as Chairman of the Sixth Committee to propose the admission of Russia.

I sincerely hope that this event will cause to reflect those nations which stand on the threshold of the League, though unfortunately with their faces turned away from it, as well as those who no longer form part of our family.

I also hope that, by the early admission of the great American Republic, the League will finally attain in actual legal fact that universality which is of its very essence and without which it cannot succeed or indeed exist at all.

The President :

Translation : I now open the discussion on the report of the Sixth Committee.

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

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : The Swiss delegation explained its attitude yesterday to the Sixth Committee. While not failing to recognise the arguments of those delegations which think it desirable and even necessary to run the evident and generally admitted risk of collaboration with the Soviet Union within the League of Nations, we maintain our negative vote, and we confirm all the reasons which dictated it. Shortly, when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has been admitted, the Assembly will have to deal with a unanimous decision of the Council that a permanent seat be granted to the new Member. It is true that Russia presents all the characteristics of a great Power, and that, in accordance with precedent, it can, as such, lay claim to such a seat. But, in view of the attitude of principle adopted by the Swiss Federal Council with regard to the application for admission, its delegation can on this special point only abstain from voting.

The President :

Translation : M. de Valera, first delegate of the Irish Free State, will address the Assembly.

M. de Valera (Irish Free State). — A few evenings ago, from this tribune, I indicated that it was not without misgiving that I proposed to cast my vote for the admission of Russia into the League. Last night, in his speech, M. Motta, in terms that everyone must have understood, made clear to the whole world the cause of this misgiving. In speaking as he did, M. Motta voiced the concern, not of the people of Switzerland alone, not merely of the three hundred millions who belong to the Catholic Church, but of those many millions more — in all, more than one-third of the inhabitants of the globe — who proclaim themselves followers of Christ and place all their hopes here and hereafter in the truth of His teaching.

If I may be permitted to say so, M. Barthou's speech was very far from relieving that concern or providing a satisfactory answer. It is not sufficient to say that we are here concerned merely with politics. No politics that is in any sense real can exclude considerations of the purpose of human life and the end which man's existence is designed to serve. There is only one way in which the troubled conscience of all those many millions to whom I have referred can be set at ease, and that is by assurances freely given and by the action of the Russian Government itself.

¹ Document A.34.1934.

Delegates will bear with me if I dwell upon the importance and seriousness of this matter. I know of no greater service I can render to the League. If Russia enters the League and assurances such as those I have indicated are not given, then, whatever else may follow from Russia's entry, I am convinced that it will not secure peace. Peace can be secured only on the basis of the goodwill of peoples towards each other, and is it not evident that there can be no goodwill when men see the things that mean most to them in life — things that transcend life itself — being attacked? Common sense declares this to be true, and the whole course of human history confirms it.

The hundreds of millions of Christians for whom M. Motta spoke believe that to deprive a man of his religion is to deprive life of its meaning. To exclude religion from the domain of human conduct is to deprive morals and ethics of all the sanctions which support them against the stress of individual or national greed. Mere devotion to abstract ideals or principles is bound to crumble before the onslaught of fierce human passions, unless a supernatural motive intervenes to support it. Does not our daily experience prove that this is so?

Christians believe that the one hope of securing peace among men is to be found in obedience to the primary Christian commandment that men should love one another for God's sake, and if Christians lose confidence in the League of Nations — there are six hundred millions of them, remember; more than one-third of the population of the globe, as I have said — if they lose confidence in the League of Nations as a means for promoting peace in this way, then the League of Nations cannot possibly succeed.

The Russian Government, in its acceptance of the invitation to join the League, has declared that it has made the organisation and consolidation of peace the main task of its foreign policy and has never been deaf to proposals for international co-operation in the interests of peace.

As one who has had hope in the League, as the representative of a nation that has no political quarrel with Russia and has no interests to serve in its foreign relations save those of promoting human welfare and happiness, I urge the Russian Government to take this occasion to proclaim that the guarantees which it recently gave the Government of the United States of America on entering into diplomatic relations with that country are to be made universal and that the rights of liberty of conscience and freedom of worship which American citizens enjoy in virtue of these guarantees shall henceforth be the rights of the nationals of all countries residing in Russia and of the Russian people.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency Mirza Seyed Bagher Khan Kazemi, first delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

M. Kazemi (Persia) :

Translation : The Persian delegation will be particularly glad to receive the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the great Geneva organisation to-day. Persia, which is a neighbour of the Union, was one of the countries which recognised the Union from the outset. Our great neighbour has always shown a spirit of understanding in international matters and has given proof of her desire to maintain peace by concluding treaties of non-aggression, particularly with her neighbours. The Soviet Union has consistently followed this policy of peace and non-aggression, and, has acceded in due course to the Briand-Kellogg Pact, which outlaws war.

Further, the definition of aggression is the work of the distinguished head of the Soviet delegation, who, by that definition, threw a new light on the conception of international law, resulting in a multilateral treaty to which Persia is one of the signatories. I am convinced that this definition will always be considered of fundamental importance in international life.

My delegation feels impelled to express its keen satisfaction at the entry of its great neighbour into our international institution, and I warmly congratulate her.

I am sure that this happy collaboration will effectively contribute towards safeguarding peace. The presence of the Soviet Union in our League, whose basis is universality, will be a happy event, and its fortunate results will help to consolidate our international institution, which is the wish of us all.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Cantilo, first delegate of the Argentine Republic, will address the Assembly.

M. Cantilo (Argentine Republic) :

Translation : For reasons which I had the honour to explain yesterday in the Sixth Committee, and just as, in the juridical practice of the West, by an unalterable rule of procedure, when a judge does not feel that he is acting under conditions of perfect impartiality he abstains from judgment, so to-day the Argentine Republic, while yielding nothing of its rights, will abstain from voting.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Caeiro da Mata, first delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

M. Caeiro da Mata (Portugal) :

Translation : The Portuguese Government, at the Council meeting at which the appointment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a permanent Member of the Council was discussed, abstained from voting, so as not to oppose a plan for the political reconstruction of Europe regarded by a large number of States as necessary to peace. It is a matter, not of argument, but of conviction; and, conviction for conviction, I venture to follow my own.

I hold as strongly as ever to my opinions, but I maintain this abstention before the Assembly in so far as the seat on the Council is concerned. As regards the admission of the Soviet Union to the League, I shall vote against it, for the reasons I gave yesterday in the Sixth Committee.

The President :

Translation : If no other delegation asks to speak, I shall declare the discussion on the report of the Sixth Committee closed.

If there are no further observations, we shall immediately proceed to take the vote required for the admission of a new State into the League.

According to the provisions of Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Covenant, the Assembly must agree by a two-thirds majority to the admission of a State into the League.

The vote will be taken by roll-call. The procedure laid down in Rule 20, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure will be followed. The name of each delegation will be called, and one of its members will reply "Yes", "No", or "Not voting". The result of the vote will be recorded and announced to the Assembly.

(A vote was taken by roll-call.)

The President :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|---|----|
| Number of voters | 49 |
| Number of abstentions | 7 |
| Number of votes to be taken into account for calculating the majority | 42 |
| Majority required for acceptance (two-thirds) | 28 |
| Number of votes in favour of the application | 39 |

Consequently, I proclaim that the admission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics into the League of Nations has been decided upon by the Assembly by the requisite majority.

I congratulate this new Member of the League, and will welcome it as soon as its delegation has taken its place among us.

39. — CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS: CONVOCAION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : In order to enable the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to sit in the Assembly during the present meeting, I will ask the Committee on Credentials to be good enough to meet immediately and examine the credentials of the delegates of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and submit its report to the Assembly.

40. — APPOINTMENT OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO BE A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL: VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL ON SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1934.

The President :

Translation : While the Committee on Credentials is examining the credentials of the delegates of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and drawing up its report, I propose that the Assembly should, without further delay, deal with the second question, on which the General Committee recommended that it should take a decision during the present meeting. I refer to the Council resolution, dated September 15th, 1934, concerning the appointment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a permanent Member of the Council on its entry into the League of Nations. This resolution has already been communicated to the Assembly at its seventh plenary meeting.

If the Assembly wishes to proceed in accordance with the proposals of its General Committee, it will decide to deal immediately, without further procedure, with the Council resolution in question.

If there are no observations, I shall interpret the silence of the Assembly as a sign of its acceptance of the proposals of its General Committee, and, consequently, I shall consider that the Assembly has decided to deal immediately and without further procedure with the Council resolution regarding the appointment of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a permanent Member of the Council on its entry into the League.

The General Committee's proposal was adopted.

The President :

Translation : I will ask the Assembly if it wishes to discuss this question.

If no delegation asks to speak, I shall conclude that the Assembly does not desire to discuss the question but wishes to proceed immediately to a vote.

Agreed.

The President :

Translation : I will therefore submit the Council resolution to the vote of the Assembly.

This vote will be taken in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Covenant, which provides that the Assembly must approve by an absolute majority the decision of the Council. The part of Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Covenant on the basis of which the Assembly is called upon to give a decision reads as follows :

"With the approval of the majority of the Assembly, the Council may name additional Members of the League whose representatives shall always be members of the Council."

The vote will take place in accordance with Rule 20 of the Rules of Procedure. The name of each delegation will be called, and one of its members will reply "Yes", "No" or "Abstaining".

The result of the vote will be recorded and announced to the Assembly.

(The vote was taken by roll-call.)

The President :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of voters | 50 |
| Number of abstentions | 10 |
| Number of votes to be taken into account in calculating the majority | 40 |
| Absolute majority required | 21 |
| Number of votes in favour | 40 |

The Assembly having approved the Council's decision by the requisite majority, the conditions required by Article 4, paragraph 2, of the Covenant are fulfilled, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is henceforth one of the Members of the League which are permanently represented on the Council.

41. — CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : The Committee on Credentials has acceded to my request, and its Chairman is able immediately to submit his report on the credentials of the delegates of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

M. Schmidt, Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials, will address the Assembly.

M. Schmidt (Estonia), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : The Committee appointed by the Assembly to verify the credentials of delegates met to-day, September 18th, 1934, at 7 p.m. in the President's room in order to consider whether the

representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are duly accredited to take part in the work of the Assembly.

The Secretary-General of the League of Nations has transmitted to the Committee a letter from the People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs, informing him that the Central Executive Committee of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has appointed as delegates of the Union to the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations:

M. Maxime LITVINOFF, People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs;

M. Vladimir POTEKINE, Ambassador of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at Rome; and

M. Boris STEIN, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at Helsinki.

Having examined this document, the Committee considers that the representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are duly accredited.

The President:

Translation: I thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report, of which the Assembly will take note.

If there are no observations, I shall declare the conclusions of the report of the Committee on Credentials approved by the Assembly.

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

42. — ENTRY OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The President:

Translation: The conclusions of the report of the Committee on Credentials being adopted, I invite the delegates of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to take their places among us.

(The delegates of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics took their seats in the Assembly.)

The President:

Translation: On behalf of the Assembly I have the honour to greet the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which will from to-day occupy its place among us.

I shall not revert to what has passed in these last few days, nor shall I attempt to consider now the arguments adduced on one side and on the other. The discussions have taken their course. Each of us has been able to state his opinion with all the freedom which is the right of the Members of our League, and on his own responsibility, which does not commit the League itself. The decision has been taken. The Soviet Union has informed us that it was ready to enter the League, and the Assembly has just voted for its admission according to its laws and regulations.

I therefore extend, on behalf of the Assembly, my sincere and cordial greetings to the new Member of the League. In the League it will enjoy the rights and assume the obligations arising out of the Covenant. The Soviet Union henceforward forms part of the great world family of States co-operating for the safeguarding of peace in the interests of all mankind. *Ut bonum, felix, faustumque sit.*

In expressing the keen satisfaction I feel at having the high honour, as President of the Assembly, of placing on record this great extension of our association, I do not feel called upon — indeed, it would be beyond my powers — to attempt an estimate of the true significance of the event which is taking place to-day. It will be for the future to show us all its consequences for the destiny of mankind, that future in which we see only few possibilities, and regarding which, for the welfare of our countries and of mankind, we are endeavouring to deduce certain probabilities, but which, in spite of all, remains hidden from us.

