LEAGUE OF NATIONS
Official Journal

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT No. 151

RECORDS

OF THE

SIXTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION

OF THE

ASSEMBLY

PLENARY MEETINGS

(June 30th to July 4th, 1936)

TEXT OF THE DEBATES

PART II.

GENEVA, 1936

PUBLICATIONS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY

A. Minutes of the Sessions of the Council.

Minutes of the Eighty-fourth Session of the Council, held at Geneva from Friday, January 11th, to Monday, January 21st, 1935. (*Official Journal*, 16th Year, No. 2, February 1935)	15/-	$3.75
Minutes of the Eighty-fifth (Extraordinary) Session of the Council, held at Geneva from Monday, April 15th, to Wednesday, April 17th, 1935. (*Official Journal*, 16th Year, No. 5, May 1935)	2/-	$0.50
Minutes of the Eighty-sixth Session of the Council, held at Geneva from Monday, May 20th, to Saturday, May 25th, 1935. (*Official Journal*, 16th Year, No. 6, June 1935)	12/-	$3.00
Minutes of the Eighty-seventh (Extraordinary) Session of the Council, held at Geneva from Wednesday, July 31st, to Saturday, August 3rd, 1935. (*Official Journal*, 16th Year, No. 8, August 1935)	1/-	$1.25
Minutes of the Eighty-eighth Session of the Council, held at Geneva from Wednesday, September 4th, to Friday, September 13th, 1935, and of the Eighty-ninth Session of the Council, held at Geneva from Tuesday, September 17th, to Monday, October 7th, 1935. (*Official Journal*, 16th Year, No. 11, November 1935)	20/-	$5.00
Minutes of the Eighty-ninth Session of the Council (Second Part), held at Geneva on Wednesday, December 18th, and Thursday, December 19th, 1935. (*Official Journal*, 17th Year, No. 1, January 1936)	2/-	$0.50
Minutes of the Ninetieth Session of the Council, held at Geneva from Monday, January 20th, to Friday, January 24th, 1936. (*Official Journal*, 17th Year, No. 2, February 1936).	9/-	$2.[illegible]
Minutes of the Ninety-first (Extraordinary) Session of the Council (Part II), held at Geneva on Monday, April 20th, 1936. (*Official Journal*, 17th Year, No. 4 (Part II), April 1936)	6/-	$1[illegible]

B. Communications from the Ethiopian and Italian Governments before October 1935.

Request by the Abyssinian Government
under Article 11, Paragraph 2, of the Covenant.

January 17th, 1935. (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1935.VII.3)	1/-	
June 12th, 1935. (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1935.VII.10)	1/6	

Memorandum by the Italian Government on the Situation in Ethiopia.

I. **Report (September 11th, 1935).** (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1935.VII.11)	2[illegible]	[illegible].60
II. **Documents (September 28th, 1935).** (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1935.VII.13)	6/6	$1.60
Photographs (Annex to Volume II). (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1935.VII.14)	1/-	$0.25

C. Communications from the Ethiopian and Italian Governments since the Commencement of Hostilities.

Ethiopian Atrocities and Misuse of the Red Cross Emblem in Ethiopia. Protest (dated February 28th, 1936) by the Italian Government to the League of Nations. (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1936.VII.2)	1/6	$0.40
Abyssinian Atrocities committed against Italian Workmen. Protest (dated March 9th, 1936) by the Italian Government to the League of Nations. (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1936.VII.3)	1/-	$0.25
Communication (dated May 9th, 1936) from the Italian Government. (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1936.VII.6)	6d.	$0.15
Use of Dum-dum Bullets by the Ethiopian Troops. Protest (dated April 30th, 1936) by the Italian Government to the League of Nations. (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1936.VII.7)	1/-	$0.25
Communication (dated May 2nd, 1936) from the Ethiopian Delegation. (Reply to the Communications from the Italian Government and Documents relating to the Use of Poisonous Gases by the Italian Troops.) (Ser. L.o.N. P. 1936.VII.4)	1/6	$0.40

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LIST OF ANNEXES

RESUMPTION OF THE WORK
OF THE
SIXTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

TELEGRAM, DATED JUNE 5TH, 1936, FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

C.L.93.1936. I am directed by President sixteenth ordinary session of Assembly under reference to communication from Argentine Government of June 2nd document C.256.M.150.1936,[1] and in conformity with decisions taken by Assembly on October 11th 1935 [2] to inform Members League that next meeting of sixteenth session will be held at Geneva on Tuesday June thirtieth at eleven o'clock. I should be grateful if Members League in cases in which changes have been made in composition of delegations to sixteenth session of Assembly [3] would communicate to me names of new delegates duly empowered to take part in further work of session. — AVENOL, *Secretary-General.*

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[1] See page 97.
[2] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, pages 114 and 115.
[3] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, pages 11 to 30.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATIONS TO THE ASSEMBLY

Note by the Secretary-General:

The following list of Members of Delegations to the Sixteenth Assembly has been compiled from the official communications received in reply to the request made in the telegram of convocation despatched on June 5th, 1936 (see C.L.93.1936), that Members of the League should transmit to the Secretariat the names of new Delegates empowered to take part in the further work of the session.

The Members of the League which are not included in the list have not notified any modifications in the composition of their delegations as published in the *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, pages 11-30.

AFGHANISTAN

Son Excellence Ali MOHAMED Khan[1].

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Londres, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in London, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Son Excellence le général MOHAMED OMER Khan.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

Abdul KAYOUM Khan.

Secrétaire de la délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — Secretary at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

ALBANIE — ALBANIA

Son Excellence le docteur Fuad ASLANI.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Lec KURTI.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Londres, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in London, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

M. LUARASSI.

Secrétaire de la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — Secretary at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

[1] En l'absence de S. E. Ali Mohamed Khan, la délégation a été présidée par S. E. Mohamed Omer Khan. — In the absence of H.E. Ali Mohamed Khan, H.E. Mohamed Omer Khan was President of the Delegation.

RÉPUBLIQUE ARGENTINE — ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

Son Excellence M. José Maria CANTILO.

Ambassadeur à Rome — Ambassador in Rome.

Son Excellence le docteur Manuel E. MALBRAN.

Ambassadeur à Londres — Ambassador in London.

Son Excellence le docteur Enrique RUIZ GUIÑAZÚ.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaires — Secretaries :

M. Oscar ONETO ASTENGO.

Premier Secrétaire de l'Ambassade à Rome — First Secretary at the Embassy in Rome.

M. Carlos A. PARDO.

Conseiller commercial à Berne, Secrétaire de la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — Commercial Adviser in Berne, Secretary of the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

M. Carlos ECHAGÜE.

Secrétaire de l'Ambassade à Londres — Secretary at the Embassy in London.

AUSTRALIE — AUSTRALIA

The Right Honourable S. M. BRUCE, C.H., M.C.

Haut Commissaire à Londres — High Commissioner in London.

Conseiller — Adviser :

Mr. F. K. OFFICER, O.B.E., M.C.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

Major O. C. W. FUHRMAN, O.B.E.

Secrétaire particulière de M. Bruce — Private Secretary to Mr. Bruce:

Miss M. E. WOOD, M.B.E.

AUTRICHE — AUSTRIA

Son Excellence M. Emeric PFLÜGL.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire, Représentant permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

Le docteur Franz MATSCH.

Secrétaire de Légation — Secretary of Legation.

BELGIQUE — BELGIUM

Son Excellence M. Paul VAN ZEELAND.

Premier Ministre — Prime Minister.

Son Excellence M. Paul-Henri SPAAK.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères et du Commerce extérieur — Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade.

Son Excellence M. Paul HYMANS.

Ministre d'Etat — Minister of State.

Suppléants — Substitutes :

Son Excellence le comte CARTON DE WIART [1].

Ministre d'Etat, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Minister of State, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

M. Henri ROLIN.

Membre du Sénat — Member of the Senate.

Le baron VAN ZUYLEN.

Ambassadeur extraordinaire, Directeur général de la politique du Ministère des Affaires étrangères et du Commerce extérieur — Extraordinary Ambassador, Director-General of Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and External Trade.

M. Maurice BOURQUIN.

Professeur à l'Université de Genève — Professor at the University of Geneva.

BOLIVIE — BOLIVIA

Son Excellence M. Adolfo COSTA DU RELS.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire, ancien Ministre des Finances, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, former Minister for Finance, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

M. David ALVESTEGUI.

[1] Après le départ de M. van Zeeland, le comte Carton de Wiart est devenu délégué titulaire — After the departure of M. van Zeeland, Count Carton de Wiart acted as full delegate.

ROYAUME-UNI DE GRANDE-BRETAGNE ET D'IRLANDE DU NORD — UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

The Right Honourable Anthony EDEN, M.C., M.P.

Secrétaire d'Etat pour les Affaires étrangères — Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Lieutenant-Colonel the Right Honourable Earl STANHOPE, K.G., D.S.O., M.C., D.L.

His Majesty's First Commissioner of Works.

Suppléant — Substitute :

Sir William MALKIN, K.C.M.G., C.B., K.C.

Conseiller juridique au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Legal Adviser to the Foreign Office.

Secrétaire général — Secretary-General :

Mr. W. STRANG, C.M.G.

Adjoints au Secrétaire général — Assistants to the Secretary-General :

Mr. R. C. Skrine STEVENSON.

Mr. R. M. MAKINS.

Mr. G. J. WHITE.

Comptable — Accountant.

Service de Presse — Press Officer.

Mr. M. R. WRIGHT.

Conseiller — Adviser :

Mr. B. COCHRAM.

Office des Dominions — Dominions Office.

Secrétaires particuliers de M. Eden — Private Secretaries to Mr. Eden :

Mr. O. C. HARVEY.

Mr. L. R. LUMLEY, M.P.

Secrétaire particulière de Sir William Malkin — Private Secretary to Sir William Malkin :

Miss T. SCURFIELD.

BULGARIE — BULGARIA

Son Excellence le docteur Nicolas NICOLAEV.

Ministre plénipotentiaire, Secrétaire général du Ministère des Affaires étrangères et des Cultes — Minister Plenipotentiary, Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Public Worship.

Son Excellence M. Nicolas MOMTCHILOFF.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

BULGARIE *(suite)*
BULGARIA *(continued)*

Son Excellence M. Pierre NEÏCOFF.
Ministre plénipotentiaire, Directeur politique au Ministère des Affaires étrangères et des Cultes — Minister Plenipotentiary, Director of the Political Department at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Public Worship.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

M. Milio MILEFF.
Secrétaire de Légation au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Secretary of Legation at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

CANADA

The Honourable Philippe ROY.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire en France — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in France.

The Honourable Vincent MASSEY.
Haut Commissaire du Canada auprès du Royaume-Uni, Londres — High Commissioner for Canada in the United Kingdom, London.

Conseillers — Advisers :

Mr. Walter A. RIDDELL.
Conseiller permanent du Dominion du Canada près la Société des Nations — Dominion of Canada Advisory Officer accredited to the League of Nations.

Mr. Loring C. CHRISTIE.
Conseiller, Département des Affaires extérieures — Counsellor, Department of External Affairs.

Secrétaires — Secretaries :

Mr. P. E. RENAUD.

Mr. A. RIVE.

Secrétaires particuliers de M. Massey — Private Secretaries to Mr. Massey :

Mr. J. Ross MCLEAN.

Mr. Lionel MASSEY.

CHINE — CHINA

Son Excellence le docteur V. K. Wellington KOO.
Ambassadeur à Paris — Ambassador in Paris.

Son Excellence M. QUO Tai-chi.
Ambassadeur à Londres — Ambassador in London.

Son Excellence le docteur V. HOO Chi-Tsai.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne, Directeur du Bureau permanent de la Délégation chinoise auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, Director of the Permanent Bureau of the Chinese Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

CHINE *(suite)* — CHINA *(continued)*

Conseillers techniques — Experts :

M. SZE Chao-kuei.
Conseiller d'Ambassade à Paris — Counsellor at the Embassy in Paris.

M. TAN Pao-Shen.
Premier Secrétaire d'Ambassade à Londres — First Secretary at the Embassy in London.

M. CHEN Ting.
Premier Secrétaire de Légation — First Secretary of Legation.

M. LOU Che-Ngan.
Premier Secrétaire de Légation — First Secretary of Legation.

M. PAO Hua-Kuo.
Premier Secrétaire de Légation — First Secretary of Legation.

Secrétaires — Secretaries :

M. FANG Pao-Tchung.
Deuxième Secrétaire de Légation — Second Secretary of Legation.

M. H. C. SUNG.
Troisième Secrétaire de Légation — Third Secretary of Legation.

M. HSIEH Ching-Kien.
Troisième Secrétaire de Légation — Third Secretary of Legation.

COLOMBIE — COLOMBIA

Son Excellence le docteur Gabriel TURBAY.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.

Son Excellence M. Carlos LOZANO Y LOZANO.
Sénateur, Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire — Senator, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.

M. Francisco UMAÑA-BERNAL.
Chargé d'Affaires à Bruxelles et à La Haye — Chargé d'Affaires in Brussels and The Hague.

CUBA

Son Excellence M. Guillermo DE BLANCK.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations, ancien Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations, former Under-Secretary of State.

DANEMARK — DENMARK

Le docteur Peter MUNCH[1].
Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

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[1] En l'absence du Dr Munch, M. de Scavenius a fait fonction de premier délégué du Danemark et de Président de la Délégation — In the absence of Dr. Munch, M. de Scavenius acted as first delegate of Denmark and President of the Delegation.

DANEMARK *(suite)*
DENMARK *(continued)*

M. Erik DE SCAVENIUS.
Ancien Ministre des Affaires étrangères, ancien Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Stockholm — Former Minister for Foreign Affairs, former Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Stockholm.

M. Harting Marcus FRISCH.
Professeur de l'enseignement secondaire, Député — Professor of Secondary Education, Member of the Chamber of Deputies.

Suppléants — Substitutes :

M. R. CHRISTIANI.
Docteur, Ingénieur, Député — Doctor, Engineer, Member of the Chamber of Deputies.

M. Ole Björn KRAFT.
Rédacteur, Député — " Rédacteur ", Member of the Chamber of Deputies.

M. Jesper SIMONSEN.
Juge à la Cour d'appel — Judge at the Court of Appeal.

M. William BORBERG.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Mlle Henni FORCHHAMMER.
Présidente d'honneur du Conseil national des Femmes danoises et Vice-Présidente d'honneur du Conseil international des Femmes — Honorary President of the National Council of Danish Women and Honorary Vice-President of the International Council of Women.

Délégué technique — Expert :

M. H. BECH.
Premier Secrétaire de la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — First Secretary at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

M. T. FROM.
Secrétaire au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

ÉQUATEUR — ECUADOR

Son Excellence M. Gonzalo ZALDUMBIDE.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

ESPAGNE — SPAIN

Son Excellence M. Augusto BARCIA TRELLES.
Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Salvador DE MADARIAGA Y ROJO.
Ancien Ministre, Ambassadeur — Former Minister, Ambassador.

ESPAGNE *(suite)* — SPAIN *(continued)*

Son Excellence M. Julio LÓPEZ OLIVÁN.
Ambassadeur à Londres — Ambassador in London.

Secrétaire général — Secretary-General :

M. Juan TEIXIDOR Y SÁNCHEZ.
Consul général à Genève, Secrétaire permanent de la Délégation auprès de la Société des Nations — Consul-General in Geneva, Permanent Secretary of the Deelegation accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaires — Secretaries :

M. Manuel BERMÚDEZ DE CASTRO.
Secrétaire d'Ambassade — Secretary of Embassy.

M. Antonio ESPINOSA.
Vice-Consul à Genève — Vice-Consul in Geneva.

ESTONIE — ESTONIA

Son Excellence M. Auguste SCHMIDT.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Londres et à Berne, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in London and Berne, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Suppléant — Substitute :

M. Johannes KÔDAR.
Conseiller de Légation à la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — Counsellor of Legation at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

ÉTHIOPIE — ETHIOPIA

Sa Majesté l'Empereur HAYLÉ SELASSIÉ Ier.

Son Excellence le Dedjazmatch NASSIBOU.

Ato Berhane MARCOS.

Ato Ephrem TEWELDE-MEDHEN[1].

Suppléant — Substitute :

Azaz WORKENEH.

Conseillers — Advisers ;

Le Professeur Gaston JEZE.
Conseiller juridique — Legal Adviser.

M. E. A. COLSON.
Conseiller de Gouvernement — Governmental Counsellor.

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[1] Pendant la présence à Genève de Sa Majesté l'Empereur Haylé Selassié Ier, Ato Ephrem Tewelde Medhen est devenu délégué suppléant — During the presence at Geneva of His Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I, Ato Ephrem Tewelde-Medhen acted as substitute delegate.

ÉTHIOPIE *(suite)* — ETHIOPIA *(continued)*

M. J. AUBERSON.
Conseiller de Gouvernement — Governmental Counsellor.

M. J. H. SPENCER.
Conseiller de Gouvernement — Governmental Counsellor.

Ato Lorenzo TAEZAZ.
Conseiller de Gouvernement — Governmental Counsellor.

Secrétaires — Secretaries :

Ato Wolde GUIORGUIS.
Premier Secrétaire — First Secretary.

Mlle Albertine JEZE.

FRANCE

Son Excellence M. Léon BLUM.
Député, Président du Conseil — Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Prime Minister.

Son Excellence M. Yvon DELBOS.
Député, Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Member of the Chamber of Deputies, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. J. PAUL-BONCOUR.
Sénateur, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Senator, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Suppléants — Substitutes :

M. Paul FAURE.
Ministre d'Etat — Minister of State.

M. Henry BÉRENGER.
Ambassadeur, Sénateur, Président de la Commission des Affaires étrangères du Sénat — Ambassador, Senator, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate.