Having said this, I think it is my duty to proclaim that this day, September 18th, 1934, marks a turning-point in the history of our League, which has been increased to-day by a Member bringing into the scale of international co-operation — as organised on precise and concrete lines by the Covenant — the weight of a population of 160 millions playing a part of primary importance in the life of two continents.

The presence of the Soviet delegation among us appears to me a happy sign, and evidence that the tendency of the organisation of States towards universality — that universality which an institution calling itself the League of Nations can never renounce — is not a mere aspiration beyond human strength, but is founded on reality — a reality that asserts itself despite differences of race, of language, of religion and of political system. By degrees the interests of the different States are being brought into harmony with the far ideal of a united humanity.

In so far as the future is determined by our own wills, it will depend on our united efforts to bring about the reign of justice and honour, as the Covenant prescribes in its Preamble. I ask the Soviet delegation to help us in our work for the welfare of the world, and I take this opportunity of expressing once more my faith in our institution. Born of war and distress, may it ensure peace in the world and may it bring happiness to the peoples!

M. Litvinoff, first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, will address the Assembly.

M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — I would like my first words to be the expression of my sincere thanks to you, Mr. President, for the very kind way in which you have greeted the first appearance here of the Soviet delegation. I would extend my gratitude to all those delegations on whose invitation, and as a result of whose votes, we have come here to-day. It is also my pleasant duty to record with gratitude the initiative taken by the French Government, actively supported by the Governments of the United Kingdom and Italy, and the sincere efforts made by the French delegation, and personally by the esteemed Foreign Minister of the French Republic, M. Barthou, and the President of the Council, Dr. Beneš, in the furtherance of this initiative.

The telegram of invitation to my Government, and the vote taken by the Council and the Assembly, convince me that all delegations, with very few exceptions, realise the importance of the arrival in this hall of a delegation from the Soviet State, as well as the favourable results to be expected from this event. It derives its significance, not merely from the formal act of our joining the League, but also from the circumstances in which this takes place, and the evolution of the relations between the Soviet Government and the League of Nations which led up to it. I should like to dwell briefly upon this evolution, even if this should involve my making — for the last time, I hope —

a swift excursion to a past that has been by no means altogether pleasant. This seems to me the more necessary in that the past has been touched upon in another place, and that the entry into the League, in the fifteenth year of its existence, of one of the greatest States in the world does undoubtedly call for some explanation.

I will speak with that frankness and moderation which many of you, knowing me of old, will, I am sure, grant me, and which can only be helpful to our mutual understanding and our future co-operation.

We represent here a new State — new, not geographically, but new in its external aspects, its internal political and social structure, and its aspirations and ideals. The appearance in the historical arena of a new form of State has always been met with hostility on the part of old State formations. It is not surprising that the phenomenon of a new State with a social political system radically different from any heretofore known should come up against intense hostility from without and manifested by literally all other countries in the world. This hostility has been not merely theoretical, but has found expression even in military action, assuming the form of prolonged externally organised attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of the new State for the purpose of getting it back to the old lines. At the time when the League of Nations was being formed to proclaim the organisation of peace, the people of our country had as yet not been enabled to enjoy the blessings of peace. They still had to defend their internal peace with arms, and to contend for long their right to internal self-determination and their external independence. Even after the most extreme forms of intervention in the affairs of our State were over, the hostility of the outer world continued to be manifested in the most varying degrees and forms.

All this makes it quite obvious that the relations between the Soviet State and the League of Nations could not be other than those existing between itself and the States belonging to the League. Not only this, but the people in the Soviet Union naturally feared that these nations united in the League might give collective expression to their hostility towards the Soviet Union and combine their anti-Soviet activities. It can hardly be denied that at that time, and even very much later, there were still statesmen who thought, or at least dreamed, of such collective action. On the one hand, they were inclined to underrate the internal powers of resistance of the new State, and, on the other hand, to overrate that harmony of political and economic interests in the other States which, it seemed to them, the League should have embodied. They continued to believe that the last world war would be the last war in the world, and that the order established by it was immutable and secure against any attempts at alteration by force. They dreamed of establishing at least temporary peace, which would, however, by no means have been extended to the new Soviet State. The history of the last ten years, the history of the League of Nations itself, the increasing conflicts of international interests, the prolonged economic crisis, and, finally, the development of the Soviet State, have shown the world how Utopian were these dreams and aspirations.

To-day we are happy to be able to state that the exponents of those Utopias and the advocates of the policy of ignoring and isolating the Soviet Union are no longer to be met among broad-minded statesmen, among the representatives of the more important States moulding international life who think on realistic lines and understand the needs of the present day, but must be searched for among narrow-minded politicians unable to rise

above their petty political passions and strong prejudices and deriving their knowledge of countries and peoples from muddled sources. It remains only to pity such people and to wish them a speedy enlightenment and a return to more reliable sources of information.

I take this opportunity of expressing my conviction that, in the meantime, the League will see to it that such people have nothing to do with the settlement of affairs affecting the interests of the Soviet State in which impartial judgment and at least an elementary understanding of world events are necessary.

I have already described the attitude of the Soviet Union to the League of Nations both at its formation and during the first stages of its development and have given the reasons for that attitude. To this I must frankly add that the Soviet Government could not have agreed with all the decisions of the League at that time and that, had we taken part in drawing up the Covenant of the League, we would have contested certain of its articles. In particular, we should have objected to the provision in Articles 12 and 15 for the legalisation, in certain instances, of war, and that is why I stated in my letter of September 15th to the President of the Assembly our satisfaction at the proposals to alter these articles. Further, we should have objected to Article 22 on the system of mandates. We also deprecate the absence in Article 23 of an undertaking to ensure race equality.

All this, however, has not been important enough to prevent the Soviet Union from entering the League, especially since any new member of an organisation can be morally responsible only for decisions made with its participation and agreement.

In order to make our position quite clear, I should like further to state that the idea in itself of an association of nations contains nothing theoretically unacceptable for the Soviet State and its ideology. The Soviet Union is itself a league of nations in the best sense of the word, uniting over 200 nationalities, thirteen of which have a population of not less than one million each, and others, such as Russia and the Ukraine, a population running into scores of millions. I will make so bold as to claim that never before have so many nations coexisted so peacefully within a single State, never before have so many nations in one State had such free cultural development and enjoyed their own national culture as a whole and the use of their own language in particular. In no other country are all manifestations of race and national prejudice so resolutely put down and eradicated as in the Soviet Union.

Here, as regards equality of rights, are neither national majorities nor minorities, since no nation, either in theory or practice, has less rights and fewer opportunities for cultural and economic development than another. Many nationalities which seemed to have been doomed to die out altogether have received a fresh lease of life and begun to develop anew, and this on territories where, before the Soviet regime, all nationalities except the dominating Russian were being stamped out by violence and oppression.

At the present time the periodical Press in the Soviet Union comes out in fifty languages. The national policy of the Soviet Union and the results of this policy have received their due both from friends and foes visiting the Soviet Union and studying the national question on the spot.

All the nationalities in our Union are, of course, united by a common political and economic regime and by common aspirations towards a single ideal, for the attainment of which they vie among themselves. The Soviet State has, however, never excluded the possibility of some form or other of

association with States having a different political and social system, so long as there is no mutual hostility and if it is for the attainment of common aims. For such an association it considers that the essential conditions would be, firstly, the extension to every State belonging to such an association of the liberty to preserve what I might call its State personality and the social economic system chosen by it — in other words, reciprocal non-interference in the domestic affairs of the States therein associated; and, secondly, the existence of common aims.

As to the first condition, which we have named the peaceful coexistence of different social-political systems at a given historical stage, we have advocated it again and again at international conferences. We have managed to get it recognised by inclusion in some of the resolutions of these conferences. But further developments were necessary before this principle was able to gain for itself wider recognition. The invitation to the Soviet Union to join the League of Nations may be said to represent the final victory of this principle. The Soviet Union is entering into the League to-day as representative of a new social-economic system, not renouncing any of its special features, and — like the other States here represented — preserving intact its personality.

With regard to common aims, these have long ago been established in many spheres. Workers in the fields of science, art and social activities in the Soviet Union have long been co-operating fruitfully with representatives of other States, both individually and on organised lines, in all spheres of science and culture and on problems of a humanitarian nature.

The co-operation of the Soviet Union with other States within the framework of the League of Nations has also long ago shown itself to be both desirable and possible in the sphere of economics. Soviet delegations have taken part in the Committee of Enquiry for European Union, which occupied itself chiefly with economic questions; in both Economic Conferences, and in other Conferences of a lesser range. It will not be out of place here to remark that at all these Conferences proposals were put forward by the Soviet delegations with a view to the utmost reduction of the existing chaos in international economic relations and in the interests common to all concerned.

The Soviet Government has also not abstained from co-operation of a political nature whenever some alleviation of international conflicts and increase of guarantees of security and consolidation of peace might reasonably be expected from such co-operation. I will only mention the active part taken by the Soviet delegation in the Preparatory Commission of the Disarmament Conference and in the Conference itself, when, on behalf of the Soviet Government, it declared its readiness for any degree of disarmament, taking its stand on far-reaching proposals for the ensuring of peace, some of which have received worldwide recognition and even application. In this respect, I remember, not without pride, the Soviet definition of aggression, which has been made the basis of innumerable international acts.

It needed, however, one great dominating common aim to prove incontestably to all nations, including those of the Soviet Union, the desirability — nay, the necessity — for closer co-operation between the Soviet Union and the League of Nations, and even for the entry of the Soviet Union into the League. The discovery of such a common aim has been greatly facilitated by the events of the last two or three years.

Thirty delegations to the Assembly, comprising most of the Members of the League, and represent-

ing all the big States and those of importance in international life, declared in their address to the Soviet Union that the mission of the League was the organisation of peace, and that the success of this mission demanded the co-operation of the Soviet Union. They knew that the State which they were addressing had not spared, throughout the seventeen years of its existence, its efforts for the establishment of the best possible relations with its own neighbours, on the most solid foundations, for *rapprochements* with all States desiring this, thus making itself a powerful factor for international peace.

For its part, the Soviet Government, following attentively all developments of international life, could not but observe the increasing activity in the League of Nations of States interested in the preservation of peace and their struggle against aggressive militarist elements. More, it noted that these aggressive elements themselves were finding the restrictions of the League embarrassing and trying to shake them off. All this could not be without its influence on the attitude towards the League of Nations of the Soviet Government, ever searching for further means for the organisation of peace, for co-operation in which we have been invited to come here.

The organisation of peace! Could there be a loftier and at the same time more practical and urgent task for the co-operation of all nations? The words used in political slogans have their youth and their age. If they are used too often without being applied, they wear themselves out and end by losing potency. Then they have to be revived and instilled with new meaning. The sound and the meaning of the words "organisation of peace" ought now to be different from their sound and meaning twelve or fifteen years ago. Then, to many Members of the League of Nations, war seemed to be a remote theoretical danger, and there seemed to be no hurry as to its prevention. Now, war must appear to all as the threatening danger of to-morrow. Now, the organisation of peace, for which so far very little has been done, must be set against the extremely active organisation of war. Then, many believed that the spirit of war might be exorcised by adjurations, resolutions and declarations. Now, everybody knows that the exponents of the idea of war, the open promulgators of the refashioning of the map of Europe and Asia by the sword, are not to be intimidated by paper obstacles. Members of the League of Nations know this by experience. We are now confronted with the task of averting war by more effective means.

The failure of the Disarmament Conference, on which formerly such high hopes were placed, in its turn compels us to seek more effective means. We must accept the incontestable fact that, in the present complicated state of political and economic interests, no war of any serious dimensions can be localised, and any war, whatever its issue, will turn out to have been but the first of a series. We must also tell ourselves that sooner or later any war will bring misfortune to all countries, whether belligerents or neutrals. The lesson of the world war, from the results of which both belligerents and neutrals are suffering to this day, must not be forgotten. The impoverishment of the whole world, the lowering of living standards for both manual and brain workers, unemployment, robbing all and sundry of their confidence in the morrow, not to speak of the fall in cultural values, the return of some countries to medieval ideology — such are the consequences of the world war, even now, sixteen years after its cessation, which are making themselves acutely felt.

Finally, we must realise once and for all that no war with political or economic aims is capable of restoring so-called historical justice, and that all it could do would be to substitute new and perhaps still more glaring injustices for old ones, and that every new peace treaty bears within it the seeds of fresh warfare. Further, we must not lose sight of the new increase in armaments going on under our very eyes, the chief danger of which consists in its qualitative still more than in its quantitative increase, in the vast increase of potential destruction. The fact that aerial warfare has with such lightning speed won itself an equal place with land and naval warfare is sufficient corroboration of this argument.

I do not consider it the moment to speak in detail about effective means for the prevention of impending and openly promulgated war. One thing is quite clear for me, and that is that peace and security cannot be organised on the shifting sands of verbal promises and declarations. The nations are not to be soothed into a feeling of security by assurances of peaceful intentions, however often they are repeated, especially in those places where there are grounds for expecting aggression or where, only the day before, there have been talk and publications about wars of conquest in all directions, for which both ideological and material preparations are being made. We should establish that any State is entitled to demand from its neighbours, near and remote, guarantees for its security, and that such a demand is not to be considered as an expression of mistrust.

Governments with a clear conscience and really free from all aggressive intentions, cannot refuse to give, in place of declarations more effective guarantees which would be extended to themselves and give them also a feeling of complete security.

Far be it from me to overrate the opportunities and means of the League of Nations for the organisation of peace. I realise, better perhaps than any of you, how limited these means are. I am aware that the League does not possess the means for the complete abolition of war. I am, however, convinced that, with the firm will and close co-operation of all its Members, a great deal could be done at any given moment for the utmost diminution of the danger of war, and this is a sufficiently honourable and lofty task the fulfilment of which would be of incalculable advantage to humanity. The Soviet Government has never ceased working at this task throughout the whole period of its existence. It has come here to combine its efforts with the efforts of other States represented in the League. I am convinced that in this, our common work, from now on the will to peace of the Soviet Union with its 170 million inhabitants — peace for itself and for other States — will make itself felt as a powerful factor. I am convinced that, as we observe the fruitful consequences of this stream of fresh forces in the common cause of peace, we shall always remember with the utmost satisfaction this day, as one occupying an honourable place in the annals of the League.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TENTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH, 1934, AT 3.15 P.M.

CONTENTS :

43. REQUEST OF AFGHANISTAN TO BE ADMITTED INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

Inclusion of this Question in the Agenda of the Session and Reference to the Sixth Committee.

President : M. R. J. SANDLER.

43. — REQUEST OF AFGHANISTAN TO BE ADMITTED INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: INCLUSION OF THIS QUESTION IN THE AGENDA OF THE SESSION AND REFERENCE TO THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : Having received this morning a telegram containing an application for the admission of Afghanistan as a member of the League of Nations, I immediately convened the present meeting.

The Secretary-General took the necessary steps to communicate to all the delegations the text of the telegram received from the Afghan Minister in London, which reads as follows :

" London, September 24th, 1934.

" According my Government telegraphic instructions I submit you following :

" In accordance with the terms of Article 1 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, I have the honour to request that the Afghan Government may be admitted as a Member of the League of Nations, and that this request may be placed on the agenda of the present meeting of the Assembly of the League.

" The Government of Afghanistan is prepared to accept the conditions laid down in Article 1 of the Covenant and to carry out all obligations involved in membership of the League. — Ali MOHAMMAD, *Afghan Minister.*"

I then requested my colleagues of the General Committee to meet with a view to consulting them on the procedure to be followed, in order to be able, on behalf of the General Committee, to make proposals to the Assembly with regard to this matter.

With the unanimous approval of my colleagues of the General Committee, I have the honour to propose that the Assembly, without further procedure, place the application of Afghanistan for admission to membership of the League of Nations on the agenda of the present session.

If there are no observations or objections, I will take the silence of the Assembly as signifying that, in accordance with its Rules of Procedure, it decides to place on the agenda of the present session the request of Afghanistan to be admitted to membership of the League of Nations.

The President's proposal was adopted.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly having decided to place this question on its agenda, I have the honour, both in my personal capacity and on behalf of my colleagues of the General Committee, to propose that the Assembly immediately refer this question to the Sixth Committee for consideration.

If there are no observations, the application of Afghanistan for admission will be referred to the Sixth Committee.

The President's proposal was adopted.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH, 1934, AT 3.30 P.M.

CONTENTS :

44. PROPOSAL BY CERTAIN DELEGATIONS ON THE QUESTION OF THE NATIONALITY OF WOMEN.
Communication by the President on behalf of the General Committee of the Assembly.
45. COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION.
Resolution proposed by the General Committee of the Assembly.
46. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES SUBMITTED TO THE ASSEMBLY FOR APPROVAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF OCTOBER 11TH, 1933, CONCERNING THE SIMPLIFICATION OF THE PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY.
 - I. Manner of accrediting Delegates to the Assembly.
Report of the First Committee.
Resolution.
 - II. Work of the Health Organisation.
Report of the Second Committee.
Resolution.
 - III. Work of the Communications and Transit Organisation.
Report of the Second Committee.
Resolution.
 - IV. Collaboration of the Press in the Organisation of Peace.
Report of the Second Committee.
Resolution.
 - V. Penal and Penitentiary Questions.
Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolutions.
 - VI. Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish Refugees.
Report of the Sixth Committee.
Resolutions.
 - VII. Work of the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation.
Report of the Sixth Committee.
Resolutions.
 - VIII. Mandates.
Report of the Sixth Committee.
Resolution.
 - IX. Slavery.
Report of the Sixth Committee.
Resolution.

47. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES TO THE SUBMISSION OF WHICH THE PROCEDURE PROVIDED BY THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF OCTOBER 11TH, 1933, IS NOT APPLICABLE.

- I. Economic and Financial Questions.
Report of the Second Committee.
Resolution.
- II. Traffic in Women and Children.
Report of the Fifth Committee.
Resolutions.

President : M. R. J. SANDLER.

44. — PROPOSAL BY CERTAIN DELEGATIONS ON THE QUESTION OF THE NATIONALITY OF WOMEN : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT ON BEHALF OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The delegations of certain countries whose names I will read have laid before me, as President of the Assembly, in the form of a letter dated September 21st, 1934, a proposal concerning the problem of the nationality of women.

The text of the letter reads as follows :

" In view of the world-wide restrictions upon the rights of women — the right to earn a living, the right to an education, to hold public office, to enter the professions — and in view of the interdependence of nationality and the right to work, the following delegations request that there be brought before the First Committee the Convention for Equality for Women in Nationality entered into at the recent Conference of American Republics in Montevideo.

"Trusting that this action may be taken immediately, etc.

(Signed)

M. LITVINOFF (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics),
Stefan OSUSKÝ (Czechoslovakia),
Cemal HÜSNÜ (Turkey),
F. CASTILLO NAJERA (Mexico),
M. RIVAS-YICUÑA (Chile),
A. NIETO-CABALLERO (Colombia),
QUO Tai-chi (China),
B. PORRAS (Panama),
Phya Subarn SOMPATI (Siam),
E. BRACHE Jr. (Dominican Republic),
James PARR (New Zealand),
W. MUTERS (Latvia),
J. M. CANTILLO (Argentina),
Constantin MAYARD (Haiti),
J. SOUBBOTITCH (Yugoslavia)."

The text of this proposal has been communicated to the delegations.

As soon as the proposal reached me, I took the occasion of a meeting of the General Committee to consult it on this matter.

As the work of the session is now far advanced, and as the problem in question is one which would necessitate close study, the members of the General Committee agree with me that, in the present circumstances, the only means of meeting the wishes of the delegations signatories of this letter was to take note of their proposal and place the question on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : Mlle. Forchhammer, delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Forchhammer (Denmark). — Equality in nationality between the sexes is a question for which women's organisations, both national and international, have worked for years. I am sure I speak for millions of women all over the world when I express our gratitude to the framers of the Montevideo Convention and those Governments which have signed it. This satisfaction was expressed a few months ago in a resolution passed by the International Council of Women at their Paris Congress, urging the national councils to press forward legislation in their own countries to give women, married or not, the same right as men to determine their nationality, so as to make it possible for their Governments to adhere to the Montevideo Convention.

I also want to express our satisfaction that this question has been put on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly. We urge that, during this year, Governments will give this question their closest attention, and I am sure the women's organisations will be glad to co-operate with their Governments in order to reach a satisfactory result.

The President :

Translation : If there are no other observations I shall consider that the Assembly, approving its General Committee's suggestions, takes note of this proposal and decides that the question shall be placed on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

The General Committee's proposal was adopted.

45. — COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY FOR EUROPEAN UNION : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that at its second meeting, on September 10th, it referred to its General Committee for preliminary consideration the following question, which appears on the agenda of the present session : Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

The General Committee of the Assembly, after considering the question, decided to submit for the approval of the Assembly a resolution based on that which the Assembly adopted on the same subject at its previous session.

This draft resolution prepared by the General Committee has been submitted to the delegations and reads as follows :

"The Assembly,

"After consulting its General Committee as to the procedure to be followed in connection with Item 8 of the agenda of this session (Commission of Enquiry for European Union) :

"Notes that circumstances have made it impossible for this Commission to meet since the last session ;

"Decides, under these conditions, to renew for twelve months the term of office of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union and to include the question in the agenda of the next session of the Assembly."

If there are no observations, I shall consider that the Assembly approves the draft resolution submitted to it by the General Committee renewing the term of office of the Commission of Enquiry for European Union.

The resolution was adopted.

46. — REPORTS OF COMMITTEES SUBMITTED TO THE ASSEMBLY FOR APPROVAL IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF OCTOBER 11TH, 1933, CONCERNING THE SIMPLIFICATION OF THE PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : On the agenda of the present meeting there are grouped together under a special heading the reports of various Committees which are submitted for the approval of the Assembly in accordance with the resolution of October 11th, 1933, concerning the simplification of the procedure of the Assembly.

I will remind the Assembly of the two paragraphs of the resolution which concern the application of this procedure :

"(i) When the reports and resolutions submitted by the various Committees of the Assembly are brought up for adoption in plenary session, the President, in the cases indicated below, shall read the titles of the reports and put forthwith to the vote the resolutions which are proposed.

"(ii) The procedure provided for in paragraph (i) shall only apply in cases where the Committee has unanimously declared that it does not consider a discussion of the report in plenary session to be necessary and where no delegation has subsequently asked the President to open a discussion on the report. The report must be circulated to the delegations twenty-four hours before it is brought up in plenary session."

The reports grouped under this heading of the agenda have been notified to the President of the Assembly by the Chairmen of the various Committees concerned as being reports to which the simplified procedure in question is applicable.

In other words, the Committees do not ask that these reports should be commented on or discussed in the Assembly.

Moreover, since the decisions taken on this subject by the Committees, no delegation has informed me that it wishes a discussion to be opened on these reports.