M. Jean MISTLER.
Député, Président de la Commission des Affaires étrangères de la Chambre des Députés — Member of the Chamber of Deputies, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies.

Délégués adjoints — Assistant Delegates :

M. A. LÉGER.
Ambassadeur, Secrétaire général du Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Ambassador, Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

M. BARGETON.
Ministre plénipotentiaire, Directeur des Affaires politiques au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Minister Plenipotentiary, Director of Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

M. René MASSIGLI.
Ministre plénipotentiaire, Directeur adjoint des Affaires politiques au Ministère des Affaires étrangères, Chef de la Sous-Direction de la Société des Nations — Minister Plenipotentiary, Assistant Director for Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Head of the Bureau for the League of Nations.

FRANCE *(suite)* — *(continued)*

M. Jules BASDEVANT.
Professeur à la Faculté de droit de Paris, jurisconsulte du Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Professor at the Faculty of Law in Paris, Legal Adviser at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

M. Jules GAUTIER.
Président de Section honoraire au Conseil d'Etat — Honorary President of Section in the Council of State.

M. René CASSIN.
Professeur à la Faculté de droit de Paris, Président honoraire de l'Union fédérale des Mutilés et des anciens Combattants — Professor at the Faculty of Law in Paris, Honorary President of the Federal Union of Mutilated and Former Combatants.

M. Jean RÉVEILLAUD.
Président honoraire du Conseil de la Préfecture de la Seine — Honorary President of the Council of the Seine Prefecture.

M. Louis AUBERT.
Agrégé de l'Université.

M. Léon JOUHAUX.
Secrétaire général de la Confédération générale du travail — Secretary-General of the General Labour Confederation.

GRÈCE — GREECE

Son Excellence M. Nicolas POLITIS.
Ancien Ministre des Affaires étrangères, Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Paris — Former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Paris.

Son Excellence M. N. MAVROUDIS.
Ancien Ministre des Affaires étrangères, Directeur général du Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Director-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Raoul BIBIÇA-ROSETTI.
Ministre plénipotentiaire, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Suppléant — Substitute :

M. B. P. PAPADAKIS.
Directeur de la Presse au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Director of the Press Service at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Conseillers techniques — Experts :

M. OECONOMOU.
Capitaine de vaisseau — Naval Captain.

M. P. ANDROULIS.
Directeur au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Director at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

GRÈCE *(suite)* — GREECE *(continued)*

Secrétaire général — Secretary-General :

M. A. CONTOUMAS.
Premier Secrétaire de la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — First Secretary at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaires — Secretaries :

M. A. DEMERTZIS.
Secrétaire de la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — Secretary at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

M. J. PAPAYANNIS.
Secrétaire de la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — Secretary at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

HAITI

Son Excellence M. Constantin MAYARD.
Ancien Président de la Chambre des Députés, ancien Sénateur, ancien Ministre, Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Paris — Former President of the Chamber of Deputies, former Senator, former Minister, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Paris.

Son Excellence M. A. F. FRANGULIS.
Ministre plénipotentiaire, ancien Délégué à la Société des Nations, Secrétaire général perpétuel de l'Académie diplomatique internationale — Minister Plenipotentiary, former Delegate to the League of Nations, Secretary-General in perpetuity of the International Diplomatic Academy.

Suppléant — Substitute :

M. Alfred ADDOR.
Consul général à Genève — Consul-General in Geneva.

HONGRIE — HUNGARY

Son Excellence le général Gabriel TÁNCZOS.
Ancien Ministre — Former Minister.

La comtesse Albert APPONYI.

Son Excellence M. László DE VELICS.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Suppléants — Substitutes :

Son Excellence M. Alfred DE NICKL.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Le général GÉZA DE SIEGLER.

M. Béla DE SZENT-ISTVÁNY.
Conseiller ministériel, Chef de la Section des Traités au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Ministerial Councillor, Head of the Treaties Section at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

HONGRIE *(suite)* — HUNGARY *(continued)*

Le baron Georges BAKACH-BESSENYEY.
Conseiller de Légation, Chef de la Section politique au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Counsellor of Legation, Head of the Political Section at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

M. László BARTOK.
Premier Secrétaire de Légation à la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — First Secretary of Legation at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

M. F. DE MAROSY.
Conseiller de Légation — Counsellor of Legation.

M. Georges DE OTTLIK.

Conseillers techniques — Experts :

M. Paul DE BALLA.
Secrétaire de Légation — Secretary of Legation.

M. Etienne GOMBÓ.
Secrétaire ministériel au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Ministerial Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

INDE — INDIA

His Highness the Right Honourable the AGA Khan, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., G.C.V.O.

Sir Denys BRAY, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., C.B.E.
Membre du Conseil de l'Inde — Member of the Council of India.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

Mr. W. D. TOMKINS.
India Office.

ITALIE — ITALY [1]

IRAN

Son Excellence M. Anochirevan Khan SEPAHBODI.
Ambassadeur à Moscou — Ambassador in Moscow.

Son Excellence Seyed Mostafa Khan ADLE.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Son Excellence M. Mohsen RAIS.
Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berlin — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berlin.

Suppléant — Substitute :

M. Nasrollah ENTEZAM.
Délégué adjoint auprès de la Société des Nations — Assistant Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

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[1] L'Italie n'était pas représentée à ces séances de l'Assemblée — Italy was not represented at these meetings of the Assembly.

IRAK — IRAQ

Mr. Sabih NEJIB.

Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

ÉTAT LIBRE D'IRLANDE
IRISH FREE STATE

Son Excellence M. Eamon DE VALERA.

Président du Conseil des Ministres, Ministre des Affaires étrangères — President of the Executive Council, Minister for External Affairs.

M. Francis T. CREMINS.

Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

M. Michael RYNNE.

Chef de la Section de la Société des Nations au Département des Affaires étrangères — Head of the League of Nations Section at the Department for External Affairs.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

M. Denis DEVLIN.

Département des Affaires étrangères — Department for External Affairs.

LETTONIE — LATVIA

Son Excellence M. Wilhelms MUNTERS.

Ministre plénipotentiaire, Secrétaire général du Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Minister Plenipotentiary, Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Jules FELDMANS.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

M. Karlis KALNINŠ.

Premier Secrétaire de la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations et de la Légation à Berne — First Secretary at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations and of the Legation in Berne.

LIBERIA

Son Excellence le baron Othon DE BOGAERDE.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Paris, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Paris, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Suppléant — Substitute :

M. Fenton MORAN.

Attaché de Légation — Attaché of Legation.

LITHUANIE — LITHUANIA

Son Excellence M. Stasyz LOZORAITIS.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Petras KLIMAS.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Paris — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Paris.

Délégué et Secrétaire général — Delegate and Secretary-General :

Son Excellence M. J. URBŠYS.

Ministre plénipotentiaire, Directeur politique aux Affaires étrangères — Minister Plenipotentiary, Political Director at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

M. S. A. BAČKIS.

Secrétaire particulier du Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

ÉTATS-UNIS DE MEXIQUE
UNITED STATES OF MEXICO

Son Excellence M. Narciso BASSOLS.

Ambassadeur, Président de la Délégation du Mexique auprès de la Société des Nations — Ambassador, President of the Mexican Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

Son Excellence M. Vicente ESTRADA CAJIGAL.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

NORVÈGE — NORWAY

Le docteur Halvdan KOHT.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

M. Carl J. HAMBRO.

Président du Storting, Président de la Commission des Affaires étrangères du Storting — President of the Storting, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Storting.

Suppléants — Substitutes :

M. Einar MASENG.

Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

M. R. I. B. SKYLSTAD.

Directeur au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Director at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Secrétaire particulier de M. Hambro — Private Secretary to M. Hambro :

M. E. HAMBRO.

NOUVELLE-ZÉLANDE — NEW ZEALAND

The Honourable Sir James PARR, G.C.M.G.

Haut Commissaire à Londres — High Commissioner in London.

Suppléant et *Secrétaire — Substitute* and *Secretary :*

Mr. C. A. KNOWLES, C.B.E.

Secrétaire particulier du Haut Commissaire — Private Secretary to the High Commissioner.

PÉROU — PERU

Son Excellence M. Francisco TUDELA.

Ambassadeur, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations, Ministre plénipotentiaire aux Pays-Bas, ancien Ministre des Affaires étrangères, ancien Ministre des Finances, ancien Président de la Chambre des Députés — Ambassador, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations, Minister Plenipotentiary in the Netherlands, former Minister for Foreign Affairs, former Minister for Finance, former President of the Chamber of Deputies.

Son Excellence M. Victor Andrès BELAUNDE.

Ministre plénipotentiaire en Suisse, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations, ancien Ministre plénipotentiaire à l'Uruguay, du Brésil et de la Colombie, ancien Député — Minister Plenipotentiary in Switzerland, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations, former Minister Plenipotentiary in Uruguay, Brazil and Colombia, former Member of the Chamber of Deputies.

Secrétaire général — Secretary-General :

M. Pedro UGARTECHE.

Chef du Bureau permanent auprès de la Société des Nations, ancien Secrétaire général du Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Head of the Permanent Office accredited to the League of Nations, former Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Conseiller — Expert :

M. José-Maria BARRETO.

Conseiller permanent auprès de la Société des Nations, ancien Chargé d'Affaires en Allemagne — Permanent Counsellor accredited to the League of Nations, former Chargé d'Affaires in Germany.

POLOGNE — POLAND

Son Excellence M. Józef BECK.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Tytus KOMARNICKI.

Ministre plénipotentiaire, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Son Excellence M. Jan MODZELEWSKI.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne.

POLOGNE *(suite)* — POLAND *(continued)*

Suppléants — Substitutes :

M. Michał ŁUBIEŃSKI.

Directeur du Cabinet du Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Director of the Bureau of the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

M. Tadeusz GWIAZDOSKI.

Directeur adjoint des Affaires politiques au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Assistant Director of Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

M. Józef POTOCKI.

Directeur adjoint des Affaires politiques au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Assistant Director of Political Affairs at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Conseiller juridique — Legal Adviser :

M. Władysław KULSKI.

Chef de Section au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Head of Section at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Chef du Service de Presse — Head of the Press Service :

M. Victor SKIWSKI.

Chef du Service de presse au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Head of the Press Service at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Conseiller technique — Expert :

M. Kazimierz TREBICKI.

Premier Secrétaire de Légation à la Délégation auprès de la Société des Nations — First Secretary of Legation at the Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaires — Secretaries :

M. Julfusz FRIEDRICH.

Secrétaire particulier du Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

M. Paweł STARZEŃSKI.

Attaché de Légation à la Délégation auprès de la Société des Nations — Attaché of Legation at the Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

M. Alfred UZNAŃSKI.

Attaché de presse à la Délégation auprès de la Société des Nations — Press Attaché at the Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

PORTUGAL

Son Excellence le professeur docteur Armindo MONTEIRO.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères, ancien Ministre des Colonies, Membre du Conseil d'Etat, Professeur à la Faculté de Droit de Lisbonne, Député — Minister for Foreign Affairs, former Minister for the Colonies, Member of the Council of State, Professor at the Faculty of Law in Lisbon, Member of the Chamber of Deputies.

PORTUGAL *(suite)* — *(continued)*

Son Excellence le docteur Augusto DE VASCONCELLOS.

Ministre plénipotentiaire, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations, ancien Président du Conseil et Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations, former Prime Minister, former Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence le professeur docteur José CAEIRO DA MATTA.

Ancien Ministre des Affaires étrangères, Recteur de l'Université de Lisbonne — Former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dean of the University of Lisbon.

Suppléant — Substitute :

Son Excellence le docteur José Jorge RODRIGUES DOS SANTOS.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne.

Secrétaire général — Secretary-General :

M. Henrique da Guerra Quaresma VIANNA.

Conseiller de Légation, Chargé d'Affaires auprès de la Société des Nations — Counsellor of Legation, Chargé d'Affaires accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaires — Secretaries :

M. Jorge BAHIA.

Secrétaire de la Délégation permanente auprès de la Société des Nations — Secretary at the Permanent Delegation accredited to the League of Nations.

M. Pedro BATALHA-REIS.

Secrétaire particulier du Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

M. Paulo MENDES-OSORIO.

Attaché de Presse à la Légation à Paris — Press Attaché at the Legation in Paris.

ROUMANIE — ROUMANIA

Son Excellence M. Nicolas TITULESCO.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Constantin ANTONIADE.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary accredited to the League of Nations.

Son Excellence M. Georges ASSAN.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Copenhague — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Copenhagen.

ROUMANIE *(suite)*
ROUMANIA *(continued)*

Suppléants — Substitutes :

Son Excellence M. V. V. PELLA.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à La Haye — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at The Hague.

Son Excellence M. M. N. RAICOVICIANU.

Ministre plénipotentiaire, Membre du Conseil juridique du Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Minister Plenipotentiary, Member of the Legal Council at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Secrétaire particulier de M. Titulesco — Private Secretary to M. Titulesco :

Le colonel S. NENISIOR.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

M. D. CANTEMIR.

Secrétaire de Légation — Secretary of Legation.

SUÈDE — SWEDEN

Son Excellence M. Karl Gustaf WESTMAN.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

M. R. J. SANDLER.

Sénateur, Directeur général du Bureau central de statistique, ancien Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Senator, Director-General of the Central Statistical Bureau, Former Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Mlle Kerstin HESSELGREN.

Ancien membre de la première Chambre du Riksdag — Former Member of the First Chamber of the Riksdag.

Suppléant — Substitute :

M. K. I. WESTMAN.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Secrétaire — Secretary :

M. N. E. DE IHRE.

Deuxième Secrétaire de Légation — Second Secretary to Legation.

TCHÉCOSLOVAQUIE
CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Son Excellence le docteur Kamil KROFTA.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Štefan OSUSKÝ.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Paris — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Paris.

TCHÉCOSLOVAQUIE *(suite)*
CZECHOSLOVAKIA *(continued)*

Son Excellence M. Rudolf KÜNZL-JIZERSKÝ.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Berne, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Berne, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

Suppléant — Substitute :

M. Arnošt HEIDRICH.

Chef du Service tchécoslovaque de la Société des Nations au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Head of the League of Nations Office at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Secrétaire particulier de M. Krofta — Private Secretary to M. Krofta :

M. Jan JÍNA.

Chef du Cabinet du Ministre des Affaires étrangères — " Chef du Cabinet " to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Conseiller technique — Expert :

M. Jaromír KOPECKÝ.

Secrétaires — Secretaries :

M. Frantisek STRNAD.

Secrétaire du Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Secretary at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

M. Ladislaw HLAVACEK.

Attaché au Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Attaché at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

TURQUIE — TURKEY

Son Excellence le docteur Tevfik RÜSTÜ ARAS.

Ministre des Affaires étrangères — Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Numaf MENEMENCIOGLU.

Ambassadeur, Secrétaire général du Ministère des Affaires étrangères — Ambassador, Secretary-General at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Son Excellence M. Necmeddin SADAK.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

VENEZUELA

Son Excellence le docteur C. PARRA-PÉREZ.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire à Londres — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in London.

Son Excellence M. Manuel AROCHA.

Envoyé extraordinaire et Ministre plénipotentiaire, Délégué permanent auprès de la Société des Nations — Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

TEXT OF THE DEBATES

EIGHTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

Tuesday, June 30th, 1936, at 5 p.m.

CONTENTS.

Chairman: Mr. EDEN (United Kingdom),
President of the Council, Vice-President of the Assembly.

83. — RESUMPTION OF THE WORK OF THE ASSEMBLY.

Mr. Eden, delegate of the United Kingdom, President of the Council and Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair.

The Chairman. — On behalf of the Bureau of the Assembly, which has just concluded its session, I have been asked, in my capacity as President of the Council and Vice-President of the Assembly, to open this, the eighteenth plenary meeting of the sixteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

I have been invited to do this because, since the last meeting of this session,[1] our President, His Excellency M. Eduard Beneš, has resigned, for reasons which are known to and appreciated by us all.

[1] For the records of the first seventeen meetings of the sixteenth ordinary session of the Assembly, see *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138.

84. — RESIGNATION OF M. BENEŠ FROM THE PRESIDENCY OF THE SIXTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman. — My first duty is to give the Assembly official cognisance of M. Beneš's letter of resignation, addressed to the Secretary-General. I note that the delegations have already received the text of this letter, dated June 22nd, 1936, which has been communicated to you in document A.82.1935-36. It reads as follows:

"The Assembly of the League of Nations, continuing the work of its sixteenth session, of which I have the honour to be President, is to meet shortly. The duties attached to the office to which my country called me in December of last year render it impossible for me to continue to direct the work of the Assembly. I am therefore obliged, to my great regret, to resign the duties of President of the Assembly, and I beg you to be so good as to inform the Assembly to that effect.

"Although I cannot take part in the forthcoming meetings, I shall follow them with the keenest interest, and it is my most earnest hope that the Assembly will succeed in finding a way out of the difficulties of the present hour.

"I am firmly convinced that, in the interest of peace, there is a need for an organisation which, systematically and unremittingly, will harmonise the interests of different States, both with each other and with the common interests of all; and accordingly I shall continue, in another form and by other means, but no less energetically and perseveringly than in the past, to place my services at the disposal of the League. The difficulties with which the Geneva institution is at present contending have in no way affected my belief in the League and its future. I am convinced that a far-seeing policy appropriate to the circumstances may even strengthen the principles and the lofty ideal of which it is the expression. On that subject my optimism is unshakable.

"In resigning the duties of President of the Assembly, I cannot but recall the invaluable aid which you yourself and your colleagues have always so unsparingly afforded me, and I beg you to accept, for yourself and for them, my most sincere thanks.