In consequence, and in application of the rules I have just quoted, I propose that the Assembly adopt without further procedure, takes note of the following reports and adopts the resolutions contained therein :

- I. Manner of accrediting Delegates to the Assembly.
Report of the First Committee:
Resolution. (Document A.47.1934, Annex 2.)
- II. Work of the Health Organisation.
Report of the Second Committee:
Resolution. (Document A.39.1934, III, Annex 3.)
- III. Work of the Communications and Transit Organisation.
Report of the Second Committee:
Resolution. (Document A.31.1934, VIII, Annex 4.)
- IV. Collaboration of the Press in the Organisation of Peace.
Report of the Second Committee:
Resolution. (Document A.44.1934, Annex 5.)
- V. Penal and Penitentiary Questions.
Report of the Fifth Committee:
Resolutions. (Document A.45.1934, IV, Annex 6.)
- VI. Russian, Armenian, Assyrian, Assyro-Chaldean and Turkish Refugees.
Report of the Sixth Committee:
Resolutions. (Document A.37.1934, Annex 7.)
- VII. Work of the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation.
Report of the Sixth Committee:
Resolutions. (Document A.41.1934, XII, Annex 8.)
- VIII. Mandates.
Report of the Sixth Committee:
Resolution. (Document A.42.1934, VI, Annex 9.)
- IX. Slavery.
Report of the Sixth Committee:
Resolution. (Document A.43.1934, VI, Annex 10.)

The Assembly took note of the above reports and adopted the resolutions accompanying them.

47. — REPORTS OF COMMITTEES TO THE SUBMISSION OF WHICH THE PROCEDURE PROVIDED BY THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF OCTOBER 11TH, 1933, IS NOT APPLICABLE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the consideration of the reports to the submission of which the procedure provided by the Assembly resolution of October 11th, 1933, is not applicable.

Consequently, for the consideration of these reports. I shall follow the practice established in former years.

I. ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on Economic and Financial Questions (document A.40.1934.II, Annex 11).

As the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Second Committee have been obliged to leave Geneva, I will ask only the Rapporteur, M. Munters, delegate of Latvia, to take his place on the platform.

(On the invitation of the President, M. Munters, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Munters, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Munters (Latvia), Rapporteur. — The report of the Second Committee on economic and financial questions which has been circulated was unanimously adopted. It consists of five parts — a brief summary of the present economic situation, a summary of the discussion which took place in the Committee, a statement on the activity of the Economic Organisation of the League, a statement on the activity of the Financial Organisation of the League, and a draft resolution submitted for your approval.

It was the unanimous feeling of the Committee that, if the policy of combating the effects of the general depression by an ever-growing number of autonomous economic and financial measures taken by individual countries was not checked or canalised, international economic relations would be further seriously imperilled. Consequently, there was also unanimity among the members of the Second Committee that the League of Nations should continue to watch over and investigate the possibilities for common action in the field of economic relations and that the international situation should not be permitted to drift from bad to worse owing to the lack of advice or initiative.

With perfect unanimity the Second Committee decided to initiate that common action in economic matters. Whether the enquiry proposed by the Second Committee into the problem of compensation and clearing arrangements, which we hope will be sanctioned by the Assembly, will yield practical results it is impossible to predict at the present moment. One thing, however, is obvious — namely, that such results depend in large measure on the rapidity of the investigation to be undertaken so that the conclusions of the enquiry should not become inapplicable by reason of their being overtaken by the developments of the situation.

The Committee suggests, therefore, that, in the event of the adoption of the resolution submitted to the Assembly, the preparatory work for the enquiry should be undertaken in every country without delay, so that the replies to the questionnaire which will be sent to the various Governments will be forthcoming more quickly than is the usual rule in enquiries of this kind.

The President :

Translation : M. Ruiz-Guinazú, delegate of the Argentine Republic, will address the Assembly.

M. Ruiz-Guinazú (Argentine Republic):

Translation: The Argentine delegation followed the discussions of the Second Committee with the greatest interest, and took the opportunity of supporting the French initiative with a view to an enquiry into the causes, scope, methods and results of clearing and compensation agreements, together with the amendment submitted by the United Kingdom delegation. I have already explained to the Committee the meaning of the Agreements of this nature concluded by my country with a number of European and American States, which are desirous of participating in the search for the most appropriate means of improving commercial relations and developing world trade to the extent of their economic capacity.

The majority of the international conventions concluded, however, are definitely temporary and short-term arrangements, subject to amendment at short notice, their purpose being to allow foreign trade to be carried on until economic conditions show a more favourable turn. In every country the general tendency has been to reserve liberty of action for the future and even to ensure greater liberty. We are convinced that, in reality, no country can successfully pursue an economic policy, as our Rapporteur, M. Munters, has explained, without regard to the policies of other countries, unless the very object of its policy is that of complete isolation. In the modern world, however, isolation is, in fact, impossible on account of the various factors influencing economic organisation.

In this connection, I need not, I think, emphasise the importance of increasing our efforts to harmonise divergent opinions. I consider that the time has come to seek every opportunity for common action in the field of economic relations, in order to obviate the risk of a complete collapse. We all want economic disarmament. We have turned our efforts towards a sincere and more untrammelled co-operation, the only true road leading to a solution. It was with this intention that the Argentine Republic took part in the London Conference. It considers that the resumption of close relations and the preparation of a scheme for future co-ordination are the essential conditions for a satisfactory economic recovery.

With that object the Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Saavedra Lamas, has convoked a conference to be held in Buenos Aires next year, with a well-defined programme of commercial concessions; for he is convinced that a permanent recovery of world trade cannot be brought about so long as States are not ready to abandon the system of closed economy, which still threatens to stifle international trade.

Indeed, the President of the Republic, General Justo, in his last message to Parliament, emphasised his deep-seated conviction that the realisation of this aspiration might bring us closer to the ideal of a common Pan-American Customs policy, which would stimulate production and mutual marketing.

On the other hand, the tendency towards an acute economic nationalism is still seriously jeopardising the economic interdependence of the nations. This tendency, which is justified by exceptional circumstances, does not, however, preclude the possibility, subject to a less theoretical conception of autarchy and of security, of taking some action now to minimise the effects of such an attitude. This is proved by the action of certain statesmen in not claiming the benefits of the most-favoured-nation clause in the case of certain multilateral conventions. In this connection attention has been drawn to the Agreement which was opened for signature at Washington in July last, under the

auspices of the Pan-American Union, and approved by the Montevideo Conference in December 1933.

In reality, international equilibrium constitutes the fundamental problem, since it includes every aspect of the balance of accounts of the various countries. The restoration of this equilibrium would satisfy the hopes of producers and of consumers. It is notorious that the idea of equilibrium raises serious difficulties in all commercial discussions. The Economic Committee of the League of Nations wisely points out that the principal cause is that the equilibrium actually found is the unstable and mobile product of an almost infinite series of secondary equilibria of a temporary and constantly variable character. The economic analysis includes more than a study of the theoretically stable position of equilibrium; it also contains an interesting study of the disturbances of the equilibrium which cause economic changes and become the starting-points for new developments.

This phenomenon is dynamic in character and at the same time requires certain correctives with respect to the form of the economic organisation, based on a series of national economic systems, semi-closed, semi-interdependent, and less difficult to apply than isolated national systems. That, in our opinion, is the transitional formula best suited to present-day needs, the formula which will enable a link to be formed with the essential national elements. The science of political economy is definitely an experimental science, and I venture to add that every country is thus a laboratory. These tests tend gradually to combine internal exigencies with the requirements of foreign trade.

At the present time a complete readjustment is not possible, but there are a variety of symptoms of improvement which allow us to hope that a *de facto* stabilisation will be maintained considerable time. The ground gained by the compensation agreements has not been entirely lost. In the Argentine, at all events, encouraging signs have been noticed, and they are making their appearance in other countries as well.

Our experts state that the movement of our foreign trade constitutes the decisive factor in the changes of our internal situation. We are, in fact, closely linked with international economy, leaving on one side the high barriers forming an obstacle to trade — restrictions, temporary aggravations, price disturbances, currency instability and so on — which the world has been obliged to accept as a necessary evil. We proclaim that, for the future, the principle of equality of treatment shall be the basis of reciprocity for every commercial policy acceptable to us; and we shall, of course, work within the framework of the League of Nations.

It is essential that greater efforts should be made. It is too soon yet to say that economic restoration will be brought about shortly; but, thanks to the anxiety shared by all, Governments are entering into negotiations, and conversations will lead to agreement.

I cannot conclude without expressing the hopes formed by the Argentine delegation. May the shrunk spiral which in the graphs represents the sharp contraction of world trade widen its curves more and more as a symbol of happier and more equitable world conditions.

The President:

Translation: If no one else wishes to speak, I shall regard the resolution proposed by the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

II. TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN :
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 Traffic in Women and Children (document A.38.1934.IV, Annex 12).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Levillier, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Miss Horsbrugh, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Miss Horsbrugh, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Miss Horsbrugh (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Rapporteur. — The Fifth Committee decided, in order to give the largest possible measure of publicity to the result of their work at this session in connection with the traffic in women and children, that their draft resolutions should be read and some explanation given, for it is only by obtaining well-informed support from the public that it is possible to combat successfully this social evil. The League of Nations has, I think, fulfilled its functions in connection with this question in a practical manner. Expert investigations have taken place both into the nature and extent of the traffic, and definite remedies have been suggested.

This year the Fifth Committee studied the report of the Commission of Enquiry in the Far East and discussed how the League could further the proposals of the Commissioners. It decided that, with the co-operation of the Governments concerned, a Conference should be called in the East, to be attended by the authorities dealing with

these subjects. The Commissioners also drew particular attention to the plight of Russian refugee women in China; but, as there was no definite scheme for the rehabilitation of these women, it decided to obtain further information and to report to the next session of the Committee on the Traffic in Women and Children.

The enquiry in the East shows, as similar enquiries both in Europe and America have already shown, that the licensed-house system is a direct encouragement to the traffic. For many years there has been an interchange of views on that subject here at Geneva, both in the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and also in the Fifth Committee. The recent changes in medical opinion have, however, greatly modified the situation. Many countries have now abandoned the licensed-house system and have found no deterioration either in public health or public order, and no single country that has abandoned that system wishes to go back to it. This year for the first time there was complete agreement concerning the principles on the basis of which the problem can best be treated, and those principles are embodied in the resolutions of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee. This unanimity, I think, can be regarded as a distinct step forward in our work for the abolition of this traffic which we all deplore.

I therefore have the honour to submit to the Assembly for approval the resolutions proposed by the Fifth Committee.

The President :

Translation : As no delegation has asked to speak, I shall consider the resolutions proposed by the Fifth Committee as adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TWELFTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1934, AT 10 A.M.

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48. — APPLICATION OF THE KINGDOM OF AFGHANISTAN TO BE ADMITTED INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the examination of the Sixth Committee's report on the request of Afghanistan to be admitted to membership of the League of Nations.

The Assembly will remember that, at its meeting on the afternoon of September 25th, it took note of a telegram containing a request from the Kingdom of Afghanistan to be admitted to membership of the League of Nations. It decided to place this question on the agenda of the present session and referred the matter to the Sixth Committee for examination.

The Sixth Committee met forthwith and examined the request of Afghanistan to be admitted to membership of the League; the report of the Sixth Committee is before the Assembly this morning.

While acknowledging that the Assembly has full discretion to decide this point, I thought that, as the Sixth Committee's report was communicated to the delegations yesterday, I ought to give the Assembly an opportunity to state its opinion on this report without delay, in view of the advanced stage of the work of the session.

I therefore think I should first ask the Assembly if it is willing to take action forthwith on the Sixth Committee's report.

If no one wishes to speak, I shall interpret the silence of the Assembly as a sign of assent, and consequently shall consider that the Assembly has decided, in accordance with the conditions laid down in its Rules of Procedure, to take action in the matter forthwith.

Agreed.

The President :

Translation : I will therefore ask His Excellency Tevfik Rüstü Bey, first delegate of Turkey, Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, and His Excellency M. de Madariaga, first delegate of Spain, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, to take their places on the platform.

(Tevfik Rüstü Bey and M. de Madariaga took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Tevfik Rüstü Bey, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Tevfik Rüstü Bey (Turkey) Rapporteur :

Translation : The Sixth Committee has done me the signal honour of entrusting to me the pleasant task of submitting to the Assembly on its behalf the report on the admission of the Kingdom of Afghanistan to membership of the League of Nations.

I feel particular satisfaction in acquitting myself of this task since Turkey entertains relations of close friendship with Afghanistan, as with all other countries of Asia.

There is no need for me to emphasise the great importance of admitting into this body of international concord and co-operation a State which not only fulfils all the conditions required under the Covenant, but whose sincere efforts in favour of peace and progress call for the sympathy of all the nations belonging to our institution.

This country entertains good relations with all States in general and with its neighbours in particular, as was clearly evinced in the speeches made in the Sixth Committee concerning Afghanistan.

The dispute existing between Afghanistan and Persia has been referred to arbitration, as I explained yesterday in the Sixth Committee.

I therefore trust that I may be permitted to repeat my sincere hope that Afghanistan may take the place in this institution which she merits and thus give us her valuable assistance in our common task.

I am convinced, further, that this decision of the Assembly will be for this country a guarantee of the strong moral support of the League in the path of peace and progress which it is resolved to follow.

The Sixth Committee, having taken note of the report of the Sub-Committee appointed to examine the request of the Kingdom of Afghanistan to enter the League of Nations, approves that report and unanimously submits to the Assembly a proposal for the admission of the Kingdom of Afghanistan to membership of the League.

The President :

Translation : M. Sepahbodi, first delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

M. Sepahbodi (Persia) :

Translation : As I had the honour of declaring before the Sixth Committee, I have great pleasure in giving my cordial support, on behalf of Persia, to the request of the Kingdom of Afghanistan to be admitted to membership of the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : His Highness the Aga Khan, first delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

The Aga Khan (India). — They are no conventional feelings that have prompted me to address you, and it is no conventional speech that I wish to deliver. No representative of India, no Muslim, no Asiatic could play his part on this historic occasion unmoved. Times have been when the rulers of Afghanistan were content — were determined — to keep their nation aloof from the hurly-burly of the world; when even her historic and picturesque capital of Kabul was one of the world's forbidden cities. To-day, Afghanistan has set her seal on a momentous change. Times indeed have changed in all parts of the globe. There have been developments everywhere which none could have foreseen thirty, twenty years back. Nor has Afghanistan remained unaffected by the evolution of things within, or by the march of events outside. To-day, she formally and finally enters into the great comity of nations — no stranger indeed, for she has been playing her part in session after session of the Disarmament Conference. Nor does she enter into a strange Assembly, for not only can she claim the goodwill of all, she can claim that all her next-door neighbours are to-day — and we could not say this when the session began — Members like her of the League.

It is not without emotion that I play my part on this memorable occasion. Throughout all my associations with the League I have felt — you will pardon the frankness of a man who is perhaps all the more a true representative of India because he is also a citizen of the world — I have long felt that the League was in danger of becoming too occidental and too representative of one creed to be truly catholic and universal. To a Muslim like myself, it is no small thing that another Islamic nation is to-day entering the League. For I am convinced that her entry will strengthen the League in far greater measure than the number of her subjects or even the extent of her realm might suggest, and will invigorate it in the pursuit of our common ideals with fresh ideas and a fresh outlook.

No Indian will read unmoved the proceedings of to-day. For India, however much she may seek from the West her political institutions, remains a true daughter of the East, proud of her Eastern blood, her Eastern languages, her Eastern cultures. These she shares with Afghanistan, and seventy millions of her peoples share, as I share, with Afghanistan in the glorious brotherhood of Islam.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency Ja'far el Askari Pasha, delegate of Iraq, will address the Assembly.

Ja'far el Askari Pasha (Iraq). — There can, I think, be no two opinions as to the genuineness and the spontaneity of the welcome that is being extended to Afghanistan to-day. All the Members of our League, old and new, great and small, greet her entry as marking one more milestone towards the goal of universality.

But just as the States of Europe feel that there is an especial bond uniting them, a feeling that takes concrete shape, for instance, in the Commission of Enquiry for European Union; just as in any discussion affecting one or the other of the Republics of Latin America, the outsider is at once conscious of a strong solidarity between them all, based on their common origin, language and traditions, a solidarity that must quickly overcome any passing exhibition of temper between brothers; so we of Asia may be excused if we too feel that we are united by particularly intimate ties — for some geographical propinquity, for others historical contacts, for others a common religion, a common alphabet, a common literary and cultural tradition — within the larger framework that embraces all.

The religion on which the moral and social code of Europe is largely based came from Asia. When the dark night of the middle ages descended on Europe, it was we, the Arabs in particular, who took into our charge the smouldering torch of learning, first lit by Greece and Rome, blew it into flame again and handed it back to burn more brightly than ever before.

And now, in more recent times, Europe has repaid the debt by endowing Asia with those material wonders which the genius of her men of learning has brought into the world.

To-day we are all striving towards an ideal. I believe that co-operation between Europe and Asia is no less essential for the future than it has been fruitful in the past. The stronger and more vigorous the Asiatic element, the more successful that co-operation will be.

For these reasons, Iraq offers a hearty and brotherly greeting to the new Member which has come to reinforce us. I venture to express the hope that the day is not far distant when we shall be welcoming Egypt, Syria and other States into the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : As no other delegate has asked to speak, I call upon the Assembly to take note of the Sixth Committee's report recommending the Assembly to decide in favour of the admission of the Kingdom of Afghanistan to membership of the League of Nations.

If there are no observations we shall, without further delay, proceed to take the vote required for the admission of a new State to membership of the League.

According to Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Covenant, a majority of two-thirds of the Assembly is required for the admission of a new State.

A vote will be taken by roll-call. The procedure prescribed in Rule 20, paragraph 1, of the Rules of Procedure will be followed. The name of each delegation will be called and one of its members will answer "Yes" or "No" or "Not voting".

The result of the vote will be recorded and announced to the Assembly.

The vote was taken by roll-call.

The President :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of votes cast. | 47 |
| Number of votes valid for calculating the majority | 47 |
| Number of votes in favour of the application for admission | 47 |

Consequently, I proclaim that the Kingdom of Afghanistan has been admitted to membership of the League of Nations by a unanimous vote of the Assembly.

I should like at once to congratulate this new Member of the League, and I shall welcome it as soon as its delegation has taken its place among us.

49. — CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES OF THE KINGDOM OF AFGHANISTAN : CONVOCATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : In order to enable the delegation of the Kingdom of Afghanistan to sit in the Assembly at the present meeting, I will ask the Credentials Committee to be so good as to meet immediately to examine the credentials of the delegates of Afghanistan and to submit its report to the Assembly.

While the Credentials Committee is meeting, I propose that the Assembly pass to other questions on the agenda of the present meeting, and, as soon as the Credentials Committee submits its report, the report will be read and I will invite the delegates of Afghanistan to come and take their place among us.

50. — WORK OF THE CONFERENCE FOR THE REDUCTION AND LIMITATION OF ARMAMENTS : LETTER FROM THE DELEGATION OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is a communication from the President of the Assembly regarding a letter, dated September 26th, 1934, which I have received from the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics concerning the work of the Conference on the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments. The text of this letter is as follows :¹

[*Translation.*]

"In view of the fact that, during the session of the fifteenth Assembly of the League of Nations, the Third Committee was not constituted and that there has thus been no opportunity of taking stock of the present position of the work of the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, and that, moreover, at this advanced stage of its work, the Assembly could not enter upon a discussion of the question, the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has the honour to request you to be good enough to submit to the next plenary meeting of the fifteenth Assembly the following draft resolution :

"The fifteenth Assembly of the League of Nations expresses the hope that the President of the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments will report to the League Council on the position of the work of that Conference and that the Council will express its views as to the procedure to be followed."

(Signed) M. LITVINOFF."

¹ Document A.59.1934.IX.

Before communicating this letter to the Assembly and submitting to it my views on the subject, I consulted my colleagues on the General Committee and, with their approval, I now make the following observations :

The Assembly will remember that it considered that the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments had suspended its work in circumstances which necessarily led the Assembly to consider it expedient this year not to appoint one of its Committees to consider the same subjects with which the Conference was still dealing. In view of this circumstance and also in view of the difficulties of entering now upon a full examination of this question, and whereas the Council is free to obtain any information it may think desirable regarding any question coming within its competence, the Assembly will perhaps consider it desirable simply to take note of the letter from the first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

M. Litvinoff, first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, has asked to make a communication on this subject, and he will now address the Assembly.

M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — It was not my intention to have my letter accompanied by any speeches, nor to raise at this late hour any controversial questions entailing a debate ; but, in view of the President's statement, I feel compelled to say a few words in order to explain at what my letter aims, or rather at what it does not aim.

It is far from my mind to endeavour to induce the Assembly or the Council to interfere with the normal procedure of the Disarmament Conference or its executive organs, and still less to do away with the Conference altogether. Let the President of the Disarmament Conference or the Bureau and other executive organs carry out, by all means, the decisions taken by the Conference or by the General Commission. Let them take the necessary steps which they think fit and timely. But I think at the same time that the Assembly and the Council of the League cannot be disinterested in the question of disarmament. After all, as I have more than once been reminded, the Disarmament Conference itself is an emanation of the League of Nations, and the President of the Conference has received his mandate from the Council of the League. It seems to me quite natural that, after two and a-half years of the existence of the Conference, at least the Council as a body, if not the Assembly, should show some interest in the work of the Conference, should take stock of what has been done and what has not been done and perhaps take some measures which might help the work of the Conference or give it some new direction.

I make no secret of what I am going to propose, when such an occasion arises, at least as regards procedure. I shall probably bring to the notice of the Council the proposal made by the Soviet delegation in the General Commission to create a special permanent organ of the League for dealing with all questions relating to peace, including disarmament. I have not given up the idea of a permanent conference of peace. On the contrary, I am more convinced than ever of its necessity ; and, if I am not mistaken, this idea is gaining ground in the circles of the League.

It is before my mind that there is still left outside the League a great country whose collaboration in the questions of peace and disarmament we all highly value. It is therefore essential to establish a common and permanent basis for such collaboration. This, however, is not the moment to say any more on that point.

The purpose of my letter was only to remind the Assembly of the question of disarmament and to show people outside the Assembly that the League of Nations does not lose sight of it. It seemed to me that a negative decision following upon the non-constitution of the Third Committee was not sufficient for that purpose, and that some positive proposal or decision was necessary. That purpose has been achieved by my letter having been made public and also by the statement of the President. If, on technical grounds, a formal resolution does not commend itself to the Assembly, as running counter to a previous decision at a time when my delegation was not yet at the Assembly, I do not insist on a formal vote being taken, and I shall be satisfied, in following the advice of the President, to raise this question in the Council itself.

The President :

Translation : I thank the first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the explanation he has been good enough to make to the Assembly on a question the capital and undeniable importance of which he has rightly emphasised.

If there are no other observations, the Assembly will, in the circumstances, simply take note of the letter from the delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the statement he has just made.

The Assembly noted the letter and statement of the first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

51. — CREDENTIALS OF THE DELEGATES OF THE KINGDOM OF AFGHANISTAN: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : M. Schmidt, Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials, will address the Assembly.

M. Schmidt (Estonia), Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials :

Translation : The Committee appointed by the Assembly to verify the credentials of delegates met again to-day, September 27th, 1934, at 10.45 a.m., in the President's room, in order to ascertain whether the representatives of the Kingdom of Afghanistan are duly accredited to take part in the work of the Assembly.