(Signed) Eduard BENEŠ."

In asking the Assembly officially to take note of this resignation, I feel I should also give the delegates the opportunity of expressing their great regret and their deep gratitude to M. Beneš. For the first time since the Assembly of the League of Nations has met, M. Beneš is not with us. I shall not venture to remind you of all the work he has done on behalf of the League. It is fresh in all your minds. He has, indeed, been one of the foremost artisans of the League as well as one of the most distinguished citizens of his own country.

The courage and determination for the future shown by M. Beneš will, I am sure, inspire us all to carry on the work with which his name will remain inseparably associated.

I am confident that I am interpreting the wish of the Assembly in proposing to send a telegram to M. Beneš giving expression to our heartfelt appreciation of his services to the League of Nations. With your approval, I will send a telegram in these terms:

"On the resumption of the work of its sixteenth session, the Assembly has taken note with deep regret of the resignation of its President, His Excellency M. Beneš, President of the Czechoslovak Republic. The Assembly desires to tender him a unanimous expression of its regard and appreciation. In thus interpreting the feelings and wishes of the Assembly as regards yourself and your country, I beg Your Excellency to accept the assurance of my highest consideration."

The Chairman's suggestion was approved.

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

The Chairman. — The Committee on Credentials has met in order to examine the new credentials presented by some delegates to this session.

I call upon the Rapporteur of the Committee, M. Bourquin, delegate of Belgium, to be good enough to address the Assembly, and the Chairman of the Committee, M. Tudela, delegate of Peru, to come to the platform.

M. Bourquin (Belgium), Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials:

Translation: The present meeting is only a continuation of the ordinary session of the Assembly, of which the work was simply suspended. In these circumstances, the Committee on Credentials, which met on June 30th, 1936, at 11 a.m. at the Secretariat, under the chairmanship of M. Tudela, and on whose behalf I have the honour to report, had only to deal with the changes that have been made in the composition of some of the delegations. Further, it confined itself to verifying the formal regularity of the credentials submitted to it, without going into other questions which seemed to it to lie outside its competence.

Only partial changes were made in the composition of thirty-four delegations. In the case of thirty-one of these, the changes were made in virtue of powers emanating from the head of the State, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, or an authority having similar powers.

These were the delegations of the following Member States:

Afghanistan, Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, France, Greece, India, Iraq, Irish Free State, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Venezuela.

Their credentials being entirely in conformity with the provisions of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, the Committee concluded that they were duly accredited.

The changes in the composition of the delegation of the Argentine Republic were made in virtue of full powers emanating from the head of the State, which, however, have as yet been communicated to us only by telegram.

The changes made in the delegations of Iran and Peru have been notified only by telegram from the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

The Committee proposes, however, that you should accept the credentials of the new delegations of these three Members, subject to subsequent regularisation.

The composition of two delegations has been completely changed:

Haiti and Liberia.

The credentials of the delegates of the Republic of Haiti emanate from the head of the State and are therefore fully in accordance with the requirements of the Rules of Procedure.

As regards the Republic of Liberia, we have been informed of the composition of its delegation only by telegram from the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Committee proposes, nevertheless, that you should admit the delegation to take part in our work, subject to subsequent regularisation.

The following Members have not yet appointed delegates for this meeting of the Assembly:

Paraguay and Salvador.

Guatemala has sent a telegram stating that it is unable to be represented at the present meeting of the Assembly.

As regards the other delegations, no change having been made in their composition, the previous acceptance of their credentials, *ipso facto*, remains effective.

The Chairman. — I beg to thank the Rapporteur of the Committee on Credentials for his report.

Does anyone wish to speak on the conclusions of this report?

If there are no observations, I shall regard the report as adopted.

The report was adopted.

86. — ELECTION OF THE SUCCESSOR TO M. BENEŠ AS PRESIDENT OF THE SIXTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman. — The next question is the election of the successor to His Excellency M. Beneš as President of the present ordinary session of the Assembly. In conformity with the Rules of Procedure, the voting will be by secret ballot.

May I call upon M. Politis, delegate of Greece, and M. Guani, delegate of Uruguay, to be good enough, as former Presidents of the Assembly, 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	51
Blank voting-paper	1
Valid votes	50
Absolute majority	26

His Excellency M. van Zeeland, first delegate of Belgium, has obtained 47 votes.

I have the honour, therefore, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure, to declare that M. van Zeeland, Prime Minister and First Delegate of Belgium, is elected President of the Assembly.

I should like, on behalf of the Assembly, sincerely to congratulate M. van Zeeland on his election, and this Assembly on its President. At this hour of our history, we could, I feel sure, have made no more suitable choice of a wise and far-seeing statesman to guide our deliberations.

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

(M. van Zeeland took the Presidential Chair.)

87. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The President:

Translation: You have just done my country a very great honour in calling upon me to preside over your discussions, and I offer you my heartfelt thanks. But honours become more burdensome as the difficulties of international life increase, and, in the circumstances in which we find ourselves to-day, the honour which falls to me is a truly formidable one.

The League of Nations stands at a turning-point in its existence. That expression has already been used more than once; but I think that never before this moment has it held its full significance and gravity. Who among you, I ask, on the journey that brought him to Geneva, did not feel a pang of dread when he thought of the words he would have to speak and the decisions he would have to take?

The destinies of great peoples, the destinies of a large part of mankind, are, it seems to me, in the balance. What we are going to put in one or the other scale of that balance may weigh it down for a long time to come on the side either of good or of ill. And we cannot but tremble at the thought that it needs only a momentary clumsiness, an error of thought, a slip of the tongue, an incautious or premature gesture, to divert us to the path that leads to the direst peril.

Nevertheless, the impression I have received is not a bad one. You know better than I do what is termed in the lobbies the "Geneva atmosphere" and the importance that may be attached to it. The few contacts, direct or indirect, which I have had since my arrival here have left me with a feeling of encouragement.

True, the difficulties have changed neither in aspect nor in magnitude. But it seems to me that there is a determination to approach them in a spirit of mutual comprehension, and with the desire to subordinate everything — disappointments, vengefulness, personal reactions, considerations of prestige — to the major objective that lies before us all, of providing better foundations on which to build the future of the world, of peace and of security.

Upon the good order, calm and objectiveness of your debates a great appeasement may depend.

I hope your action during this Assembly will display other qualities, too: I hope it will avoid the reefs of bitterness, scepticism and discouragement. Remember that no great work has ever been achieved without trials, temporary setbacks, and even pain, and without the display of perseverance, energy and persistence.

To the modest extent to which your President can in this capacity help to attain such an ideal, you may be sure that you can rely on my devotion. But I cannot claim to banish the regrets you all feel at the absence of your distinguished President, M. Beneš. I shall loyally do all in my power to carry on here the traditions of impartiality and idealism which were handed on to him by his predecessors and which he so splendidly observed.

In that spirit I call upon you, without further delay, to carry on your work and pass to the agenda.

88. — PROPOSALS BY THE PRESIDENT ON THE PROCEDURE TO BE FOLLOWED BY THE ASSEMBLY.

The President:

Translation: This resumption of the Assembly's session is the outcome of the decisions taken by the Assembly itself at its previous meetings, and of the circumstances which have occurred since then.

Before separating, the Assembly instructed its President, in agreement with the President of the Council and the Secretary-General, to take the requisite steps, if the necessity arose, to summon the Assembly afresh.

The League's action since October 1935 in connection with the Italo-Ethiopian conflict forms the subject of a general statement taken from the Secretary-General's report to the Assembly. This document, A.81.1935-36.VII, which has been communicated to all the delegations, contains full data, to which they can refer (Annex 1, page 72).

Further, it will be remembered that it was on the proposal of the Argentine Government that the President of the Assembly called upon the delegations to meet again. In a communication dated June 2nd, document C.256(1).M.150(1). 1936 (Annex 2, page 97), the Argentine Government asked for this meeting to be convened, at the same time expressing the opinion that its purpose should be to examine certain aspects of the situation.

Accordingly, I propose, in opening this discussion, in accordance with the agenda, to call upon the first delegate of the Argentine Republic, in order to enable him to give the Assembly any further explanation he may think fit.

I shall then call upon any other delegates who wish to speak, and, in order to facilitate the procedure, I should like to ask those desiring to take part in the debate to send in their names as soon as possible.

89. — DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY: COMMUNICATION FROM THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT.

The President:

Translation: Before calling upon the Argentine delegate, I must acquaint you with a letter, dated June 29th, 1936, with appendices (Annex 3, page 98), which I have just received from the Italian Government and which reads as follows:

[*Translation.*]

"MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

"No. 221821/33.

"Rome, June 29th, 1936-XIV.

"*To His Excellency the President of the Sixteenth Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations, Geneva.*

"Sir,

"On the occasion of the meeting of the Assembly of the League of Nations, I have the honour to beg Your Excellency to bring the following to the knowledge of the delegates of Member States:

"1. By a series of written and oral communications, made to the Council and to the Assembly of the League of Nations, the Italian Government has defined and documented the situation which existed in Abyssinia, the circumstances which preceded and determined Italian action, the conditions under which it was pursued, the high standard of civilisation which constantly inspired Italy's political objective. The Italian Government, with

a view to attaining a fair and equitable appraisal of the situation, and as a sequel to the communications to which it has the honour to refer herein, wishes to recall and make clear the following points which relate particularly to more recent events.

"2. Firstly, the Italian Government wishes to recall that its attitude towards the League of Nations, despite the measures imposed for the first time by the Member States upon Italy, was characterised by its willingness to take all initiatives into favourable consideration and allowing no opportunity of negotiating a settlement to pass unheeded.

"The attempts made to this end are well known. The Hoare-Laval proposals forwarded to Geneva, Rome and Addis Ababa on December 11th, 1935,[1] which the Italian Government was about to examine with the greatest attention, proved fruitless, having been rejected by the Negus on December 12th[2] and declared void before the Italian Government had expressed its opinion.

"On March 3rd, 1936,[3] the Committee of Thirteen addressed an appeal to the parties at issue to attempt conciliation. On March 8th,[3] the Italian Government replied by declaring its willingness to negotiate. After the appeal of the Committee of Thirteen and throughout the month of March, the Italian troops took no initiative in military operations. It was the Negus himself who, at the beginning of April, engaged his troops in the battle which proved decisive; after which, believing himself able to resist, he issued another order for mobilisation, which received no response from the population.

"In the course of conversations held at Geneva on April 15th and 16th with the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen, attended by the Secretary-General of the League, the representative of the Italian Government defined the manner in which negotiations should be conducted in order to be likely to lead to concrete results.[4] By suggesting direct negotiation as the form best suited to the circumstances, the Italian Government also agreed that the Committee of Thirteen should be kept constantly informed of the progress of negotiations, the latter remaining at the disposal of the parties for such co-operation as might appear useful.

"On April 16th,[5] the Ethiopian Government again replied with a refusal. In these circumstances, the Council decided, on April 20th, 1936,[6] that the attempt at conciliation had failed. To-day we may add that the Italian Government had also attempted to establish confidential contacts, which took place at Athens and Jibuti, between delegates of the two parties.

"3. Two weeks after the refusal to negotiate on the part of the Ethiopian delegate in Geneva, the Negus fled from Addis Ababa, followed by members of his Government, and took refuge abroad, being fully aware that, not only did he lack support, but that he was menaced by the rising population as well as by the warriors whom he had mobilised. During the retreat from Dessie, this uprising cost the life of several members of the Imperial escort.

"Before the Italian troops reached Addis Ababa, the rudimentary organisation of the Ethiopian State had collapsed. The capital of Ethiopia had been deliberately left open to looters and incendiaries, so that Italian intervention was urged to protect the Foreign Legations. Italy found the country in a state of the most fearful disorder. On few occasions in history has the collapse of a regime and of a dynasty received such a clear and definite sanction by its own hand and by the will of the population as in the present case.

"Italy was therefore compelled to accept such responsibilities as were entailed by the situation and in order to comply with the wishes and requirements of the populations obviously needful of a new order capable of assuring progress and peace.

"The foregoing factors cast the proper light on the action pursued by Italy.

"4. In making a survey of the situation, one cannot overlook the peculiar conditions existing in most of the African countries nor, more especially, can one disregard the unquestionable need of the Ethiopian populations to have their fundamental claims to life, to religious and personal freedom, to the integrity of family life and to the enjoyment of their property safeguarded, as well as their need to be directed, like other peoples of Africa, towards such forms of civilisation and of economic, social and cultural progress as Ethiopia has proved unable to achieve by her own means.

"A long series of documentary evidence was appended to the memorandum of September 4th, 1935,[1] supplied by persons of various nationalities and political creeds, which bears irrefutable testimony to conditions in Abyssinia. More recently, highly significant evidence of this nature has been offered by outstanding personalities of different countries, who, after residing for some time in Abyssinia or accompanying the Abyssinian army during the military operations, volunteered to describe conditions existing under the old regime, thereby casting light upon the real causes of the disintegration which hastened the collapse. Testimonials of this nature may be seen in the Press almost every day.[2]

"5. The need to be raised to a more human standard of living is deeply felt and strongly demanded by the Ethiopian population, which has given tangible proof of this by rising against the regime of the Negus and by welcoming the Italian troops as liberators and heralds of justice, civilisation and order. All the religious and civil chiefs of the countries through which the troops marched gave their prompt support and co-operation to the Italian Government. After the flight of the Negus, practically all the prominent chiefs of the former Ethiopian Empire spontaneously submitted to Italian rule. Submissions of civil and military chiefs are continually taking place also in the most distant regions of Western and Southern Ethiopia.[3]

"This favourable disposition of the populations was further evidenced on the 9th inst.,[4] when nearly all the civil notables, including some former Ministers and the religious authorities, beginning with the Abouna and comprising the representatives of the monasteries, which are the depositories of national traditions, took their oath of allegiance to the King of Italy, Emperor of Ethiopia. This event unquestionably shows the determination of the population formerly subjected to the Negus Haile Selassie to repudiate his rule and consider it fallen, and to express their devotion and loyalty to the King of Italy, Emperor of Ethiopia.

"That this support is spontaneous and given in the fullest confidence is further proved by the

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[1] See *Official Journal*, January 1936, page 39.
[2] See *Official Journal*, January 1936, page 41.
[3] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 395.
[4] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 361.
[5] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), pages 361 and 401.
[6] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 392.

[1] See *Official Journal*, November 1935, page 1355.
[2] See Annex 3, Appendix I, page 98.
[3] See Annex 3, Appendix II, pages 98 *et seq.*
[4] See Annex 3, Appendix III, page 101.

peaceful resumption of normal life, by the lively traffic in market centres, by the people's willingness to work and by the contribution offered by natives of every class to the great programme of civilisation and development set on foot by Italy.

"The will of the population and their co-operation with the new regime are elements whose importance and meaning can be neither contested nor underestimated.

"Italy on her part has solemnly pledged herself before the people of Ethiopia to establish peace, justice and security in the country and to promote the moral and material improvement of the country's standards in keeping with the best traditions of her civilisation.

"6. Italy views the work she has undertaken in Ethiopia as a sacred mission of civilisation, and proposes to carry it out according to the principles of the Covenant of the League of Nations and of other international deeds which set forth the duties and tasks of the civilising Powers. Italy assures equitable treatment to the native populations, by promoting their moral and material well-being and their social progress. In order to associate the native populations with this task of social improvement, native personalities will sit on an Advisory Body already formed under the ægis of the general Government. Religious beliefs will be fully respected and all cults will be freely exercised provided they do not run counter to public order and moral principles. The free use of their original language is guaranteed to each of the races which inhabit Ethiopia.[1] Slavery and forced labour, which were a blot of infamy on the old regime, are now abolished.[2] Taxes levied on the people will be used exclusively to meet local requirements.

"Italy on her part is willing to accept the principle that natives should not be compelled to perform military duties other than local policing and territorial defence.

"Measures will be taken to guarantee freedom of transit and communications and equitable treatment for the trade of all countries.

"Italy will consider it an honour to inform the League of Nations of the progress achieved in her work of civilising Ethiopia, of which she has assumed the heavy responsibility.

"7. The Italian Government is fully convinced that loyal and effectual co-operation between countries meets the aspiration of all peoples towards a better and higher future.

"While expecting the League of Nations to appraise the situation now existing in Ethiopia in a spirit of fair understanding, the Italian Government declares itself ready to give once more its willing and practical co-operation to the League of Nations in order to achieve a settlement of the grave problems upon which rests the future of Europe and of the world. It is in this spirit that Italy acceded, amongst others, to the Treaty of Rio de Janeiro of October 10th, 1933.

"The Italian Government expresses the conviction, generally held elsewhere, that the League of Nations requires adequate reform, and it is ready to participate in the study and enactment of such reform.

"The Italian Government is fully aware of the rôle which devolves upon Italy and of its own responsibility in the solution of problems which concern the future of all peoples; it has, therefore, no preconceived ideas or prejudicial reservations as to the international formulæ or instruments to be used to this end, while intending to appraise them merely in the light of their efficiency in attaining the common aim.

"Nevertheless, the Italian Government cannot but recall the abnormal situation in which Italy has been placed and the necessity for the immediate removal of such obstacles as have been and are in the way of the international co-operation which Italy sincerely seeks, and to which she is prepared to give a tangible contribution for the sake of and the maintenance of peace.

(Signed) CIANO."

[1] These principles have already been enacted by the Law of June 1st, 1936-XIV. (See Annex 3, Appendix IV, page 103.)

[2] Cf. Report of the Advisory Commission of Experts on Slavery (League of Nations document C.189(1). M.145.1936.VI, Annex 18). (See Annex 3, Appendix V, page 104.)