The Secretary-General of the League of Nations has transmitted to the Committee a letter, signed by the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Afghanistan in London, in which he states that he is instructed by his Government to inform the Secretary-General that he himself and His Excellency General Mohamed Omar Khan have been appointed to represent the Royal Government of Afghanistan as delegates to the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly.

The Committee,

Having considered the contents of this document, and in view of the fact that, on account of lack of time, it has been impossible for the delegation of Afghanistan to obtain powers in good and due form ;

Considering that the Royal Government of Afghanistan authorised His Excellency Ali Mohamed Khan, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in London, to communicate on September 24th, 1934, the request for admission of the Kingdom of Afghanistan to membership of the League of Nations ;

In view of the above-mentioned exceptional circumstances :

Considers the delegates of the Kingdom of Afghanistan accredited to take part in the work of the Assembly, and requests the Assembly to be good enough to ratify this decision.

The President :

Translation : I wish to thank the Chairman of the Committee on Credentials for his report, of which the Assembly will take note.

If no one asks to speak, I shall consider the conclusions of the report of the Credentials Committee to be adopted by the Assembly.

The conclusions of the report of the Committee on Credentials were adopted.

52. — ENTRY OF THE KINGDOM OF AFGHANISTAN INTO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The President :

Translation : I invite the delegates of the Kingdom of Afghanistan to take their places among us.

(The delegates of the Kingdom of Afghanistan took their seats in the Assembly.)

The President :

Translation : For the second time during this Assembly, I have the honour to welcome the representatives of a country which has just entered the League of Nations. I feel certain that I am interpreting the unanimous opinion of the Assembly when I express the great satisfaction I feel in seeing the delegates of the Kingdom of Afghanistan among us.

Your distant and beautiful country is rich in memories of ancient times. It possesses, too, a wealth of resources which give promise of great future development. In taking your seats in the World's Parliament at Geneva, you are lending strength such as is particularly desired to the voice of Asia in the concert of the nations. I feel sure that the cause of peace will benefit by the closer relations between East and West and the establishment of a wider basis for international co-operation.

By admitting the Kingdom of Afghanistan into the League of Nations, we have travelled one more stage along the road towards universality. It is a happy augury for the future of the community of peoples.

I repeat my welcome to the delegates of the Kingdom of Afghanistan and beg them to co-operate with us in the work of the League.

His Excellency Ali Mohamed Khan, delegate of the Kingdom of Afghanistan, will address the Assembly.

Ali Mohamed Khan (Afghanistan). — Allow me, as the Afghan representative, to thank you for the kind words in which you have welcomed my country's entry into the League of Nations ; to which I have the great pleasure of coupling the names of our esteemed neighbours and those distinguished States Members who have added their cordial felicitations. I am particularly thankful to our eminent friend, His Excellency Tefvik Rüstü Bey, the Foreign Minister of Turkey, for his great interest in our case and for his untiring efforts in this connection. Nor am I less thankful to all the Members of the Assembly for so overwhelmingly and unanimously according a warm and friendly reception to Afghanistan.

The cordiality of the atmosphere which has thus been created emboldens me to state that, although somewhat belated in coming within the fold of this great peace instrument, we do not consider ourselves as strangers either to the cause or to the Assembly itself, for it will be remembered that, in the several activities of the League — as, for instance, in the Disarmament Conference and in your social and humanitarian activities — Afghanistan has consistently taken an active, and I hope not an insignificant, part.

In matters appertaining to general world peace and international goodwill we have an abiding interest, and contemporary history of Asia is not without instances to testify that both in promoting and maintaining world fellowship and understanding our nationals have time and again taken a prominent part.

Although technically Afghanistan may be a newcomer to the League of Nations, the idea behind the League's endeavours has not been unknown to her, for, in virtue of her nation's traditional practice and belief, equality, justice and an insistence on the minimum human rights have always guided the people in whose name I have the honour of speaking here to-day.

We heartily and devoutly welcome the object of the League, which I understand is to maintain permanent peace, for, due to our already established order, we consider peace to be sacrosanct, and that it is our highest duty to engender and protect goodwill amongst mankind, and not to disturb the earth after it has been properly set up.

Nor are we mere theorists in this regard, for, in Afghanistan, we are practical men or nothing ; and what our efforts have been in the direction of human concord can be readily affirmed by our recent history.

I may assure my esteemed colleagues, through you, Mr. President, that Afghanistan is entering the League to-day full of sentiments of goodwill and fraternity towards each and all, and is determined to strengthen to her utmost capacity the progress of peace.

To reiterate again, I may safely venture to say that, distant though Afghanistan be, her geographical position is such that it is destined to play a great part by throwing her weight in favour of international friendliness, justice and human welfare. Consequently, I am confident that our entry into the League of Nations is not without significance, for to us world peace is not a vision or only a pious hope. It is a reality, in the full realisation of which I am sure my countrymen will acquit themselves worthily.

Afghanistan is zealous about the League for another reason, as well ; it is this, that we consider that by her adhesion to this noble organisation it is contributing towards the universality of the League of Nations, for the universality of this effort is the only sure international guarantee for securing that which we call world peace ; and surely peace and orderly progress are the least of human birthrights.

We shall therefore co-operate wholeheartedly to plant more deeply the roots of this collective peace system in the hearts of the people, a system which we hope and trust will be made ceaseless in its growth.

With this adage, and this alone, writ large upon our banners, we, Sir, enter this celebrated world gathering as your fellow-workers in this sublime cause.

53. — COMMITTEES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of a resolution submitted to the Assembly by the General Committee on the question of League Committees.

The Assembly will remember that, during its meeting on September 10th, it referred Item 2 of the agenda for the present session, "Committees of the League of Nations", to the General Committee for preliminary examination.

The General Committee of the Assembly examined this question and decided to submit for the approval of the Assembly the following resolution :

"The Assembly,

"Having taken cognisance of the Secretary-General's report on the League Committees, prepared as a result of the Council's decision of January 17th, 1934 (document C.287.M.125.1934);

"Considering that this report constitutes a useful basis for enquiring whether corrections, adjustments or improvements should be made in the constitution and in the practice and procedure of the committees :

"Requests the Council to have the Secretary-General's report studied by a suitable body in order that proposals for the realisation of the above-mentioned aims may, if necessary, be laid before the Assembly at its next session.

"In order to facilitate this examination, the Members of the League might be invited to communicate to the Secretary-General any suggestions they may wish to make."

If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

54. — REPORTS OF COMMITTEES SUBMITTED FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE ASSEMBLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF OCTOBER 11th, 1933, CONCERNING THE SIMPLIFICATION OF THE PROCEDURE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : On the agenda of this meeting the reports of the various Committees submitted for the approval of the Assembly in accordance with the resolution of October 11th, 1933, for the simplification of the procedure of the Assembly, are grouped under a special heading, as was done yesterday.

There is no need to remind you of the text of the paragraphs of this resolution, which were read at yesterday's meeting.

The Chairmen of the Committees concerned have indicated to me the reports grouped under this item of the agenda as being those to which the simplified procedure in question may be applied.

I may add that, since these decisions were taken by the Committees, no delegation has informed me that it wishes a discussion to be opened on these reports.

Consequently, and in application of the rules to which I have just referred, I propose that the

Assembly, without further formality, takes note of the following reports and adopt the resolutions contained therein :

I. Protection of Minorities.

Report of the Sixth Committee.
(Document A.57.1934.I, Annex 13.)

II. Prohibition, under the provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations, of the Supply of Arms and War Material to Belligerents.

Report of the Sixth Committee :
Resolution. (Document A.56.1934, Annex 14.)

III. Assistance to Indigent Foreigners.

Report of the Fifth Committee :
Resolution. (Document A.50.1934.IV, Annex 15.)

If no one desires to speak, I shall consider these reports approved *en bloc* by the Assembly and the resolutions accompanying certain of them adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

55. — REPORTS OF COMMITTEES TO THE SUBMISSION OF WHICH THE PROCEDURE PROVIDED IN THE ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF OCTOBER 11th, 1933, IS NOT APPLICABLE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the reports to the submission of which the procedure provided in the Assembly resolution of October 11th, 1933, is not applicable.

I. CHILD WELFARE. REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The first is the report of the Fifth Committee on Child Welfare (document A.52.1934. IV, Annex 16).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Levillier, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Mme. Malaterre-Sellier, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Mme. Malaterre-Sellier, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Mme. Malaterre-Sellier (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Fifth Committee has instructed its Rapporteur to submit certain remarks on a few particular points.

I shall make these remarks very brief. They refer, in the first place, to the problem of the effects of unemployment on unemployed young persons and on the children of unemployed parents.

Since the question of unemployed young persons has been placed on the agenda of the next International Labour Conference, the Fifth Committee has confined itself to a few suggestions which will be transmitted to that Conference.

The Committee paid special attention to the moral consequences by which children are beset when their parents remain unemployed for months and sometimes even years at a time. It considered that the relief given to children of unemployed parents and to the families of unemployed persons should be in conformity with certain moral

principles to which the Fifth Committee, and I am sure the Assembly too, attaches the greatest importance.

This relief should be given with the firm intention of maintaining the unity of the family and without impairing parental authority. It often happens that, where a family lives solely on charity or on public relief granted by Governments or private organisations, the child, on discovering that its livelihood is not provided for by its family, loses all respect for its family.

The aim of the measures submitted for the Assembly's decision is to prevent our finding ourselves confronted with a physically and morally enfeebled generation when once the world's economic equilibrium is restored.

The Fifth Committee also draws the Assembly's attention to that part of the report which refers to the development of its secretariat as a centre of information. The last Assembly requested that this question should be placed on its agenda. I do not want to take up your time, and I shall not read the resolution submitted for your consideration. I should nevertheless like to emphasise the importance of the development of the Social Section's work in this direction for purposes of information and dissemination.

It would seem, in fact, that, though excellent child welfare work has been done, not only by the Child Welfare Committee, but also by the International Labour Office, the Office d'Hygiène and various international organisations, and through the valuable legislative contributions of many Governments, too frequently adequate use is not made of this work, which is pigeon-holed. By organising this work of information and dissemination, the Secretariat will place at the disposal of all countries and all persons interested in the child material which will enable them to help in the development of child welfare and, at the same time, secure publicity for the grand social and humanitarian work being done by the League.

We believe that, in this way, we are acting in accordance with the spirit of the League, which accepted the first report on child welfare ten years ago. That report contained what has been called the Charter of Children's Rights.

That Charter has become in every country the lodestar for the activity of all those interested in the problems of childhood. It lays down that the child has certain rights on the preceding generation, and that, irrespective of race, nationality or religion, mankind must place all its best at the service of childhood.

The report which I submit for adoption by the Assembly aims at enabling this noble declaration to be converted into a fact. By contributing to the success of the work of child welfare, we are conscious that we are doing good service to the League, for, to make our work really durable, we must prepare better days for future generations — happier days than those experienced by the present generation.

The President :

Translation : No delegation has asked to speak. If no one has any observations to make, I shall consider the Fifth Committee's report and the resolutions accompanying it adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

II. TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the Fifth Committee's report

on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs (document A.51.1934.XI, Annex 17).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Casares, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Casares, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Casares (Spain), Rapporteur :

Translation : I submit my report to the Assembly in conformity with the mandate given to the Fifth Committee. I shall do so as briefly as possible.

At the time of the Assembly last year — that is, barely two months after the coming into operation of part of the Convention for the Limitation of the Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs, which, bold in its conception and without precedent in the history of economic relations and international law, was directed towards the complete regulation of an entire industry and a trade extending over the entire surface of our globe — all that could be done was to express a hope that the Convention would prove itself in practice a workable, useful and effectual instrument.

To-day, we are in a position to judge it in the light of the experience we have gained during the first year of its practical application. This first year has justified the hopes of all those who, when preparing this Convention, foresaw an entirely new development of international co-operation from the economic, legal and administrative points of view.