90. — SITUATION ARISING OUT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY: OPENING OF THE GENERAL DISCUSSION.

The President:

Translation: I call upon M. Cantilo, first delegate of the Argentine Republic, to address the Assembly.

M. Cantilo (Argentine Republic):

Translation: When my Government, on June 2nd last (Annex 2, page 97), requested the summoning of this Assembly, public opinion, reflecting the mood of the moment, attributed our attitude to many different causes.

This uncertainty would not have existed if, in the light of past events, due heed had been paid to the persistence of certain principles which we have always applied in a logical and consistent manner.

This is not a privilege reserved only to us Argentinians. These principles constitute the spiritual inheritance of the whole American continent. They belong to all the American republics from north to south, and they can be invoked without a formal writ by each of the nationalities which compose it. It is a title of moral nobility to which I can lay claim without undue presumption, in face of the obstacles that beset this ideal among the great nations through the heritage of an age-long past.

The request for the Assembly to be convened is the outcome of our faith in the absolute equality of States. It is also due to the democratic spirit which, from its inception, has inspired our institutional life.

My country, although a Member of the Council, wished to see a gathering of all the nations which form the League. It thought that, at a time when the destinies of our institution are at stake, it was a duty to offer all of them an opportunity of stating their views and sentiments and to shoulder their responsibilities. Thus, in asking for this Assembly to be convened, we were obeying a conception and ideas which we maintain with deep conviction. We have upheld these ideas in the League since the first Assembly, and we have asserted them on various occasions in plans for the reform of the composition of the Council.

It is our duty to proclaim and uphold these principles, because in America they are of such long standing that they may be said to date from the birth of our republics. We cannot forget that they are the inviolable essence of the legal conscience of the New World, and that they live on there, unblemished and with full vitality.

We have proclaimed and defended them from our beginnings, setting up the legal *uti possidetis* as the principle which was to govern our territorial divisions, and we have accepted no solutions which were not based on titles derived from that principle.

Respect for territorial integrity was recognised by all American Congresses, from that of Panama in 1826, summoned by Bolivar, from those of Lima in 1847 and 1864, convened on the initiative of Peru, to the Continental Treaty of 1856 concluded on the initiative of Chile. These meritorious efforts were always accompanied by resolutions in favour of arbitration for the settlement of international disputes.

The first American Conference held at Washington in 1889 also pronounced against the right of conquest and eliminated it from the public law of the continent; a similar conception prevailed for half a century at all the other conferences. The Argentine Republic paid homage to these principles both in doctrine and in practice. It affirmed them in its acts, delimiting its frontiers on the basis of arbitral awards, sometimes losing large territories, but never failing to respect the award. These principles have their origin in the conscience of the nation, and it is our moral duty to recall that fact, because they lie in the very hearts of our people and are deeply rooted in its spiritual soil. They have inspired our thinkers and our public men, such as Alberdi, who in 1844 anticipated by over forty years the work of the Pan-American Conferences, stigmatising in a famous book "the crime of war".

Though in 1865 our country was obliged to take up arms and to endure with its allies a war it had not provoked, at the end of that war it negotiated with the vanquished a treaty whereby part of the territory in dispute was made subject to arbitration and the remainder settled by direct agreement. By the same pacific procedure we put an end to the territorial controversy with Chile by the treaty signed in 1902, accompanied by arbitration and the reduction of naval armaments.

Such an attitude, consistently maintained, was renewed in more recent times — on July 30th, 1932 — in the session organised by the Neutrals at Washington on the occasion of the conflict in the Northern Chaco between Paraguay and Bolivia, when the Argentine Ambassador, on the instruction of his Government, proposed the resolution that in America territorial questions are not to be settled by force. This proposal was soon afterwards embodied in the historic declaration of August 3rd, 1932, ratified by nineteen American nations and afterwards endorsed by the Argentine Treaty of Conciliation and Non-Aggression signed and ratified by the whole continent, which stipulates that no territorial arrangement shall be recognised "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".

We therefore find ourselves faced by a case of conscience. Realising as we do our responsibility at the present juncture, and in view of these solemn declarations, we can only obey the voice of conscience by reasserting, as I solemnly do on behalf of the Argentine Republic, our irrevocable support of the same principles. My Government not only hopes, but is convinced, that the League of Nations, if it wishes to retain its universal character, must, subject to the diversity of circumstances, reassert its support of these principles.

It is not, however, the safeguard of our legal tradition alone which inspires us. That is not the sole purpose we have in view. Other preoccupations guide our action and influence the responsibility we incur. I refer to the anxieties we feel for the future of the League to which we belong and with which we have pledged ourselves to collaborate to further the work of justice and peace which is its aim.

For sixteen years, statesmen, lawyers and diplomats have been devoting every effort to the League's cause and have been labouring for its technical improvement; they have been endeavouring to enforce its establishment, in practice and in reality, by engendering in nations the habit of seeking the settlement of their disputes through it. Thus, one of the noblest organisations which history has known has grown up. But let us not forget that this great edifice of international justice is based, not on force, but on principles, and that we must not let those principles be shaken. Let us see whether it is not essential to improve its structure and to make judicious changes therein; let us strengthen the points which experience has shown to be weak.

The proceedings upon which we are entering will therefore be of the highest importance. If American ideas cannot be harmonised with the manner of applying the Covenant, if we cannot secure the practical universality of a principle of justice, and if the attempt to do so might create a danger to peace or might prove incompatible with the forms devised to secure it, the Argentine Republic would be obliged to reconsider the possibility of continuing its collaboration.

In any case, you can be sure that, in calling for the meeting of this Assembly, we have acted with the highest intentions and inspired by a spirit of sincere co-operation. We considered that it might constitute a new and a great effort towards peace, imbuing all its Members with the same desire for conciliation and harmony in order that they may hasten on the solutions which still have to be sought. The world is calling for peace; it is suffering from the absence of peace; and on the endeavour, so often unsuccessfully repeated, to ensure its final stability depends the welfare of innumerable peoples all over the earth.

The President:

Translation: His Majesty the Negus Haile Selassie, first delegate of Ethiopia, will address the Assembly.

H.M. the Negus Haile Selassie (Ethiopia), *speaking in French:*

Translation: I ask the Assembly to excuse me if I do not speak in French as I should have wished. I shall express myself better, with all the strength of my heart and mind, if I speak in Amharic.

(H.M. Haile Selassie continued in Amharic.)

I, Haile Selassie I, Emperor of Ethiopia, am here to-day to claim that justice that is due to my people, and the assistance promised to it eight months ago by fifty-two nations who asserted that an act of aggression had been committed in violation of international treaties.

None other than the Emperor can address the appeal of the Ethiopian people to those fifty-two nations.

There is perhaps no precedent for a head of a State himself speaking in this Assembly. But there is certainly no precedent for a people being the victim of such wrongs and being threatened with abandonment to its aggressor. Nor has there ever before been an example of any Government proceeding to the systematic extermination of a nation by barbarous means, in violation of the most solemn promises made to all the nations of the earth that there should be no resort to a war of conquest and that there should not be used against innocent human beings the terrible weapon of poison gas. It is to defend a people struggling for its age-old independence that the Head of the Ethiopian Empire has come to Geneva to fulfil this supreme duty, after having himself fought at the head of his armies.

I pray Almighty God that He may spare nations the terrible sufferings that have just been inflicted on my people, and of which the chiefs who have accompanied me here have been the horrified witnesses.

It is my duty to inform the Governments assembled in Geneva, responsible as they are for the lives of millions of men, women and children, of the deadly peril which threatens them, by describing to them the fate which has been suffered by Ethiopia.

It is not only upon warriors that the Italian Government has made war. It has, above all, attacked populations far removed from hostilities, in order to terrorise and exterminate them.

At the outset, towards the end of 1935, Italian aircraft hurled tear-gas bombs upon my armies. They had but slight effect. The soldiers learned to scatter, waiting until the wind had rapidly dispersed the poisonous gases.

The Italian aircraft then resorted to mustard gas. Barrels of liquid were hurled upon armed groups. But this means too was ineffective; the liquid affected only a few soldiers, and the barrels upon the ground themselves gave warning of the danger to the troops and to the population.

It was at the time when the operations for the encirclement of Makale were taking place that the Italian command, fearing a rout, applied the procedure which it is now my duty to denounce to the world.

Sprayers were installed on board aircraft so that they could vaporise, over vast areas of territory, a fine, death-dealing rain. Groups of nine, fifteen, eighteen aircraft followed one another so that the fog issuing from them formed a continuous sheet. It was thus that, from the end of January 1936, soldiers, women, children, cattle, rivers, lakes, and fields were constantly drenched with this deadly rain. In order to kill off systematically all living creatures, in order the more surely to poison waters and pastures, the Italian command made its aircraft pass over and over again. That was its chief method of warfare.

The very refinement of barbarism consisted in carrying devastation and terror into the most densely populated parts of the territory, the points farthest removed from the scene of hostilities. The object was to scatter horror and death over a great part of the Ethiopian territory.

These fearful tactics succeeded. Men and animals succumbed. The deadly rain that fell from the aircraft made all those whom it touched fly shrieking with pain. All who drank the poisoned water or ate the infected food succumbed too, in dreadful suffering. In tens of thousands the victims of the Italian mustard gas fell. It was to denounce to the civilised world the tortures inflicted upon the Ethiopian people that I resolved to come to Geneva. None other than myself and my gallant companions in arms could bring the League of Nations undeniable proof. The appeals of my delegates to the League of Nations had remained unanswered; my delegates had not been eyewitnesses. That is why I decided to come myself to testify against the crime perpetrated against my people and to give Europe warning of the doom that awaits it if it bows before the accomplished fact.

Need I remind the Assembly of the various stages of the Ethiopian drama?

For twenty years past, as Heir-Apparent, Regent of the Empire, and as Emperor, I have been directing the destinies of my people. I have ceaselessly striven to bring to my country the benefits of civilisation, and especially to establish relations of good-neighbourliness with adjacent Powers. In particular, I succeeded in concluding with Italy the Treaty of Friendship of 1928, which absolutely prohibited the resort, under whatsoever pretext, to force of arms, substituting for force the procedure of conciliation and arbitration on which civilised nations have based international order.

In its report of October 5th, 1935, the Committee of Thirteen recognised my efforts and the results I had achieved. It stated as follows: [1]

"The Governments considered that the entry of Ethiopia into the League would not only afford her a further guarantee for the maintenance of her territorial integrity and independence, but would help her to reach a higher level of civilisation. There does not appear to be more disorder and insecurity in Ethiopia to-day than was the case in 1923. On the contrary, the country is better organised and the central authority is better obeyed."

I should have procured still greater results for my people had not obstacles of every kind been put in the way by the Italian Government, which stirred up revolt and armed the rebels.

Indeed, the Rome Government, as it has thought fit to proclaim openly to-day, has been ceaselessly preparing for the conquest of Ethiopia. The treaties of friendship it signed with me were not sincere; their only object was to hide its real intention from me. The Italian Government asserts that for fourteen years it has been preparing for its present conquest. It therefore recognises to-day that, when it supported the admission of Ethiopia to the League of Nations in 1923, when it concluded the Treaty of Friendship in 1928, when it signed the Pact of Paris outlawing war, it was deceiving the whole world. The Ethiopian Government for its part saw, in these solemn treaties, only fresh guarantees of security, enabling it to achieve further progress along the pacific path of reform upon which it had entered and to which it had devoted all its strength and all its heart.

The Walwal incident in December 1934 came as a thunderbolt to me. The Italian provocation was obvious. I did not hesitate to appeal to the League of Nations. I invoked the provisions of the Treaty of 1928, the principles of the Covenant: I urged the procedure of conciliation and arbitration.

Unhappily for Ethiopia, this was the time when a certain Government considered that the European situation made it imperative at any price to obtain the friendship of Italy. The price paid was the abandonment of Ethiopian independence to the greed of the Italian Government. This secret agreement, contrary to the obligations of the Covenant, has exerted a great influence over the course of events. Ethiopia, and the whole world, have suffered and are still suffering to-day its disastrous consequences.

This first violation of the Covenant was followed by many others. Feeling itself encouraged in its anti-Ethiopian policy, the Rome Government feverishly made war preparations, thinking that the concerted pressure which was beginning to be exerted on the Ethiopian Government might perhaps fail to overcome the resistance of my people to Italian domination. Time had to be gained; so all kinds of difficulties from all sides were placed in the way, so as to protract the procedure of conciliation and arbitration. Every kind of obstacle was placed in the way of that procedure. Certain Governments tried to prevent the Ethiopian Government from finding arbitrators amongst their nationals. When once the arbitral tribunal was set up, pressure was exercised to ensure an award favourable to Italy. All was in vain. The arbitrators — two of whom were Italian officials — were forced to recognise unanimously that in the Walwal incident, as in the subsequent incidents, no international responsibility was attributable to Ethiopia.

After this award, the Ethiopian Government sincerely thought that an era of friendly relations might be opened with Italy. I loyally offered my hand to the Rome Government.

The Assembly was informed by the report of the Committee of Thirteen, dated October 5th, 1935, of the details of the events which occurred after the month of December 1934 and up to October 3rd, 1935. I need only quote a few of the conclusions of that report (Nos. 24, 25 and 26): [1]

"The Italian memorandum [containing the complaints made by Italy] was laid on the

[1] See *Official Journal*, November 1935, page 1618.

[1] See *Official Journal*, November 1935, page 1619.

Council table on September 4th, 1935, whereas Ethiopia's first appeal to the Council had been made on December 14th, 1934. In the interval between these two dates, the Italian Government opposed the consideration of the question by the Council on the ground that the only appropriate procedure was that provided for in the Italo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1928. Throughout the whole of that period, moreover, the despatch of Italian troops to East Africa was proceeding. These shipments of troops were represented to the Council by the Italian Government as necessary for the defence of its colonies menaced by Ethiopia's military preparations. Ethiopia, on the contrary, drew attention to the official pronouncements made in Italy which, in its opinion, left no doubt ' as to the hostile intentions of the Italian Government '.

" From the outset of the dispute, the Ethiopian Government has sought a settlement by peaceful means. It has appealed to the procedures of the Covenant. The Italian Government desiring to keep strictly to the procedure of the Italo-Ethiopian Treaty of 1928, the Ethiopian Government assented ; it invariably stated that it would faithfully carry out the arbitral award, even if the decision went against it. It agreed that the question of the ownership of Walwal should not be dealt with by the arbitrators, because the Italian Government would not agree to such a course. It asked the Council to despatch neutral observers and offered to lend itself to any enquiries upon which the Council might decide.

" Once the Walwal dispute had been settled by arbitration, however, the Italian Government submitted its detailed memorandum [1] to the Council in support of its claim to liberty of action. It asserted that a case like that of Ethiopia cannot be settled by the means provided by the Covenant.

" It stated that, ' since this question affects vital interests and is of primary importance to Italian security and civilisation ', it ' would be failing in its most elementary duty, did it not cease once and for all to place any confidence in Ethiopia, reserving full liberty to adopt any measures that may become necessary to ensure the safety of its colonies and to safeguard its own interests '."

Such are the terms of the Committee of Thirteen's report. The Council and the Assembly unanimously adopted the conclusions of that report and solemnly proclaimed that the Italian Government had violated the Covenant and was in a state of aggression.

I unhesitatingly stated that I did not want war, that it was imposed upon me, that I should struggle solely for the independence and integrity of my people, and that in that struggle I was defending the cause of all small States exposed to the greed of a powerful neighbour.

In October 1935, the fifty-two nations who are listening to me to-day gave me an assurance that the aggressor would not triumph, that the resources of the Covenant would be implemented in order to ensure the rule of law and the failure of violence.

I ask the fifty-two nations not to forget to-day the policy upon which they embarked eight months ago, and on the faith of which I directed the resistance of my people against the aggressor whom they had denounced to the world.

Despite the inferiority of my weapons, the complete lack of aircraft, artillery, munitions and hospital services, my trust in the League was absolute. I thought it impossible that fifty-two nations, including the most powerful in the world, could be successfully held in check by a single aggressor. Relying on the faith due to treaties, I had made no preparation for war, and that is the case with a number of small countries in Europe. When the danger became more urgent, conscious of my responsibilities towards my people, I tried, during the first six months of 1935, to acquire armaments. Many Governments proclaimed an embargo to prevent my doing so, whereas the Italian Government, through the Suez Canal, was given all facilities for transporting, without cessation and without protest, troops, arms and munitions. On October 3rd, 1935, Italian troops invaded my territory. Not until a few hours later did I decree a general mobilisation. In my desire to maintain peace, I had, following the example of a great country in Europe on the eve of the great war, caused my troops to withdraw thirty kilometres back so as to remove any pretext of provocation.

War was then waged in the atrocious conditions which I have laid before the Assembly.

In that unequal struggle between a Government commanding more than forty-two million inhabitants, having at its disposal financial, industrial and technical means which enabled it to create unlimited quantities of the most death-dealing weapons, and, on the other hand, a small people of twelve million inhabitants, without arms, without resources, having on its side nothing but the justice of its own cause and the promise of the League of Nations, what real assistance was given to Ethiopia by the fifty-two nations who had declared the Rome Government guilty of a breach of the Covenant and had undertaken to prevent the triumph of the aggressor ? Has each of the States Members, as it was its duty to do in virtue of its signature appended to Article 16 of the Covenant, considered the aggressor to have committed an act of war personally directed against itself ?

I had placed all my hopes in the fulfilment of these undertakings. My trust had been confirmed by the repeated declarations made in the Council to the effect that aggression must not be rewarded, and that, in the end, force would be compelled to bow before law.

In December 1935, the Council made it quite clear that its sentiments were in harmony with those of hundreds of millions of people who, in all parts of the world, had protested against the proposal to dismember Ethiopia.

It was constantly repeated that there was not merely a conflict between the Italian Government and Ethiopia, but also a conflict between the Italian Government and the League of Nations.

That is why I refused all proposals to my personal advantage made to me by the Italian Government if only I would betray my people and the Covenant of the League. I was defending the cause of all small peoples who are threatened with aggression.

What has become of the promises made to me ? As early as October 1935 I noted with grief, but without surprise, that there were three Powers which regarded their undertakings under the Covenant as absolutely valueless. Their connections with Italy impelled them to refuse to take any measures whatsoever to stop Italian aggression.

On the other hand, it was a profound disappointment to me to note the attitude of a certain Government which, whilst tirelessly protesting its scrupulous attachment to the Covenant, has equally tirelessly striven to prevent its observance. As soon as any measure which was likely to be rapidly effective was proposed, pretexts in one form or another were devised to postpone even consideration of that measure. Did the secret agreements of January 1935 provide for this tireless obstruction ?

The Ethiopian Government never expected other Governments to shed their soldiers' blood to defend the Covenant when their own immediately personal interests were not at stake. Ethiopian warriors asked only for means to defend themselves. On many occasions I asked for

[1] See *Official Journal*, November 1935, page 1355.

financial assistance for the purchase of arms. That assistance was constantly denied me. What, then, in practice, is the meaning of Article 16 of the Covenant and of collective security ?

The Ethiopian Government's use of the railway from Jibuti to Addis Ababa was in practice obstructed as regards the transport of arms intended for the Ethiopian forces. Yet at the present moment this is the chief, if not the only, means of supplying the Italian armies of occupation. The rules of neutrality should prohibit transports intended for the Italian forces; but in this case there is not even neutrality, since Article 16 lays upon every State Member of the League the duty not to remain neutral, but to come to the aid, not of the aggressor, but of the victim of aggression. Has the Covenant been respected ? Is it being respected to-day ?

Finally, statements have just been made in their respective Parliaments by the Governments of certain Powers, the most influential Members of the League of Nations, that, since the aggressor has succeeded in occupying a large part of Ethiopian territory, they propose not to continue the application of any of the economic and financial measures decided upon against the Italian Government.

These are the circumstances in which, at the request of the Argentine Government, the Assembly of the League of Nations meets to consider the situation created by Italian aggression.

I assert that the issue before the Assembly to-day is a much wider one. It is not merely a question of a settlement in the matter of Italian aggression. It is a question of collective security; of the very existence of the League; of the trust placed by States in international treaties; of the value of promises made to small States that their integrity and their independence shall be respected and assured. It is a choice between the principle of the equality of States and the imposition upon small Powers of the bonds of vassalage. In a word, it is international morality that is at stake. Have treaty signatures a value only in so far as the signatory Powers have a personal, direct and immediate interest involved ?

No subtle reasoning can change the nature of the problem or shift the grounds of the discussion. It is in all sincerity that I submit these considerations to the Assembly. At a time when my people is threatened with extermination, when the support of the League may avert the final blow, I may be allowed to speak with complete frankness, without reticence, in all directness, such as is demanded by the rule of equality between all States Members of the League. Outside the Kingdom of God, there is not on this earth any nation that is higher than any other. If a strong Government finds that it can, with impunity, destroy a weak people, then the hour has struck for that weak people to appeal to the League of Nations to give its judgment in all freedom. God and history will remember your judgment.

I have heard it asserted that the inadequate sanctions already applied have not achieved their object. At no time, in no circumstances, could sanctions that were intentionally inadequate, intentionally ill-applied, stop an aggressor. This is not a case of impossibility, but of refusal to stop an aggressor. When Ethiopia asked — as she still asks — that she should be given financial assistance, was that a measure impossible to apply ? Had not the financial assistance of the League already been granted — and that in time of peace — to two countries, the very two countries which in the present case refused to apply sanctions against the aggressor ?

In presence of the numerous violations by the Italian Government of all international treaties prohibiting resort to arms and recourse to barbarous methods of warfare, the initiative has to-day been taken — it is with pain that I record the fact — to raise sanctions. What does this initiative mean in practice but the abandonment of Ethiopia to the aggressor ? Coming as it does on the very eve of the day when I was about to attempt a supreme effort in the defence of my people before this Assembly, does not this initiative deprive Ethiopia of one of her last chances of succeeding in obtaining the support and guarantee of States Members ? Is that the guidance that the League of Nations and each of the States Members are entitled to expect from the great Powers when they assert their right and their duty to guide the action of the League ?

Placed by the aggressor face to face with the accomplished fact, are States going to set up the terrible precedent of bowing before force ?

The Assembly will doubtless have before it proposals for reforming the Covenant and rendering the guarantee of collective security more effective. Is it the Covenant that needs reform ? What undertakings can have any value if the will to fulfil them is lacking ? It is international morality that is at stake, and not the articles of the Covenant.

On behalf of the Ethiopian people, a Member of the League of Nations, I ask the Assembly to take all measures proper to secure respect for the Covenant. I renew my protest against the violations of treaties of which the Ethiopian people is the victim. I declare before the whole world that the Emperor, the Government and the people of Ethiopia will not bow before force, that they uphold their claims, that they will use all means in their power to ensure the triumph of right and respect for the Covenant.

I ask the fifty-two nations who have given the Ethiopian people a promise to help them in their resistance to the aggressor: What are they willing to do for Ethiopia ?

I ask the great Powers, who have promised the guarantee of collective security to small States — those small States over whom hangs the threat that they may one day suffer the fate of Ethiopia: What measures do they intend to take ?

Representatives of the world, I have come to Geneva to discharge in your midst the most painful of the duties of the head of a State. What answer am I to take back to my people ?

NINETEENTH PLENARY MEETING

Wednesday, July 1st, 1936, at 10.30 a.m.

CONTENTS :

President : M. VAN ZEELAND.

91. — MAINTENANCE OF ORDER IN THE ASSEMBLY HALL: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT:

The President :

Translation : Before passing to the agenda, I have to make a short communication.

Yesterday, the order and dignity of your proceedings were disturbed by a most regrettable external incident, an incident deeply deplored by every Member of the Assembly.

In order, if possible, to prevent its repetition or, in any event, to define its precise significance, I think I should draw your attention to one of the fundamental rules of any deliberative assembly : nothing counts or exists for it, except what occurs in the course of its proceedings ; no attitude, no gesture coming from outside — especially from the galleries — can affect its own position as a corporate body or that of any of its members.

But there is an elementary duty incumbent upon those who are privileged to witness your debates — to refrain from demonstrations of any kind. That is why orders were immediately given yesterday to remove the demonstrators. It is not my business to address the galleries from the platform ; but I can assure the Assembly that, should there be any further attempt of any kind to interrupt its discussions, steps will at once be taken, with the same decisiveness and celerity as yesterday, to put an end to the disturbance and to prevent any recurrence of it.

92. — SITUATION ARISING OUT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY: GENERAL DISCUSSION (continuation).

The President :

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

M. Turbay (Colombia) :

Translation : In response to the invitation addressed to it, and for the reasons underlying that invitation, my Government desires, at the outset, to define its attitude towards the problems before the Assembly.

Colombia's position being similar to that of a large group of countries, she might aspire to express the general attitude of the small States, but she will confine herself to presenting her own views, as a Member of the League of Nations, with the knowledge that she has been among the most loyal in her fulfilment of the terms of the Covenant. She has done so, not only when, because of her obligations, she has had to intervene in international problems with which she had no concern, but also when she placed a dispute of her own before the League and accepted all the recommendations made at Geneva.

The League has not had many clear successes to its credit in the past, but one of them is the dispute between Colombia and Peru. The League's admirers often use this case as an illustration of the League's value and the services it renders ; accordingly, it is not inappropriate for those who helped to bring about this result, by respecting the undertakings they assumed in acceding to the Covenant, to recall it as adding authority to their opinion. This opinion is not that of an armed Power, vigorous and economically strong, but of a State which is proud to have co-operated loyally in furthering the principles underlying the League, principles which justify its perpetuation.

To-day we are faced with a grave question, which world public opinion seems disposed to divide into three sections : first, a problem closely connected with European politics, as regards which the Members of the League have taken up their position — namely, the enforcement of sanctions against Italy in virtue of a League decision ; secondly, a European-African problem, with which all chancelleries throughout the world are faced — the annexation of Ethiopia by Italy, which has been notified by the latter nation ; lastly, a general problem, which is as much the concern of America as of the other nations, but for different reasons — the modification of the League Covenant.

We know it is suggested that these three great problems should be studied separately, that two of them should be adjourned until September, and that we should discuss the other — which has apparently been settled already. We do not contend that our view will lead the Assembly to change its decisions ; but it would be inexcusable not to reveal our fear that the legal principles of which the League is the trustee may be prejudiced if, at a moment such as this, any one of its Members fails to make clear its attitude on the whole of the problem constituted by the raising of sanctions, the annexation of Ethiopia, and the reform of the Covenant. Even were the Assembly to decide that its resolutions on these three questions should be taken at intervals, we do not feel bound to split up our views into three parts and submit them piecemeal.

Why did Colombia take sanctions against Italy? We say Colombia, but we might equally well speak for a large group of nations which are collaborating in the work of the League because they have accepted its universal principles, and not because they themselves have any immediate political interests at stake. Colombia had certainly no immediate political interests in the Italo-Ethiopian war, and we believe the same could be said of all Members of the League.

At the same time, we could not adopt the passive attitude sometimes expected of us towards the great international problems of Europe discussed, on occasion, at Geneva ; for, in signing the Covenant we handed over part of our national sovereignty to the League, thereby seeking to establish the universal reign of principles from which we had nothing to fear — principles, moreover, which we sincerely admire, cherish and profess. The sole

compensation for this limitation of sovereignty was the right to intervene in world affairs, to ensure the furtherance of the policy of peace, in accordance with definite rules that are equally binding upon us. We had no reason to adopt a mesure which, had it been taken by individual States or had there been no Covenant, would have been regarded by Italy as a violation of neutrality — a measure, which, even within the framework of the Covenant, compromised our diplomatic and commercial relations with Italy.

On the other hand, we have a strong reason for accepting the League's decision, inasmuch as we are Members acting in good faith. Colombia unreservedly supports the principle of sanctions against an aggressor country, and regards it as essential if the doctrine of the outlawry of war is to be backed by that active force which has always been lacking when efforts to bring about conciliation or to restore peace have failed.

My country's attitude towards Italy was not prompted by a desire to forge a weapon against Italian policy, but by the single-minded belief that, in adopting sanctions, we were helping to prevent the development of a war of aggression which has been converted into a war of territorial conquest. We are not unaware that, in the terribly difficult period through which Europe is passing, a theoretical decision in favour of peace may lead to war.

We have no desire to sacrifice peace to the ideal of peace; but what we recommend is a gesture of frankness to save the League from the danger of adopting halting principles incapable of withstanding political realities. It would be much more dangerous for the League to go on living on an equivocal basis than for us to recognise dispassionately that it is based upon ideals that cannot be put into practice and that changes must be made if the doctrine of the outlawry of war, which saw the light in the period following the last world conflict, is not to end in countenancing acts of violence that before 1914, could be committed only at the risk of world-wide reprobation.

There have been too many wars of aggression and too many cases of territorial conquest for recents events to occasion surprise; but never have wars of aggression or territorial conquests coincided with the existence of institutions more or less perfectly organised to decree sanctions, in the case of the former, or to prevent recognition of the latter. If, when called upon to deal with such events, the organs in question do not function, the principles must be saved so that the concert of nations, assembled at Geneva, may not, through the timidity of its decisions, be made to appear as the body before which a country comes to obtain recognition for claims founded upon violence, as the tribunal which validates them by its own deliberate passivity.

It would be better to reduce the activities of the League to the level of its capabilities than to allow it to live on with an unlimited jurisdiction which, when not effectively exercised, marks the first step towards approval of facts which it ignores. If the League is the only institution which has the right to intervene in case of war, to call for sanctions against the aggressor and to disavow international acts of force, then whenever it fails to take such action, it will be authorising, with the assent of all the countries represented at Geneva, acts constituting a breach of the Covenant, and which it has not penalised, prevented or disavowed.

The American nations have on several occasions declared their attachment to the principles of law on which the League is founded. They represent a third of the Members of the League, and their vote should have a determinant influence over its decisions. But the future brings them face to face, not with one, but with a whole series of questions regarding the policy they should follow.

Colombia has proposed the discussion, at the Inter-American Peace Conference which is to meet at Buenos Aires, of the question of the formation of an American regional *entente*, co-operating with the League. We take the view that, as long as there is no previous agreement among the American nations concerning their policy at Geneva, Latin America's influence can never make itself felt to the full.

The creation of an association of American nations, working within the framework of the League, which permits of regional associations, has in the last few years been advocated by leaders of opinion in both America and Europe. The Colombian suggestion is based upon the same moral and legal principles as those that guided the founders of the present League. There is no question whatever of supplanting the League by an association pursuing different ends.

The aim is to breathe new life into the League, to strengthen it through the more democratic representation of the countries of the American continent, the representatives of which are at present unable to co-ordinate their efforts sufficiently to override the individual interests of the American nations themselves.

We would not defend such views were we not convinced that the way to strengthen the League and the principles it represents is to delimit its field of action in accordance with its possibilities, and thus to enable it to do faithfully that which it is capable of doing.

Let me, in conclusion, sum up what I have said, and define my Government's attitude in this hour fraught with anxiety for the future of the principles which, in the years following the war, were embodied in the Magna Charta of international law:

Unshakable fidelity to the principles of the Covenant and strict execution of its obligations and duties;

Adherence to the principle of non-recognition of territorial acquisitions or special advantages obtained by force;

Strengthening of the Covenant and adoption of measures to render its application more effective;

Maintenance of the principle of universality in the duties and obligations which the Covenant enjoins;

Support for action in favour of regional *ententes* facilitating the effective application of the provisions of the Covenant and acting as instruments for co-operation with the League in the maintenance of peace and the outlawry of war.

In this spirit, the Colombian delegation is prepared to co-operate in the study of the problems for the examination and solution of which this Assembly was summoned, as soon as they can be constructively discussed.

The President:

Translation: M. Léon Blum, President of the Council of Ministers of the French Republic, will address the Assembly.

M. Léon Blum (France):

Translation: You will hear to-day as delegate of France a man who is a newcomer to this Assembly as he was to the councils of the Government of his country, and who comes before you in all the strength of his inexperience. I will speak to you without circumlocution, even without caution, and I hope that in return for my frankness you will give me your sympathy.

Allow me, before defining the position of the French Government, Parliament and people, to clear up certain misunderstandings, which undoubtedly weigh heavily on the international situation as a whole.

I have heard it said, and I have read for some weeks past, that the influence of France in Europe,

the action which she could bring to bear on international affairs, were on the decline. It is said that she is a Power which can no longer offer any effective resistance to breaches of international law, or collaborate effectively in the fulfilment of international engagements; a Power whose foreign policy must be neutral on account of her domestic difficulties; a Power which has been reduced to the second rank.

These words hurt me as I speak them. That, however, is what has been said and written, and you will not be surprised, therefore, if I face this preliminary question frankly, as I will face all others.

There is not, and we trust there never will be, an order of precedence among the Powers forming the international community. Were a hierarchy of States to be established within the League of Nations, or were a governing order to be set up outside it, then the League would be ruined, both morally and materially, for it would have overthrown the principle on which it was founded.

On what grounds, however, is it asserted or suggested or feared that France is a factor in European affairs that has been devalorised? Two separate sets of facts are adduced: the movement for workers' claims; and the crisis which began on March 7th with the military occupation of the Rhineland.

The workers' movements have been interpreted as bringing into the domestic life of France an epoch of division and strife tantamount to a beginning of civil war. The series of events that have taken place since March 7th have been interpreted as heralding, in the foreign policy of France, an epoch of passive resignation, in which she would tolerate anything where she herself was concerned, and would, still more, accept anything where others were concerned.

Both of these views are entirely mistaken.

Europe assuredly thought that the military occupation of the Rhineland would be met also by military action on the part of France. France took no such action; she sought a solution for this most dangerous crisis in international methods alone. Instead of mobilising, she appealed to the guarantor Powers of the Treaty of Locarno, and to the League. Was that a sign of weakness on her part? Have we come to the point in Europe to-day where a nation is thought to weaken itself, or to fall into a lower rank, when it deliberately renounces all weapons except the weapon of law?

Undoubtedly, a certain legal text, which is open to no discussion, assimilated the occupation of the Rhineland to an act of aggression. Despite, that legal equivalence, however, French soil has remained intact. Who, then, would dare to suppose that our reaction would have been the same if either our own frontiers or those we guaranteed had really been violated?

As regards the workers' movements, I am not called upon here to explain or to justify the social policy on which France has embarked, as a result of the new majority and under the new Government. A great change is taking place, and without violence. Accounts which describe France as a prey to all kinds of strife and bloodshed, accounts which I should not have to go far to find, are mere calumnious travesties. Certainly, our public life is an ardent one. But ardent peoples are neither cowardly nor selfish peoples. A nation does not grow weak — rather it strengthens itself — when it further intensifies its inward energy. A people is the more devoted to its independence if it has the more reasons to defend it, and if it lives a freer life in a juster society. That is what is happening in France to-day.

The French delegation feels able, therefore, to speak firmly and with calm assurance in interpreting here the will of the nation. That will is clear: the French people desire peace, and desire it unanimously. They desire it so deeply that, in our domestic controversies, the conclusive argument of the parties, one against the other, consists in saying: "You are endangering the cause of peace; you are drawing the nation into war".