In the economic sphere, by limiting internationally, in a direct quantitative and qualitative manner, the manufacture of, and consequently the trade in, certain industrial products strictly to the legitimate demand for those products, this Convention has given effect internationally, for a specified industry, to the essential principles of what is commonly called managed economy.

In the legal and administrative sphere, the Limitation Convention has not only bound States by mutual obligations, but, by establishing for the first time the principle of integral control as applied to a whole industry, it has provided for and imposed the organisation of a veritable international administrative authority, which henceforth will regulate and supervise day by day the relations between the contracting parties as manufacturers, exporters, importers and consumers of certain industrial products.

What is extraordinary for the times in which we are living, when disappointment and failure have become almost our daily fare, is that a work of human solidarity has been attempted and has succeeded. It may be said to-day that close and effective co-operation exists among the peoples for the purpose of overcoming a scourge the ravages of which, although they may impress the imagination of the general public less than those of wars, are no less certain and no less terrible.

Ours is the thankless task of the pioneer; but, if the historian one day retraces the beginning of the new order of things which in his view may perhaps coincide with the institution of the League of Nations, he cannot ignore this first endeavour to achieve true international co-operation, this first seed of an international administrative authority which has been set up under the auspices of the League and which already exists to-day in what may for short be called the domain of opium.

No one can say from what misery the League has saved the world by its success in this domain, since we shall never know exactly the volume of drugs which in every manufacturing country

was being diverted into the illicit traffic at a time when the trade in drugs was relatively free, before the League undertook its task in 1921.

As an example only, and without desiring to make any retrospective accusation — which would, indeed, be directed against a large number of countries — I draw attention in my report to the case of one country in the Far East which in 1920 possessed an enormous stock of more than 40 tons of drugs, two-thirds of which had their origin in exports from nearly all the manufacturing countries of Europe and America.

If this situation is compared with that prevailing at present, an idea may be obtained of the immense progress that has been made. We may therefore say that the hopes conceived when the Limitation Convention was drawn up have been fully realised, and that this battle, begun by the League fourteen years ago, will end in a striking victory over a large part of the front. Yet, amid the first echoes of the songs of triumph, the sentinels are again sounding the alarm. The fight goes on. The enemy is launching a fresh offensive over particularly difficult country and,

in order to vanquish him finally, we must make an urgent appeal to the Governments, which have always given us so much help, and to the public opinion of the whole world, which has afforded us its valuable support and confidence.

It is with this object in view that I have been requested to lay before the Assembly the Fifth Committee's unanimous hope that, in the interests of the League, more general publicity will be given to the great success achieved by the League in this sphere, and that for this purpose the report of the Fifth Committee to the Assembly will be published by the Information Section of the Secretariat, with the necessary changes or adjustments, in the form of a pamphlet for general distribution.

The President :

Translation : If no one else desires to speak, I shall consider the report of the Fifth Committee and the resolutions accompanying it adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1934, AT 5.30 P.M.

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President : M. R. J. SANDLER.

56. — RELATIONS BETWEEN THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND THE PAN-AMERICAN UNION : LETTER FROM THE COLOMBIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Before proceeding with the agenda, I should like to make a communication to the Assembly in respect of a letter, accompanied by a draft resolution, which was sent to me yesterday by the Colombian delegation concerning the relations between the League of Nations and the Pan-American Union. This letter was communicated to the delegations in document C.434.M.189. 1934, dated September 26th, 1934 (Annex 18).

The request submitted by the Colombian delegation is to the effect that this question should be placed on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

This morning I communicated this request to the General Committee. With the approval of my colleagues on the General Committee, I suggest that the Assembly should note the Colombian delegation's request. The Secretary-General will take the necessary steps under Article 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly to have this question placed, at the request of the Colombian Government, on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

The President's proposal was adopted.

57. — PROPOSAL OF CERTAIN DELEGATIONS CONCERNING THE STATUS OF WOMEN : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : The delegations will have received a document containing the text of a letter dated September 26th, 1934, from the following delegations to the President of the Assembly : Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay, relating to the question of the status of women. The letter reads as follows :¹

"In consideration of the fact that the League of Nations is an international organisation designed to defend human rights, the following delegations deem it urgent that the League take cognisance of the present widespread and alarming encroachments upon the rights and liberties of women, and, recognising that the League has no more loyal supporters in its work for international peace than the women of the world, believe that the League should show its appreciation of the services of women by giving immediate attention to every circumstance imperilling their welfare."

¹ Document C.440.M.190.1934.V.

"Since the Bureau has found it impossible to give consideration at the present time to the subject of the nationality of women and has, we understand, put this subject on the agenda of the next session of the Assembly, we, the undersigned, request that there be included on the agenda, not only the subject of women's nationality, but also the entire status of women, giving particular attention to the Treaty signed by four Governments at Montevideo (December 1933) to remove all legal distinctions based on sex.

"We also request the Assembly or the proper authorities, as an emergency matter, to bring the whole critical situation affecting the position of women before the Council of the League at the earliest possible moment.

(Signed) F. TUDELA (Peru).
Dr. G. PATTERSON (Cuba).
M. A. COSTA DU REIS (Bolivia).
Dr. B. PORRAS (Panama).
Dr. E. BRACHE (Dominican Republic).
F. CASTILLO NAJERA (Mexico).
J. M. CANTILLO (Argentine).
M. MAYARD (Haiti).
M. A. BAUER (Honduras).
M. GUANI (Uruguay)."

The delegations in question wish to have this subject placed on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly, in order that the question of the nationality of women, which it has already been suggested should be placed on the agenda of the next session,¹ may be widened in scope.

The request put forward by these delegations on this subject has been noted, and I will leave it to the Secretary-General to take the necessary action on the various points raised in the letter.

58. — DISPUTE BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND PARAGUAY: RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the resolutions submitted by the Sixth Committee to the Assembly on the dispute between Bolivia and Paraguay (document A.58.1934.VII, Annex 19).

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Madariaga, Chairman and Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. de Madariaga, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. de Madariaga (Spain), Rapporteur :

Translation : Permit me to analyse briefly the resolution which the Sixth Committee proposes to you for adoption. I should like to call attention to six points.

The first point is that we have desired to propose that you should, in the first place, affirm the competence of the Assembly, which was questioned by the Paraguayan delegate. On this subject there is no room for further doubt after the report submitted to us by your First Committee (document A.VI.12.1934).

¹ See records of the eleventh plenary meeting.

I would also draw your attention to the second paragraph of the second resolution :

"And whereas, in particular, the endeavour made in the interests of peace, prior to the meeting of the Assembly, by the Government of the Argentine Republic, with the support of the Governments of the United States of America and the United States of Brazil, has revealed the difficulties which still stand in the way of a settlement by conciliation."

You are all aware of this noble endeavour. It was made in common by three great Governments of the American continent and directed by a statesman who has repeatedly evinced the interest he feels in international peace, in particular by proposing to that continent and to the world at large the adoption of a new pact. M. Saavedra Lamas is to be congratulated on his untiring efforts to reach a conclusion. We have simply noted that these constant efforts, with the co-operation of two States which are both powerful and directly interested—Brazil and the United States of America—merely serve to illustrate still further the difficulties inherent in the problem we have to solve here.

I also draw your attention to the composition which we propose for the Committee. We think that, since Article 15 requires a majority of the Assembly, which must include the unanimity of the Members of the Council, it would be wise to follow the procedure we have already adopted for the dispute between China and Japan and to include all the Members of the Council in the Committee. We propose that you should add the four Members of the Assembly who have taken part in the difficulties of conciliation from the outset, since they are also members of the Conciliation Commission of Washington. Lastly, we have proposed, out of a desire for equilibrium to which I will not advert further, to add four countries whose names are given by the Sixth Committee on the proposal of the General Committee of the Assembly.

I would also draw your attention to the last sentence of the paragraph following the enumeration of the members to which I have just referred :

"It (the Committee) may secure such assistance as it may consider necessary."

The Sixth Committee, in a remarkable series of speeches, was at pains to make the purpose of this sentence clear. You will all be aware of it. It is to voice in the resolution the earnest desire of us all for the participation in our work of the two great American States which have co-operated with M. Saavedra Lamas in the former efforts, and without which we think our task would be much more difficult. Out of a feeling of elementary discretion, we did not think we should go further than the sentence I have just read ; but, as many speakers have given the Sixth Committee to understand, that is the meaning to be attached to the sentence. I do not think it necessary to urge the interest which we all feel — and which I, as Rapporteur and Chairman of the Committee and as delegate of Spain, wish to emphasise — in securing this co-operation.

There are, finally, two paragraphs to which I should like briefly to refer. The first of these speaks of the settlement of the dispute under Article 15, paragraph 4, while at the same time leaving the door open for conciliation, which is still possible and which we earnestly hope may actually be effected before the Assembly comes to a decision under paragraph 4.

This dispute has lasted so many years that we consider no useful purpose can be served by expressly prescribing a period of conciliation. We simply provide that the Committee's activities shall be directly governed by paragraph 4, but that the possibility of conciliation shall not be overlooked. This paragraph of the resolution, however, must be read in conjunction with that dealing with the situation arising when the Committee submits its report under paragraph 4 of Article 15, and when consideration will have to be given to the possible consequence of solutions entailing the enforcement of the prohibition to supply arms and war material, to which a large number of Governments have pledged themselves. As you are aware, certain Governments had already adopted such measures in virtue of their own sovereign rights, being moved to do so mainly in view of the very great moral and legal difficulty in determining the proper attitude to adopt towards their exports of arms; and it is a difficulty that must be experienced by every Member of the League conscious of its moral and legal duties when two other Members are engaged in warfare.

That brings me to the end of this brief analysis. I hope that the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee may now be permitted to speak in his other capacity as Spanish delegate, and tell you that Spain regards this distressing dispute as a matter of quite special concern; for it is a conflict between two nations of her own stock and her own civilisation, as whose motherland she has sometimes the joy to be hailed. The conflict therefore causes her the deepest distress — a two-sided distress. In this fratricidal strife, neither of the warring nations feels any great concern at the wounds it inflicts on the other, enmity having all but closed the eyes of each to the suffering of the other. But in the hearts of my own countrymen, the sufferings of both are felt twofold.

There is yet another reason why I must emphasise the importance which Spain attaches to this conflict. It is that, unfortunately, it has its origin in uncertainties, difficulties and complications arising out of texts going back to our own colonial era. It is particularly tragic for Spain to see two nations of her own stock come before the forum of the League and base their claims and counter-claims on documents dating from the days of Spain's colonial empire.

It is our earnest hope that the present conflict will soon be brought to an end, and that we shall soon be able to put it out of our minds as one of the most terrible nightmares in our history. I need hardly say that Spain does not approach the solution of this problem in any self-seeking spirit of ambition. What ambition could she have other than that this terrible outbreak, which she regards as a Spanish-American civil war, should be terminated?

It may perhaps be true to say that Spain's concern for peace goes deeper than that of the other nations because it is older historically. Spain, indeed, is an imperial nation which has completed her full cycle and whose love of peace goes hand in hand with wisdom and renunciation. It is on account of that wisdom and that renunciation that I feel it my duty to remind you that Spain approaches the study of this problem in a spirit absolutely devoid of national ambition and, I should perhaps add, absolutely devoid of personal ambition. For at a time when the primary, the only task must be to put an end to the bloodshed in America, any man whose conduct here were tinged by the least shade of personal ambition would be a criminal unworthy to address you.

The conflict has been stubborn and protracted. Do not forget that both peoples are proud and

brave, and that one of them has gone down to history for the miracle of having waged a war until its male population was completely and finally exterminated. Paraguay emerged from that catastrophe only to plunge into yet another, the Chaco war, from which I hope we shall still be able to save her. This stubbornness in conflict, this certainty that each has right upon its side, this courage, this obstinacy in seeking settlement in war has led the two countries to confront you with a case for which no provision exists in the Covenant. Here are two Members of the League of Nations actively engaged in war, and, moreover, as one of them has maintained in the Council, in a war which has been legally recognised; and to-day they stand before you in virtue of Article 15 of the Covenant.