Although we are entirely free, like all other peoples, to choose our own friendships, and to choose them in accordance with our special affinities, political, social, historical and ethnic, the French people desire peace for all peoples and with all peoples, whatever their system or principles of Government. The desire of France for peace, however, represents neither an admission of weakness nor a selfish withdrawal into herself. Peace, as the French people conceive it, is not a mute submission to force; it is not a resigned acceptance of accomplished facts. It is based on international law and morality. Even if we wished to cloak ourselves with a purely selfish conception of our interests, we could not do so — and if we could not, what other nation could? There is no European conflict in which France might not sooner or later find herself involved, even against her will. Peace, therefore, as we conceive and desire it, is not only the peace of France, but the indivisible peace of Europe and the world.

I have said enough to show you with what serious apprehension France views the present situation. The world at this moment is not a world of peace. I do not seek to enquire why, nor for how long this has been the case. The fact, the terrible fact, is there. We feel the atmosphere growing heavy; we see the shadow looming. Everywhere the world is arming, and the mystery in which certain countries shroud their armaments adds to the universal feeling of dread. For the first time for eighteen years a European war is once again looked upon as a possibility. Now, of all the dangers of war, perhaps the most to be feared is the general feeling that war has become possible. War is possible as soon as it is thought of as possible; it becomes almost inevitable as soon as there is a feeling that it is inevitable.

I wish to point out to you another sign that seems to me equally alarming. The events of these last months lead to the distressing conclusion that those States which are constantly thinking of war, and seem prepared to precipitate it at any moment, thereby secure for themselves an advantage, obtain a start, over the States which are faithful to their obligations and have openly renounced war as an instrument of policy and a means of power. Will other countries withstand the contagion of this example? Will they withstand the still more dangerous contagion of success?

Allow me to tell you that my friends and I, in our efforts to influence French public opinion, have not only striven to ward off the immediate dangers of war, we have attacked with all our force the permanent causes of war; we have attacked the spirit of war, by which I mean those age-old conceptions of policy, morality and collective honour which were the justification of war. We have, to a great extent, succeeded. But, even among the most resolutely pacific peoples, warlike traditions and virtues lie not very far below the surface. It would not need a very severe test to bring them to the surface. One is entitled to speak like this when one has devoted one's life to the cause of peace.

There is the danger; pre-war Europe reconstituted not only materially but morally; faith in peace shaken, shattered by too oft-repeated shocks; and, in the end, catastrophe preferred to the anguish of uncertainty. Against this danger, France intends firmly and pertinaciously to block the path, and her action will therefore tend more firmly and pertinaciously than ever towards the international organisation of which you are the representatives.

The League has undoubtedly suffered a setback, and none of us should pass it over in silence. Undoubtedly, the League has shown itself powerless

to prevent an act of aggression and to stop a war. But the cause of the setback does not lie in the Covenant; it lies in the tardy, uncertain and confused application of the Covenant.

The conclusion to be drawn from this setback is not that the obligations entailed by the Covenant should be relaxed, but rather that they should be strengthened. The French delegation could not therefore accept any plan for reform which would make of the League a merely academic consulting body. It is ready to propose or to accept any method of interpretation and adaptation which would increase the practical effectiveness of the Covenant, and would make its provisions more exactly and immediately applicable.

France boldly declares, and will attest by her acts, her loyalty to international law. She will cast far from her mind at this hour all thought of disappointment or discouragement. She gives her word; she will keep it. Her wish is to make the idea of collective security a reality. She will contribute by all the means in her power to revive within the League and around it that outburst of enthusiasm and faith which threw a lustre on certain great days: in 1924, at the time of the Protocol; in 1932, when the Disarmament Conference opened; and again last autumn, when the associated States proclaimed their unanimlous resolve. Looking beyond the present moment, we turn our thoughts to those memories, from which we may draw fresh encouragement, and which offer us experience for our guidance. We shall spare no pains to revive them. We shall spare no pains to restore and strengthen unceasingly the confidence between the Powers that are animated by the same desire, and we are glad to find from our recent conversations that our views are in exact agreement with those of most of the Powers represented here, to whom we are bound by undertakings to provide guarantees or mutual assistance.

The very instinct of self-preservation must thus lead the peaceful Powers to draw closely together and to make the obligations which bind them more definite and certain. The same instinct impels them to-day to carry on their armaments with feverish haste. In this matter, all Governments use the same language: "If I arm", they say, "it is in order to place greater strength in the service of the undertakings I have contracted, and consequently in the service of peace; it is in order, when the time comes, to throw a heavier weight into the balance and to bring it down on the side of right." It is natural that this should be so at this particular moment in history, and this reflex was almost inevitable.

Nevertheless, on this point also, I would like to make a frank statement of our views. Collective security, based on the coalition of superior forces opposing any aggression or any possible system of aggression — that is to say, on the continued growth of armaments — cannot be a durable and stable instrument of peace.

Soon the world would be crushed under the simultaneous weight of two wars — the war of which we still feel the effects and the war in preparation. Soon the weight of armaments would drag the world towards war by a kind of law of gravity.

I would like to add one reflection which is, in my opinion, equally serious, and draw from the Ethiopian drama one lesson which we cannot ignore, any more than the rest. Collective security, as it will be organised in an armed and super-armed Europe, will face each State, and in particular each nation, with a too harsh alternative. International obligations are defied or set at nought if the Powers which have signed them are not determined to go on to the end. I agree. But to go on to the end means to accept the risk of going as far as war. It is therefore necessary to accept the possibility of war in order to save peace. The Covenant imposes this alternative on all Powers without distinction. Our plans for adaptation restrict it to the Powers which are nearest, geographically or politically, to the Power that is attacked; but, in a more or less general way, the possibility exists and the danger remains.

I say unhesitatingly that, in the present state of the world, this risk must be run with a full knowledge of the facts and with full courage. I agree, also without hesitation, that the more boldly the risk is run the smaller it will be. Nevertheless, the only solution that can satisfy the conscience of the peoples is one which would divest collective security of any virtual possibility of war that it may still conceal.

Collective security must be no more than an instrument of peace, and its operation should normally involve no danger of war; this means that collective security, to be complete, must be combined with general disarmament.

It may seem almost ridiculous to revive the idea of disarmament in the Europe of to-day, resounding as it does with the din of arms. Yet it is quite certain that, without the progressive reduction of the military machine, without a race for disarmament, it is impossible to conceive the full effectiveness of arbitral awards, and the exemplary power of purely peaceful sanctions.

Undoubtedly, collective security is the condition of disarmament, since no State would agree to disarm unless mutual assistance offered it a degree of certainty; but the converse is equally true. Disarmament is the condition of full collective security, for States must be substantially disarmed if arbitral awards are to be imposed and pacific sanctions are to exert their constraining power.

Below a certain degree of immediate offensive power, the international community need no longer fear rebellion. Disarmament is the pledge of arbitration and the sanction of sanctions.

This, then, is the direction in which France will endeavour to lead international action, without shrinking before any initiative, and this is the spirit in which she is determined to consider the disputes at present submitted to this Assembly.

Two breaches of international law have been committed: the breach of the Covenant and the breach of a solemn Treaty. Both have resulted in a *de facto* situation that is contrary to law. The Rhineland question has not been settled with the passage of time. The Ethiopian question may be settled in Africa, but it is not settled at Geneva.

France will endeavour to reconcile her loyalty to law and her will for peace. She does not wish to pronounce, upon acts that are contrary to law, any absolution that would amount to encouragement. She does not wish to call for war to provide reparation for right. But, above all, she is thinking of the Europe of to-morrow, and her ambition, her bold ambition, is to draw from the present disputes a contribution to real peace, organised peace, indivisible peace, disarmed peace. She sees only one sure method of wiping out the past, and that is to create a new future.

The essential question which the League of Nations must put to the Powers by whom breaches have been committed is whether they are determined or not to prepare for that future. Are they agreed that, in the history of Europe, warned and enlightened as it has been by such cruel lessons, a new phase should be opened up? Do they accept joint work for disarmed peace in a League of Nations tried and regenerated? What are their intentions, their offers, their guarantees? According to those intentions, those offers, those guarantees, the difficulties of to-day may be reduced and may finally disappear.

We are glad to note that the memorandum communicated to the Assembly by the Italian Government contains a contribution in this sense, and we hope that the German reply to the British

questionnaire may in turn serve as a starting-point for a political reconstruction of Europe.

Such is the appeal that France makes to those present here, and such is her message to those who are absent. Some of you may perhaps think that, by holding up beside the present world this picture of the possible world, we are pushing our idealism into the realm of fancy. But do not forget that upon this fancy depends universal life, and that it alone can rekindle enthusiasm in the minds and hearts of hundred of millions of living beings. Do not forget that, without this fancy, peace will always remain hazardous and threatened. Do not forget, too, that in such a grave hour the good faith of each one must be proved. Offers of peace, assurances of peace and offers of disarmament have come from all quarters. They must be put to the test.

I am loath to believe that, faced by a common will and a common effort, there is a single Power that can reply : I refuse to take part, and by my refusal I compel all the other nations in the world to remain armed, to arm more heavily every day, and to allow themselves to be pushed against their will down the slope that leads to war.

I conclude my remarks, therefore, not on a note of alarm, but with a declaration of hope and confidence — I would even say with an act of faith.

In this hall there are delegations. Behind each delegation there is a Government. Behind each Government there is a people, a people composed of men and women who are much alike, moved by the same feelings and the same needs. I know what they are asking you. They are asking you to put an end to what Hugo, on the morrow of the Treaty of Frankfort, called the great insomnia of the world. Men want to recapture sleep ; they want to rest their heads quietly upon the pillow after the hard day's toil. They place their hope in you. May the League of Nations feel that it is surrounded by this unanimous hope ; all that you need, gentlemen, in order not to disappoint it, is to realise the strength with which it endows you.

The President :

Translation : M. Galileo Solís, first delegate of Panama, will address the Assembly.

M. Solís (Panama) : At its meeting last October, this same Assembly decided energetically to apply Article 16 of the Covenant, thus subjecting the League of Nations to the severest test of its efficiency that that body has undergone in its sixteen years' existence.

The results achieved have not answered to any of the lofty considerations which led us, for altruistic reasons, to designate Italy as an aggressor and to set in motion against her the remedies which, with excessive optimism, had been laid down in the text of the Covenant as a guarantee of the existence and safety of all nations.

We are once more here to consider afresh the most complicated situation which has ever been dealt with by the League Assembly, to recognise the errors of doctrine or practice which have led to this lamentable situation, and, lastly, to learn the lessons of this hard experience and discover the rules by which the League of Nations must be guided in order to ensure the slow, vacillating and painful, but persistent, advance of the world towards a better civilisation.

On this occasion, when a total revision of this institution is necessary in order to lay down a new milestone in the development of international law, Panama has not only the right to make herself heard on an equal footing with any other nation, but has also the historic duty to do so owing to circumstances which are peculiar to her.

It was in America that the idea of an association of nations took practical shape for the first time, and it was in America that, for the first time, the plenipotentiary delegates of different States met together for the purpose of constituting an international association based on law and designed to guarantee the rule of justice in their mutual relations. This congress, which was summoned by the Liberator, Simon Bolivar, was held in the City of Panama in June and July 1836, or exactly one hundred years ago. Thus, Panama is the depositary of Bolivar's ideal of the association of international co-operation on a legal basis.

Furthermore, the Republic of Panama, situated at the most central point of the globe, the meeting-place of every current and route and every race, forced by these circumstances to defend persistently and arduously the character of its international personality, finds herself obliged to keep watch in order that relations between nations should always be governed by increasingly definitive and effective juridical principles, so that, in the course of years, the meeting and clash of interests, viewed from the exceptional geographical position of her territory, may ensure for all the nations of the world an equal enjoyment of the benefits of every kind which humanity is entitled to expect from universal interchanges through the Isthmus of Panama.

The idea of a universal organisation of nations for the common welfare of all and for the benefit of humanity as a whole is an idea which cannot die as long as man is amenable to moral improvement ; and I believe that it is not the idea of a legal association of nations which has broken down, but the ambition or desire to obtain from the present League of Nations what a league of nations cannot give in the present state of humanity and of Western civilisation.

In the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, Italy would not lower her pretensions in order to seek a solution within the rigid limits of the Covenant, and the League of Nations would not moderate the strictness of its principles so as to provide, within a certain latitude, a solution for the demographic and economic expansion claimed by Italy as an essential condition of her very existence. As the parties would not meet on the only common ground on which an agreement was possible, no solution was conceivable and, breaking the restraints of pacifism and humanity, war claimed its immemorial privilege of imposing the solution of the strongest.

The League of Nations, in tenaciously pitting its moral authority against the mobilised force of a powerful nation in a world not prepared for such an emergency, has imperilled its own prestige and even its own existence, and we find it to-day in a sorry plight, asking us for the help and co-operation necessary to rebuild its shaken structure. And within its frame we have, on the one hand, Italy, the mother of Latin civilisation, a nation without whose help no universal equilibrium is possible, but whose maximum pretensions are difficult to reconcile with any sense of equity ; and, on the other hand, Ethiopia, a nation which is on the point of paying with its life for the doctrinaire intransigence of the League of Nations and whose disappearance as a sovereign State this League of Nations cannot recognise without disowning its own fundamental principles.

This is the complex situation now before us.

International public law, as a body of rules for compulsory observance by States, is as yet in its infancy, and to endeavour forthwith to apply final and definitive rules which no State would have the least chance to violate is to endeavour to reach a goal without travelling along the path that leads to it.

The strict rules of law, applied in an environment which does not possess the necessary maturity to understand them and to recognise their expediency or necessity, cannot but be ineffective because their violation is sooner or later inevitable.

In the times we live in, international conflicts can only be solved if each one is considered separately, and if solutions are sought on the basis of their peculiar circumstances. To endeavour to universalise the solution of a local conflict is, on the one hand, to give to such a conflict a scope which it does not possess, and, on the other hand, to apply to it remedies which are not specific and which cannot therefore be effective. Any endeavour to make a universal problem of each regional conflict cannot but bring chaos into relations between States. This is one of the great defects of the Covenant because, instead of simplifying problems in order to seek the plainest solutions, it has sought for each local and simple problem a worldwide complication.

Let us leave the League of Nations on the lofty plane where it can engage in the study, analysis and enunciation of the universally accepted principles of law; in the study, analysis and enunciation of the rules and principles which will ensure an improvement of life in all its manifestations; in the propanganda and educational activity necessary to bring about a higher degree of moral and ethical sensitiveness in world opinion; in the work of *rapprochement* between nations in order to create closer ties and greater harmony in their cultural, economic and political relations.

The League of Nations can only subsist as long as it allows, within an ample sphere, the free play of regional interests in order that they may be grouped, harmonised, organised and regulated according to the needs and characteristics of the group of nations which have common interests and common problems, and according to the degree of moral development which such nations have already attained and to the degree in which, in consequence, they are ready to give preference to right and justice over interests and selfish considerations.

The existing structure of the League of Nations does not lend itself to the attainment of any satisfactory solution of the present situation, and possibily it would be advisable to summon a new international conference, inviting the co-operation of all the nations of the world which are at present absent from Geneva, in the hope that this institution may arise rejuvenated from such a conference or that an entirely new League of Nations may emerge within which we may seek solutions for all the conflicts and problems in suspense that threaten the peace of the world, on the basis of principles inspired by law and justice but with a greater sense of practical realities, principles which, while inspired by lofty and sublime ideals, still also reckon with existing realities and with the present vices, defects and shortcomings of humanity.

There is a strong current of public opinion in Latin America towards the joint withdrawal of the nations of that continent from the League because it is a failure, because they have nothing to hope from it, and because the American continent can continue to develop its public law for itself and be self-sufficient as regards its political necessities.

The Latin-American nations come here to Geneva to serve the cause of right, justice and peace, without material interests to defend, without cards to conceal; on the contrary, they come with open hearts, to offer sound and honest co-operation for the common welfare, on the basis of certain well-known American principles of international law which form the basis of their international policy, principles which, I am sure, no Latin-American country intends to abandon.

As far as it may be compatible with American dignity, and as far as our presence in Geneva does not appear in sharp conflict with those American principles of international law, I believe that we should remain here to give an eloquent testimony to our faithful adherence to the great cause of universal peace, of our unshakeable faith in the juridical organisation of nations, and of our sincere conviction that America's contribution is absolutely essential for the solution of the evils by which humanity is afflicted. Our presence here does not prevent us in any way from acting separately in the American continent in the work of promoting the cause of international law and from doing there, on our account, what cannot be done at Geneva, thus securing incalculable benefits for ourselves, while at the same time giving a fruitful example to the rest of the world.

Many years will have elapsed before the world can attain the realisation of universal aspirations towards an effective international organisation for peace; nevertheless, in undertaking this task, we must realise that international law cannot progress more rapidly along the road to improvement than humanity itself.

TWENTIETH PLENARY MEETING

Wednesday, July 1st, 1936, at 4 p.m.

CONTENTS.

President: M. VAN ZEELAND.

93. — SITUATION ARISING OUT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY: GENERAL DISCUSSION (continuation).

The President:

Translation: The agenda consists of the continuation of the discussion of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute.

Mr. te Water, first delegate of the Union of South Africa, will address the Assembly.

M. te Water (Union of South Africa). — Since the foundation of the League of Nations, the Union of South Africa conscientiously, and believing herself bound in honour by her obligations as a Member State of this association, has shared, never lightly or irresponsibly, in its deliberations and in its decisions.

Separated by the width of a continent and of an ocean from these scenes, directly disinterested in the complexities of European affairs, the participation of my country in the councils of the League has been primarily based upon a real acceptance, upon a genuine acknowledgment of the profound

significance to the world of the conception of universal peace, of which this institution has been the living embodiment.