The legal complications arising out of this situation have given our legal experts in the First Committee much food for thought; yet they can only be regarded as mere side issues of the momentous problem we have to solve. Our main concern must be the problem of the blood which is being shed, the problem of justice and peace; and my reference to this aspect of the dispute is intended merely as an instance of the many complications to which it has given rise.

The unyielding spirit of the disputants has already led to a great many attempts at mediation which I need not enumerate, as you are already familiar with them. I think, however, that they call for three observations.

The first, which has already been made here and elsewhere, is that if — and I should hardly make so bold as to deny it — there exist obscure forces which stand to gain by the continuation of the war, they must from time to time have derived unexpected though valuable assistance from the multiplicity of those voluntary agencies which earnestly and patiently have, on several occasions, striven to achieve a result. That must stop.

We must concentrate our efforts here, for reasons of which you are all aware and to which I shall presently advert. But we must recognise here and now that, if our aim is to achieve a lasting peace, such multiplicity of agencies does more harm than good.

My second observation is closely related to the first. It is profoundly unjust that the League of Nations should be accused of being slow. Anyone who examines the documents relating to the Chaco case with a fair and open mind will be compelled to admit that, whenever the League of Nations has dealt with the case, proceedings have been marked by greater vigour and despatch. It has approached more quickly towards realities, and action has been prompter. If delays there have been, if this dispute has lasted for years, it is because the League's procedure has been held up either by its own self-effacement in the pursuit of its own ends or by the action of the two belligerents, on one occasion in particular, in having recourse, athwart the action of the League, to other methods which, if they did not exactly compete with it, duplicated and undoubtedly hampered its work.

These facts must be made clear, because the League's failure would be much less pronounced than is thought if its rules were strictly applied.

Yet who would venture to complain of efforts at mediation? Are they not a proof, from whatever quarter they come, of the existence of that Geneva spirit, without which no progress can ever again be made along the road to peace? Let us rather find cause for congratulation in the fact that the Geneva spirit is everywhere at work. We must not be jealous of the activities of others, provided they do not detract from the efficacy of the work of peace.

Ultimately, however, this dispute must come back to Geneva; for, I repeat, we alone are under a legal obligation to settle it.

Moreover, while the Geneva spirit is commendable and valuable at all places and at all times, it is most commendable and valuable in this city of Geneva whose name it bears. If I may be allowed to give free rein to my fancy, I would tell you that I sometimes think the Geneva spirit owes much of its inspiration to the beautiful lake on whose shores our discussions are held.

A broad expanse of water in the midst of the landscape has two great virtues, two virtues closely akin to those we are seeking. Side by side with the broken line and manifold hues of the shore, the colour of the lake itself is pure, clear and luminous — a reflection of the sky itself. Its line is unwavering as the horizontal line that is symbolic of Justice — pure even when man-made if it reflects the Justice of Heaven — and also that other undeviating horizontal that is symbolic of Peace.

When the lake is ruffled, the line of peace is broken; and we all know — if you will allow me this digression — that when a high wind blows from the north, the lake loses its serenity, its line is broken, its colour darkens, and on its surface appear foam-flecks strangely resembling the foam-flecks of rage. But that passes. Light and brightness return, and in the bowl of the lake we see the reflection of mountain-tops, both white and blue, and, no less serene, of mountains whose summits glow with the red of strange new dawns.

Geneva fills us with the spirit of peace. It allows us to hope that the great countries for whose co-operation we have appealed will come and join their efforts to ours. It reminds us that, distant in space but near to our hearts, two sister nations are at war, their lifeblood ebbing away. We have their goodwill to add to our own. We have our legal obligation and the spirit of Geneva to inspire us. I believe that we can go forward with the task we have to perform, in the hope that soon both those countries, for ever reconciled, will see extended above their heads the wings of the twin spirits of Justice and Peace.

The President :

Translation : I now open the discussion on the resolutions submitted by the Sixth Committee. M. Caballero de Bedoya, first delegate of Paraguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Caballero de Bedoya (Paraguay) :

Translation : I have noted the resolutions proposed by the Sixth Committee to the Assembly. I will hasten to transmit them to my Government and will await its instructions.

I must confess that some, including ourselves, had hoped that the Assembly, before separating, would itself endeavour to put an end to the bloodshed between Bolivians and Paraguayans, if only as a preface to its pacific intervention.

In any case, we hope that, in order to create a calmer atmosphere favourable to its conciliatory mission, the Committee which the Assembly is about to appoint will, at the outset of its work, call upon the parties to cease hostilities.

The President :

Translation : If there are no observations, I shall declare that the Assembly adopts the resolutions submitted to it by the Sixth Committee.

The resolutions were adopted.

The President :

Translation : In the third resolution before the Assembly, relating to the establishment of a Committee, it is stated that four members are to be appointed by the Assembly. The Sixth Committee has recommended the Assembly to select as members of this Committee: China, the Irish Free State, Sweden and Venezuela.

If there are no observations, and if no vote is requested, I shall interpret the silence of the Assembly as signifying that it adopts the Sixth Committee's suggestion and, therefore, that it appoints the four States which I have mentioned as members of the Committee in addition to the other members mentioned in the Sixth Committee's resolution.

The Committee was constituted in accordance with the Sixth Committee's proposal.

59. — CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS: REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the Fourth Committee's report on contributions in arrears (document A.49.1934.X, Annex 20).

I will ask the Rapporteur of the Fourth Committee, M. Castillo Najera, first delegate of Mexico, to come to the platform alone, as the Chairman of the Fourth Committee, Count Carton de Wiart, has been obliged to leave Geneva.

(M. Castillo Najera, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Castillo Najera (Mexico), Rapporteur :

Translation : As the report of the Sub-Committee on Contributions in Arrears has been printed and distributed, I will merely read the resolution. It is as follows :

"The Assembly,

"Adopts the report of the Fourth Committee on the question of contributions in arrears, together with the Annex;

"Decides to appoint a special committee, which would sit at intervals from now until the next session of the Assembly and which would have full power, subject to ratification by the next Assembly, to negotiate and conclude arrangements with States for the equitable settlement of the amount of their debt in respect of arrears outstanding at the end of 1932. This special Committee, which is also entrusted with the study of the questions referred to it by the Fourth Committee, will be composed of the following members :

Count CARTON DE WIART (Belgium);
M. Stefan OSUSKÝ (Czechoslovakia);
Sir F. PHILLIPS (United Kingdom);
M. CASTILLO NAJERA (Mexico);
M. C. J. HAMBRO (Norway);

"Decides that the Argentine Republic, which, prior to the year 1933, stood in a special relationship to the League, should no longer be regarded as being in arrear for the four years 1929 to 1932."

The President :

Translation : No delegation has asked to speak. If there are no observations, I shall declare the report of the Fourth Committee and the resolution accompanying it adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

60. — ALLOCATION OF EXPENSES : FINANCIAL QUESTIONS : REPORTS OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of two other reports of the Fourth Committee : the report on the allocation of expenses and the report on financial questions affecting the League's budget for next year. The Rapporteur will submit to the Assembly one statement covering both these reports (documents A.60.1934.X and A.55.1934.X, Annexes 21 and 22).

(On the invitation of the President, the Vice-Chairman of the Fourth Committee, M. Zumeta, and the Rapporteur, Sir Homi Mehta, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Sir Homi Mehta, the Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Sir Homi Mehta (India), Rapporteur. — At this late hour, when the Assembly is on the point of terminating its proceedings, you will doubtless not expect me to make a long speech. Suffice it to say, therefore, that the Fourth Committee has good grounds for being pleased with the results of its work, and that it hopes the Assembly will share its gratification.

In the first place, the financial position of the League is better than at any time since the beginning of the crisis. Thanks to the economies which were made, last year's budget was balanced, and, if receipts continue at the same rate as in the last ten months, more favourable results may be expected this year.

In the second place, the Fourth Committee submits to the Assembly for adoption a budget of 30,639,664 francs, the lowest in five years. This result was obtained notwithstanding the augmented work which will certainly arise out of the increased participation in the work of the League and of its autonomous organisations.

Thirdly, as is shown in the report of my friend, M. Castillo Najera, the Committee has taken effective steps to deal with the thorny question of contributions in arrears. When this problem is settled, I feel sure that many of our budgetary difficulties — with which, in my capacity of General Rapporteur, I am more particularly concerned — will be very near a solution.

Fourthly, thanks to the spirit of compromise shown by all concerned, the Fourth Committee has come to a provisional and temporary agreement on the question of the allocation of expenses, and has cleared the way for more definite conclusions next year.

These results do not imply by any means that our difficulties are over. Knowing, as the Committee does, that it can count on the constant vigilance of the Secretary-General and of the responsible officials of the autonomous Organisations, it looks a head to the future with renewed confidence in the financial stability of the League.

You have before you the resolutions proposed by the Fourth Committee, which I recommend to you for adoption.

The President :

Translation : No delegate has asked to speak. If there are no observations, I will take it that the Assembly approves these two reports and adopts the resolutions attached to them.

The resolutions were adopted.

61. — CLOSING SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen. — We have come to the end of our work.

Before I formally close the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations, I should like to thank all those who have helped me to discharge my presidential duties — the delegates, who have displayed unfailing moderation and courtesy ; the Chairmen and Rapporteurs of Committees, who have acquitted themselves of their task with ability and authority ; and, in particular, M. Avenol, who, backed by his Secretariat, has aided me throughout with his mature wisdom, his extensive experience, and his unshakable calm.

This year, for the first time, we have experimented with a new procedure which aims at simplifying the submission of reports to the Assembly in plenary session. In the endeavour to achieve equal simplicity, I shall merely summarise very briefly the proceedings of this Assembly in the order of the Committees by which the different questions have been examined.

Through the opinions given by the First Committee, the Assembly is in possession of certain interpretations of the Covenant, the interest of which extends far beyond the particular case that they concern. The Assembly has discussed the economic state of the world, and decided that a number of problems of present interest in that field shall be studied. On the other hand, it has not made any thorough examination of the grave problem of the steady increase in armaments. It has discussed and fixed its budget, as the Parliament of the world must do, like any other legislative assembly. It has also considered a large number of social and humanitarian questions. It has likewise held a doubtless necessary discussion on the question of minorities. Lastly, it has arrived at far-reaching decisions in regard to a conflict which has already long continued between two Members of the League, and which we are jointly endeavouring to bring to an end.

This Assembly has taken a step which marks the beginning of a new era in the history of the League. It has received one of the great Powers and assigned to it the position to which it is entitled. The places of two other great Powers are empty. All friends of the League can have no more earnest wish than that one day universality, the fundamental principle of this organisation, may be realised. In the course of a single session, the Assembly has taken two important steps in that direction by receiving the representatives of Afghanistan and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In its composition, in its action, in its discussions, and even in its passive moments, the Assembly of the League reflects all the manifold aspects of the evolution of the world.

This year, the League can celebrate a jubilee. It has already been in existence for three lustra. As history goes, that is but a short period ; but it is a big proportion of a lifetime, and, with the four years that preceded it, it represents the period of the most vast and sanguinary crisis in history. This crisis is a phenomenon which contains destructive elements and also other elements which are constructive. What chiefly matters for the future is the new structures which are rising on the ruins of the past. Among those new structures, the

League of Nations holds the foremost place. Encouraged by the results of the work of this Assembly, and especially by the notable increase in the League's territorial area, its sincere friends all over the world will persevere more resolutely than ever in their present line of action. With all its weaknesses — for every living organism has weaknesses — the League reveals to us, in the aims it seeks to achieve, the grandeur and the nobility of life.

I now declare the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations closed.