Indeed, not inappropriately at this fateful moment in the life of the League, I may be permitted to recall to you the distinguished services rendered by an eminent South African statesman in the shaping of the Covenant of the League, and in whose thoughts the association of the nations of the world was to constitute " a great organ of the ordinary peaceful life of civilisation, to be part and parcel of the common international life of States, an ever visible, living, working organ of the polity of civilisation ".

Speaking personally, I have been most fortunately privileged over a period now of many years to sit in these council chambers and to share in the disappointments and sometimes in the triumphs of the League. Always I am able to bear witness that its failures have been borne with courage and with resignation and its successes with sobriety. But, in sharing your deliberations, particularly at this moment, I would ask the Assembly to believe me when I say this : My country has at all times been seized, and is seized to-day, of a full realisation that her voice is the voice of one of the least of the nations here, whose burden of responsibility for the heavy decisions which they are called upon to make in this place, must by that token always be a lesser burden than is carried by the greater Powers, but not for that reason a voice that should not be raised or heard.

There must inevitably come a time in the affairs of nations when resignation in the face of calamity is not enough. Events so inexorably shape themselves that, to control them, decision must be supported by courage, and action by determination and sacrifice.

It was in this spirit that the fifty nations met in these halls to avert the threat of war to one of the weakest of the League's Members. It was that spirit which led the distinguished representative of the United Kingdom to declare, in a speech made memorable by its lofty and courageous sentiment,[1] " that the aspiration to establish the rule of law appealed with growing force to the strain of idealism which had its place in the national character of his countrymen and had become a part of their national conscience ".

I must be forgiven if I recall again at this melancholy moment those noble protestations by the British Foreign Secretary, which seemed to us all at that time, and, indeed, so seemed to the whole world, the very essence of the spirit of a new age. He said on that occasion :[1] " My country stands, in conformity with its precise and explicit obligations, for the collective maintenance of the Covenant in its entirety, and particularly for steady and collective resistance to all acts of unprovoked aggression. The attitude of the British nation has clearly demonstrated the fact that this is no variable and unreliable sentiment, but a principle of international conduct to which they and their Government hold with firm, enduring and universal persistence."

Let us bear witness to a great lead given in this place at a most critical moment in the affairs of the nations.

My own country's immediate response — for how could it have been otherwise ? — was to hear with the most lively satisfaction the declaration of the distinguished representative of that great country with which the Union of South Africa stands in such close association. I recollect, too, during that Assembly, with what keen anticipation the delegations looked forward to and heard the powerful voice of France, which at that time we had justly come to regard as the very cornerstone of the collective system, raised in support of the British attitude towards the Covenant.

Is it wrong to recall these lofty protestations at this moment ? Is it to be presumed that the phrases of statesmen are meaningless when tested by time and by trial ? Surely, on the contrary, the distinguished Prime Minister of France, who so ably led his delegation last September, must remember the deep feelings which must have inspired him to declare[1] " that the spirit of solidarity in the matter of responsibilities of all kinds, in all circumstances, and at all times and places, which is implied for the future by such a statement marks an epoch in the history of the League ".

Surely his distinguished successor, to whom I listened with the closest attention and interest to-day, must approve the proud words of his countryman used on that day : " The Covenant is our international law. How could we allow such a law to be weakened ? "

Yet to-day we know that the Covenant is falling to pieces in our hands. Fifty nations, led by three of the most powerful nations in the world, are about to declare their powerlessness to protect the weakest in their midst from destruction.

The authority of the League of Nations is about to come to nought.

My Government, whom I have the honour to represent, desires me to say here that this renunciation by the most powerful Members of the League of the collective decision most solemnly taken by us all, under the obligation by which we declared ourselves bound, can alone be interpreted as surrender by them of the authority of the League — a surrender of the high trust and ideals of world peace entrusted to each member nation of this institution. I am to declare that this surrender, if it is agreed upon by the nations, cannot be interpreted as impotence to safeguard that trust, but as a simple denial of their ability to bear the sacrifices necessary for the fulfilment of their obligations.

The Union of South Africa cannot, without protest, subscribe to a declaration to the world which, in their profound belief, will shatter for generations all international confidence and all hope of realising world peace. For it is idle to suppose that, by a process of reconstruction thereafter, the League can survive as an instrument of world influence and peace.

This action of the great Powers — what will it achieve ? Where will it lead us now ? Before, there was order here. The prestige of the League reborn, the hope of the world running high — this was the picture then. We had succeeded in reducing the disunity of the nations to a single variable — the sanction front of fifty nations ; a compression of the disorder of the world into a single manageable group — a vast mass movement ; an instinctive drawing together of the nations of the League. Those who stood outside watched silently and were moving nearer in sympathy.

But now ? The hand is being thrown in. Order is losing to chaos : the spectacle of power has hypnotised the world.

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[1] *See Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, pages 44 and 46.

[1] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, page 65.

The nations are arming feverishly — all of us. What will be the end ? Where are the great Powers leading us, who have not the faith to persevere ?

Are the people of our countries helpless, inarticulate, like sheep facing the terror, to be fed to these engines of destruction which the nations are so proudly building ?

If not, for what purpose then are we pouring out treasure and exhausting the resources of science in the vastest mass production of armaments ever known to history ?

To defend ourselves ?

But will the building of armaments prevent the holocaust, while the ambition and greed of nations govern their policies ?

It is not for this that the nations covenanted, by a collective pledge of mutual assistance, to maintain their security against ambition and aggression.

And if there is to be no loyalty to that pledge, if fear, like a wedge, is to be driven into the ranks of the covenanters, or if the nations are to be cut into separate groups, cowering into their separate pens, what must be their inevitable fate, what black despair must settle upon the face of Europe !

It is being widely questioned : What can sanctions achieve now ? Have they not failed in their object which, it is claimed, was the preservation of Ethiopian sovereignty ? To continue sanctions in the face of the destruction of that sovereignty by Italy, would not that in effect be an illegal attempt by the League of Nations to punish the successful aggressor ?

Of those who question thus, my Government would ask in turn : Can it be said, can it be justly claimed, that the triumph of the organised might of Italy over the undisciplined and ill-equipped black armies of Ethiopia was not foreseeable ? Did the fifty nations, when they solemnly bound themselves to collective action under the Covenant of the League, make the successful resistance of Ethiopia a condition precedent to the fulfilment of their collective obligation ?

These questions my Government has not evaded or found difficult of reply.

Nor does the Union of South Africa look upon the restraining action of sanctions upon Italy as the only justification of their retention. Of far greater importance than their restraining effect upon Italy is the proof of loyalty to the League and the determination to respect its obligations, which is borne witness to by their retention, in order to vindicate the wrongs inflicted upon a fellow-Member. Was not this reciprocal vindication of violated rights by the combined efforts of the League of Nations against an aggressor the very reason why we all became Members of the League ?

Surely these considerations which I have just examined, and their implications, must have been, and, indeed, were, weighed by us all when we acknowledged our obligations under the Covenant and gave judgment against Italy.

My Government has again examined its own conduct in this matter scrupulously and conscientiously. It can find no new factor in the present situation which did not in fact, or potentially, exist when it announced its decision from this place to honour its obligations and to participate in collective action against the aggressor nation. On the contrary, the destruction of Ethiopian sovereignty by Italy and the annexation of the territory of a country which at no time menaced the safety of Italy creates now the exact state of affairs which this League was designed to avoid, and which we are all still pledged to prevent by every agreed means in our power, and to refuse to acknowledge.

If the League were to refuse that vindication to any one of its Members, it would disclose itself a mere pretender ; should Italy be held to have succeeded in retaining her spoils, not in spite of the authority of the League, but because of the abdication of that authority, what else, then, can this League mean ?

If the great Powers, in whose hands in the last resort lies the safety of nations, accepting success as the yardstick by which the acts of the Covenant-breakers are to be measured, can rebuild on the broken pledge, if these are policies of realism, let them be demonstrated, so that we may know whether we may continue to collaborate with them in the maintenance and organisation of peace.

And so I beg to announce the decision of my Government that it is still prepared to maintain the collective action legitimately agreed upon by the resolution of this Assembly of the League of Nations on October 10th, 1935.[1]

We offer this course, which, in our deep conviction, will alone maintain the League of Nations as an instrument of security for its Members. We commend it to this Assembly even at this eleventh hour as the only way which will ensure salvation to the nations.

The President :

Translation : The Honourable Vincent Massey, delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

The Hon. Vincent Massey (Canada). — It falls upon me to make known here the decision of Canada at this juncture.

In October last, in taking its decision then to co-operate with many other Members of the League in the execution of the Co-ordination Committee's proposals, the Canadian Government, by means of a public declaration made at the time, expressed the continued and firm adherence of the people of Canada to the fundamental aims and ideals of the League of Nations and its own view of the League as an indispensable instrument for organising and strengthening the forces of peace and goodwill in the world.

Recognising that, from the beginning, there had existed among League Members some differences of opinion as to the means for securing these aims, it recalled that successive Canadian Governments, without any appreciable public dissent, had opposed the conception that the League could usefully rely upon force for the maintenance of peace, with the emphasis upon punishment rather than upon prevention ; and it recorded the view that this new association of nations should rather be regarded as an instrument for peaceful action, one that would search the causes of disputes and seek to remedy grievances.

As regards the giving of general commitments in advance to apply either economic or military sanctions, it noted the increased difficulties arising from the absence of certain great Powers from the League, the failure of the repeated efforts towards the regime of disarmament contemplated by the Covenant, and the unwillingness of League Members to enforce sanctions in the case of countries distant from the European scene.

In this particular instance, however, when it appeared that an earnest and widely supported effort was being made to test the feasibility of preventing, or at least terminating, war by the use of

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[1] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, pages 113 and 114.

economic sanctions, the Canadian Government declared its readiness to co-operate fully in the endeavour. At the same time, it was pointed out that Canada's course in this instance could not be regarded as necessarily establishing a precedent. It was also made clear that the Government did not recognise any commitment binding Canada to adopt military sanctions and that no such commitment could be made without the prior approval of the Canadian Parliament.

In the months that have followed the agreed date of enforcement, November 18th last, Canada has carried out strictly and effectively all the sanctions proposed by the Co-ordination Committee.

These sanctions having proved inadequate to the end in view, each Member of the League has recently been faced with the question of what to do about them now. The Canadian Government, having for some time carefully considered the position it must take, made its views known in Parliament a fortnight ago. In its view, continuance of the ineffective economic pressure would not secure the original objective and would be worse than useless. It has been urged that the Members of the League should definitely undertake to resort to whatever compulsion, including war, might be necessary to secure the objective. But it seems clear that there is no appreciable number of effective Members who would be prepared to embark upon such a course, while, even if they did, there is no certainty that the objective would not soon be lost sight of in the very serious disturbances that might arise.

Holding this estimate of the position, the Canadian Government declared that it could not feel itself warranted either in committing Canada to such a course or in urging those Members of the League upon whom the main burden and risk would fall to undertake it if they were not themselves convinced of its necessity. Consequently, while deeply regretting the failure of the joint attempt to protect a weak fellow-Member of the League, there appeared to the Canadian Government, as was announced in Parliament two weeks ago, to be no practical alternative for Canada but to take the view that the continuance of sanctions now serves no useful purpose, and the Canadian delegation has been instructed to present this view to the Assembly.

The President:

Translation: The Right Hon. Anthony Eden, first delegate of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, will address the Assembly.

The Right Hon. Anthony Eden (United Kingdom). — Yesterday, we all listened to an appeal by the Emperor of Ethiopia, delivered with a dignity which must have evoked the sympathy of each one of us. Not one of us here present can contemplate, with any measure of satisfaction, the circumstances in which this Assembly meets on this occasion. It is an occasion painful for us all.

In my belief, it is the more necessary, therefore, in the interests of every Member of the League, and of the League itself as an organisation, that the facts should be squarely faced.

What are they? So far as the application of sanctions in the Italo-Ethiopian dispute is concerned, the Members of the League have, together and in common, applied certain economic and financial measures which they were in a position to impose and which they thought could be made effective by their own action alone — yet we are all conscious to-day that these measures have failed to fulfil the purpose for which they were imposed. It is not that the measures in themselves have been without effect, but that the conditions in which they were expected to operate have not been realised. The course of military events and the local situation in Ethiopia have brought us to a point at which the sanctions at present in force are incapable of reversing the order of events in that country. That fact is, unhappily, fundamental.

Let me make quite clear, then, the position of the Government I have the honour to represent. Had His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom any reason to believe that the maintenance of existing sanctions, or even the addition to them of other economic measures, would re-establish the position in Ethiopia, then it would be prepared, for its part, to advocate such a policy and, if other Members of the League agreed, to join in its application. In view of the facts of the present situation in Ethiopia, His Majesty's Government finds it impossible to entertain any such belief. In our view it is only military action — *military* action — that could now produce this result. I cannot believe that, in present world conditions, such military action could be considered a possibility.

This is the situation with which we are confronted. The realities have to be recognised. In the light of them, I can only repeat, and repeat with infinite regret, the opinion that I have already expressed on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom — that, in existing conditions, the continuation of the sanctions at present in force can serve no useful purpose. At the same time, it is the view of His Majesty's Government that this Assembly should not in any way recognise Italy's conquest over Ethiopia. Moreover, if the harsh realities of the situation must determine our attitude towards the maintenance of the measures we have adopted they cannot, in our judgment, involve any modification of the view of Italy's action expressed by fifty Members of the League last autumn.

There is one matter of particular concern to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to which I may perhaps be allowed at this point to refer. I may recall to the Assembly that, on January 22nd last, His Majesty's Government presented to the Co-ordination Committee a memorandum[1] regarding the results of the exchanges of views which had taken place between us and certain other Governments in connection with the application of Article 16 of the Covenant. In paragraph 10 of that memorandum it is stated that His Majesty's Government had given reciprocal assurances to certain Governments to the effect that they intended faithfully to apply all the sanctions devolving upon them under the Covenant in consequence of the measures taken in application of Article 16.

Should it be decided that the existing sanctions should no longer be continued, it is the view of His Majesty's Government that these assurances it has given should not end with the discontinuance of the sanctions, but should continue to cover the temporary period of uncertainty which might ensue. His Majesty's Government declares, accordingly, that it is prepared to stand by these assurances in the event of a situation arising which would have brought them into force were action under Article 16 still continuing.

It will be appreciated that this declaration is made with the object of removing certain preoccupations which may exist in the present transitional period and it is intended to operate only so long as, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, it remains appropriate to the existing circumstances.

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[1] See document Co-ordination Committee 108.

That is all I have to say for the moment about the immediate subject before us. There remains, however, the all-important subject of the League's future, to which speaker after speaker has referred. Are we to say, because we have failed on this occasion to make the rule of law prevail over the rule of force, that we are therefore finally to abandon this object? Certainly not. His Majesty's Government cannot accept such a view. How many efforts have been needed in history to realise objectives of far less significance to the ultimate destiny of the human race? With such an objective as this before us our endeavour must be centred upon the task of reconstruction.

I heard with the greatest interest, as I am sure we all did, those passages in the speech of the representative of France in which he spoke of the determination of his Government and of his country to seek to rebuild the authority of the League. In that all-important task I can assure him at once of the fullest collaboration of His Majesty's Government.

It is, however, clear that the lessons of the last few months must be embodied in our practice. Some people may say: It is the men and not the machinery that have failed. No doubt there is force in that contention, but we have to probe a little deeper than that. What were the reasons for the failure? Let us consider this matter for the moment, for it is of vital importance to the future of the League.

Was failure due to the fact that there are certain risks which nations are not prepared to run, save where their own interests are more directly at stake than they were in this case? Clearly, the ideal system of collective security is one in which all nations are prepared to go to all lengths — military lengths — to deal with any aggressor. That is the ideal; but, if such an ideal cannot be at present attained — and I agree with the Prime Minister of France that a heavily armed world greatly increases the difficulty of its attainment, and let us not forget how much the difficulty of our task has been increased thereby in the last few months — if such an ideal cannot be attained at present, it is surely our duty to amend, not necessarily our rule of law, but the methods by which it is to be enforced, so that these may correspond to the action which nations are in fact ready and willing to take.

There is another consideration which it is idle to ignore. This dispute was not an isolated event in a world which had no other cause for anxiety. We, as Members of a League which is not universal, are inevitably conscious, in more or less degree, of the existence of other anxieties.

As regards the immediate future of the Assembly's work, His Majesty's Government is ready to join at any time in any work which this Assembly, or any other organisation of the League, decides should be undertaken.

It may be that some preliminary exchanges of views on the subject of the League's future can usefully take place during the present session, but it is essential, in our view, that all countries should have sufficient time and opportunity to consider in detail the problem that confronts them. There must, however, be no avoidable delay, and I suggest therefore that the time to get to grips with this problem — and to get to grips with the determination to resolve it — should be at the Assembly in September.

If I have tried to indicate some of the lessons of recent months, it is not because I believe that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom or the League of Nations need proffer any apology for having made an attempt which has no parallel in history. However deeply, however sincerely, we may deplore its outcome, we cannot regret, nor, I think, will history regret, that the attempt was made.

It has been my privilege during the past few days as President of the Council to come into contact with a number of the delegations represented here to-day. I have been struck, and in this I share the opinion expressed by the President of the Assembly yesterday, by the unanimity of view which I believe exists amongst us. This unanimity applies to many of the problems that now confront us, but more especially is it expressed in a determination that the League must persist in its endeavours to fulfil its mission. So far as His Majesty's Government is concerned, our policy has been based on the principles for which the League stands. We retain our faith in these principles.

The President:

Translation: M. Litvinoff, first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, will address the Assembly.

M. Litvinoff (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics). — We have met here to complete a page in the history of the League of Nations, a page in the history of international life which it will be impossible for us to read without a feeling of bitterness. We have to liquidate a course of action which was begun in fulfilment of our obligations as Members of the League to guarantee the independence of one of our fellow-Members, but which was not carried to its conclusion. Each of us must feel his measure of responsibility and of blame, which is not identical for all, and which depends, not only on what each of us did in fact, but also on the measure of our readiness to support every common action required by the circumstances.

In saying this, I have to declare that the Government I represent here, from the very beginning of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, took up a perfectly clear and firm position, arising by no means from its own interests or its relations with the belligerents, but solely from its conception of the principle of collective security, of international solidarity, of the Covenant of the League, and of the obligations imposed upon it by that Covenant.

The peoples of the Soviet Union cherish nothing but the greatest respect and sympathy for the Italian people. They are interested in the uninterrupted development and consolidation of their existing political, economic and cultural relations with Italy. Nevertheless, the Soviet Government expressed its readiness to take part in general international action against Italy in defence of a country with which the Soviet Union had not even any relations whatever, either *de jure* or *de facto*. The Soviet Government was obliged in this case to say to itself: "Plato is my friend, but international solidarity, the principle of collective security, on which the peace of the world to-day is founded, loyalty to international undertakings, must for the time being drown the voice of friendship". Since that time, at every stage of discussion of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, my Government has declared that it would participate in any action provided for under the Covenant and adopted and executed jointly by other Members of the League. All the decisions of the Co-ordination Committee were carried out by my Government without exception and with complete loyalty.

However, sooner than might have been expected, the moment came when the necessity for reconsidering the measures adopted at Geneva, from the

angle of their serving any useful purpose, became absolutely clear. That moment was when the resistance of the valiant Ethiopian troops was broken, when the Emperor and Government of Ethiopia left their territory, and when a considerable portion of their territory was occupied by the Italian army. It appeared then indubitable that, by economic sanctions alone, it would be impossible to drive the Italian army out of Ethiopia and restore the independence of that country, and that such an objective could only be attained by more serious sanctions, including those of a military nature.

Such measures could only be considered if one or several States could be found which, in virtue of their geographical position and special interests, would agree to bear the main brunt of a military encounter. Such States were not to be found among us; and, even if they had been found, the other States, before deciding on any particular degree of co-operation in serious measures, would require guarantees that similar co-operation could also be counted upon in other cases of opposing the aggressor. Such guarantees were all the more necessary because some actions and statements of one European State, whose aggressive intentions leave no room for doubt — indeed, are openly proclaimed by that State itself — indicated an accelerated rate of preparations for aggression in more than one direction. The attitude of some countries to these actions, and the lenient treatment accorded to their authors, shook the belief that those guarantees which I have just mentioned could be immediately secured. In view of these circumstances, I came to the conclusion, even during the May session of the Council of the League, that the further application of economic sanctions was useless, and that it was impossible to afford any practical aid to Ethiopia in this way. It seems that this conclusion was reached by nearly all Members of the League.

I speak of the necessity for every Member of the League now to realise its individual responsibility for the lack of success of the common action undertaken in defence of the independence of a fellow-Member of the League, because, both inside the League and outside it, there have been attempts to ascribe this lack of success to the League Covenant, to its defects and to the present composition of the League. From this are drawn far-reaching conclusions, which may lead to the result that, together with Ethiopian independence, the League itself may turn out to have been buried as well. Such attempts and conclusions must be decisively rejected.

We find ourselves face to face with the fact that the League of Nations has proved unable to secure for one of its Members the territorial integrity and political independence provided for by Article 10 of the Covenant, and to-day is able only to express to that Member its platonic sympathy. We cannot tranquilly and indifferently pass by this crying fact; we must analyse it, and draw from it all the lessons requisite to prevent similar cases for the future.

Some, however, are proposing too simple a remedy. They tell us: eliminate Article 10 altogether, free yourselves from obligations in respect of guaranteeing the integrity of the territory and the independence of League Members, and then it will never be possible to accuse the League of Nations of being bankrupt. They even consider it a mistake for the League to attempt to stop aggression and defend its Members. Only those can hold such views who deny the very principle of collective security, who deny the principal function of the League and the whole *raison d'être* of its creation and existence. It is therefore not worth while arguing with such people.

But those who recognise the principle of collective security, who continue to regard the League Covenant as an instrument of peace, might blame the Covenant only if they could show either that the Covenant does not provide sufficiently effective means in support of Article 10, or that, in this particular case, all such means were utilised to the full, yet failed to achieve their aim. But they will not be able to prove that.

I assert that Article 16 equipped the League of Nations with such powerful weapons that, in the event of their being fully applied, every aggression can be broken. Moreover, the very conviction that they may be applied may rob the aggressor of his zeal to put his criminal intentions into practice. The melancholy experience of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict does not contradict this assertion: on the contrary. In this particular case, whether because this was the first experiment in the application of collective measures; whether because some considered that this case has particular characteristics; whether because it coincided with the preparations elsewhere for aggression on a much larger scale, to which Europe had to devote special attention; whether for these or other reasons, it is a fact that, not only was the whole terrible mechanism of Article 16 not brought into play, but from the very outset there was a manifest striving to confine the action taken to the barest minimum. Even economic sanctions were limited in their scope and their function, and even in this limited scope sanctions were not applied by all Members of the League.

Four Members of the League, from the very beginning, refused to apply any sanctions whatsoever. One Member of the League bordering on Italy refused to apply the most effective sanction — namely, the prohibition of imports from Italy; while, of those countries which raised no objections in principle to sanctions, many did not in actual fact apply several of them, pleading constitutional difficulties, the necessity of "study", etc. Thus, even the embargo on arms was not applied by seven Members of the League, financial measures by eight countries, prohibition of exports to Italy by ten countries, and prohibition of imports from Italy by thirteen countries — *i.e.*, 25% of the total membership of the League. It may be said that the Latin-American countries, with a few exceptions, did not apply in practice the more effective sanctions at all. I am not in any way making this a reproach against anyone; I am simply illustrating the point I have been making. Furthermore, the proposal to deprive some non-members of the League of the possibility of counteracting sanctions, or to limit their opportunity of so doing — a proposal which could have been applied in practice — was not approved by the Co-ordination Committee.

Given all these restrictions, sanctions could have been effective only in the event of their more prolonged application side by side with the military resistance of Ethiopia herself. The latter, however, was broken down much sooner than our most authoritative sources of information anticipated.

In such circumstances, it may be said that Members of the League of Nations, for one reason or another, refrained from bringing Article 16 completely into play. But it does not follow from this that Article 16 itself is a failure.

Some are inclined to attribute the failure of League action to the absence from it of some countries, or its insufficiently universal character. We see, however, that not every Member of the League took part in sanctions. There is no reason to believe that sanctions would have been endorsed by those States which left the League, since they rejected the very foundations of the League, and particularly the presence of Articles 10 and 16 in

the Covenant. Their membership of the League would only have facilitated the still further disorganisation of our ranks, and would have acted rather as a demoralising factor than otherwise. On the other hand, we see from the example of the United States of America that the League of Nations may reckon on non-members of the League in applying Article 16, and reckon with them all the more, the more energetically it acts itself. Thus we see that it is not in the imperfections of the League Covenant that we must seek the causes of the failure to grant adequate aid to Ethiopia, nor yet in the lack of universality in the League.

We have heard other arguments in Geneva, too. Let the League Covenant be entirely unimpeachable (they say); let Members of the League and individual persons bear the blame; but does not this show disharmony between the Covenant and the state of mind of the people called upon to fulfil it, and does it not follow from this alone that it is necessary to adapt the Covenant to the existing state of mind, or, as they also put it, to "realities"?

But this argument, again, will not hold water. After all, people are different, and even in one and the same country not all statesmen think alike. To whose state of mind, then, should the Covenant be adapted?

Of those who take their stand on the consistent and collective defence of security, who see the highest interest of all nations in the maintenance of universal peace, who consider that, in the long run, this is required by the interests of every State, that it can be achieved only by sacrificing temporary interests to the community of nations, and who are ready even to place part of their own armed forces at the disposal of that community?

Or of those who, in principle, swear allegiance to collective security but, in practice, are ready to apply it only when it coincides with the interests of their own country?

Or, again, of those who reject the very principle of collective security, replace international solidarity with the watchword "*Sauve qui peut*", preach the localisation of war and proclaim war itself to be the highest manifestation of the human spirit?

I fear that it is precisely this last category of persons whom people have in mind when they argue the necessity of adapting — or, as I would call it, degrading — the Covenant, since they reinforce their argument by asserting that in this way States which have left the League may be brought back. Thus we are asked at all costs to restore to the League States which left it only because they see obstacles to the fulfilment of their aggressive intentions in the Covenant, in Articles 10 and 16, in sanctions. We are told: "Throw Article 10 out of the Covenant, throw out Article 16, renounce sanctions, reject collective security, and then former Members of the League may return to our ranks, and the League will become universal". In other words: "Let us make the League safe for aggressors".

I say that we don't need such a League, we don't need a League which, with all its universality, is safe for aggressors, since such a League, from an instrument of peace, will turn into its very opposite. At best, by depriving the League of the functions of collective security, we should be turning it into a debating society or a charitable institution unworthy of the name of League of Nations, unworthy of the resources spent on it and not answering to those hopes and anticipations which are centred upon it.

For my part, I would propose that the Covenant be adapted, not to the frame of mind of any particular category of people, any particular statesmen or temporary rulers, but to the frame of mind of the millions of people in all countries and in all continents — those who are rightly called humanity and who demand the maintenance of peace at all costs and its defence by all means. It is not the Covenant which we have to degrade, but people whom we have to educate and bring up to the level of its lofty ideas. We must strive for the universality of the League, but not make it safe for the aggressor for the sake of that universality. On the contrary, every new Member, every old Member wishing to return to it, must read over its doorway, "All hope of aggression with impunity abandon, ye who enter here".

Let us be frank. The League of Nations is not going through its first reverse by any means. There have been not less, but even more striking cases of military attacks by one Member of the League on another when the League did not react at all and left the victim of aggression face to face with the aggressor in an unequal struggle. There was no question then of the Covenant being unsuitable, or of revising it. If there were no grounds for such actions then, there are still less to-day. For my part, I prefer the League which attempts to afford even some kind of aid to the victim of aggression, albeit unsuccessfully, to a League which shuts its eyes to aggression and calmly passes by.

I consider that the League made a tremendous step forward when the overwhelming majority of its Members, regardless of substantial material sacrifices, came to the assistance — even unsuccessfully — of a fellow-Member who was attacked, instead of busying itself solely with sending the dispute from committee to sub-committee, and despatching commissions of enquiry, as has happened in other cases. In other words, the frame of mind of the Member States has been improved considerably, and this justifies our hope that next time it will rise to the full level of League ideas, and the victim will be saved from the aggressor altogether.

I am far from idealising the Covenant. Its imperfections consist, not so much in its articles as in its omissions and obscurities. Therefore, one has to speak, not of reforming the Covenant, but of making it more precise and of reinforcing it. I consider it, for instance, a serious omission that a definition of aggression is absent from the Covenant, a fact which, in the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, enabled some Members of the League to refuse to participate in sanctions at the very beginning. There is no clarity on the question of what organ of the League registers the fact of aggression. There is no clarity as to the binding character of decisions taken by League organs in the matter of sanctions.

We must put an end to the situation in which references to sovereignty and constitutional formalities serve as obstacles to the execution of international undertakings. Article 16 must remain untouched. Economic sanctions must remain obligatory for all Members of the League. Only when sanctions are obligatory will be removed the apprehension and mistrust that if, in a certain case, certain States which have no direct interest in the conflict undergo considerable sacrifices, in another case other disinterested States will act with less idealism.

What is necessary is confidence that in all cases of aggression, independent of the degree of interest in the particular conflict, sanctions will be applied by all, and this can be attained only when sanctions are obligatory. I consider this circumstance to be the principal cause of the reverse sustained by the League in the Italo-Ethiopian conflict. It may be possible to conceive of individual cases

— very rare, it is true — when aggression may be stopped by economic sanctions alone; but I recognise that, in the majority of cases, economic sanctions must march parallel with military action. In the ideal League of Nations, military sanctions as well as economic sanctions ought to be binding on all.

But, if we cannot as yet rise to such heights of international solidarity, we ought to see that every continent, and Europe, if only as a beginning, should be covered with a network of regional pacts, in virtue of which individual groups of States would undertake to defend particular regions from the aggressor, and the fulfilment of these regional obligations would be considered equivalent to the fulfilment of obligations under the Covenant and would have the full support of all the Members of the League. These regional pacts should not replace, but should supplement the League Covenant, otherwise they would amount in effect to the pre-war military alliances.

These are the directions in which I conceive of the perfection and reinforcement of the League of Nations, and my Government is ready to co-operate to the utmost with other Members of the League in achieving this. I welcome the programme developed before us by the Prime Minister of France, with which my observations coincide to a very considerable extent.

As I have dwelt on all this in the interest of the reinforcement of peace, I cannot but refer to the measure which the Soviet Government has always considered, and continues to consider, the maximum guarantee of peace — namely, total disarmament. I want to believe that humanity will not have to go through yet another Armageddon before all the peoples come to this conclusion. But, so long as this radical measure has not been adopted, we have nothing left but to strengthen the League of Nations as an instrument of peace. You cannot strengthen the League of Nations if you do not stick to the principle of collective security, which is not at all a product of idealism but a practical measure for ensuring the security of all peoples; if you do not stick to the principle of the indivisibility of peace, and to the conviction that, at the present time, there is not a single State, large of small, which is not exposed to aggression, and that, if the next war spares one country or another, the latter will sooner or later arouse the appetites of the aggressor who has emerged victorious from the war.

The carrying into practice of these ideas will preserve us from new disappointments, similar to those which we are now undergoing, will infuse new life into the League, and will bring it abreast of the great tasks it has to perform. The League of Nations is now more than ever an international necessity: it must live, it must be strong, and stronger than ever.

TWENTY-FIRST PLENARY MEETING

Thursday, July 2nd, 1936, at 10 a.m.

CONTENTS:

President: M. VAN ZEELAND.

94. — COMMUNICATION TO THE ASSEMBLY OF A TELEGRAM FROM M. BENEŠ.

The President:

Translation: Before we proceed with the agenda, I have a communication to make. We have just received a telegram from M. Beneš. The original being in English, I will read it in that language:

"I was deeply touched by the kindly thought and wishes which the sixteenth Assembly of the League of Nations was good enough to address to my country and myself. Though separated from my dear colleagues of so many years, I feel united with them in the desire to see their deliberations succeed in spite of the difficulties of the present hour. I beg you, Mr. President, to offer to all the delegates the expression of my deep gratitude and of my best recollections. — Dr. Eduard BENEŠ.

95. — SITUATION ARISING OUT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY: GENERAL DISCUSSION (continuation).

The President:

Translation: We shall now continue, in accordance with our agenda, the discussion on the dispute between Ethiopia and Italy.

The Right Hon. S. M. Bruce, first delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

The Right Hon. S. M. Bruce (Australia). — The question of immediate importance which this Assembly of the League of Nations has to determine is whether the economic and financial sanctions, which fifty-two nations imposed upon Italy as the declared aggressor in the Italo-Ethiopian war, are to be lifted; whether they are to be maintained as they exist at present, or whether they are to be intensified. In arriving at that decision, and in expressing the views of our respective Governments, we shall of necessity have to consider questions involving the fundamental principles upon which the League of Nations was founded; the rights of small nations; vital issues affecting humanity and justice; the future relationship between nations and the maintenance of peace in Europe. All those questions must cause grave anxiety to us all and increase the overwhelming sense of responsibility which rests upon us individually and collectively.

In considering the immediate problem that confronts us, we must recognise that, upon the issues involved, there is a marked cleavage of

public opinion and that, among the ranks of those holding divergent views, are men and women of undoubted integrity and courage who are animated by an intense devotion to the principles of the League and to the cause of world peace.

Those who advocate the maintenance and even the intensification of sanctions are animated by a sincere belief that only by such action can the authority of the League be upheld and its prestige, as an instrument for the preservation of peace, be assured.

They feel that, should the League now declare its impotence, either to save Ethiopia or to punish the aggressor, a fatal blow will be struck at the ideal that the rule of law shall prevail in international affairs and that, by collective action, the weak shall be protected against the strong.

We cannot but have the most sincere sympathy with the objectives and aspirations of those who hold those views. I listened yesterday with the greatest attention to the speech delivered by the representative of South Africa, who, on behalf of his Government, urged a continuance of sanctions for the reasons I have indicated. While listening to him, I could not help feeling, however, that, were we to adopt the course which he advocated, we should not be contributing to the realisation of the objectives which his Government obviously has so sincerely at heart.

To have any hope of success, the existing sanctions would have to be maintained by most, if not all, of those nations that have imposed them during the last few months. Have we any justification for the belief that this will be the position ? Already certain nations have stated their intention of lifting existing sanctions, and are there not strong grounds for expecting a progressive disintegration of the sanctions front, even if, as a result of our meeting here, the solidarity of that front is, for the time being, strengthened ?

If existing sanctions, after being in operation approximately seven months, have not prevented the conquest of Ethiopia, how are those measures going to secure, within any reasonable time, the restoration of their territory to the Ethiopian peoples ? Again, unless it were proved that sanctions were effective, the economic sacrifices and hardships involved would undoubtedly react upon public opinion and, in many countries, there would arise insistent demands for their withdrawal. In order to avoid that situation arising, we should not only have to maintain the present sanctions, but should be compelled to impose new and more far-reaching sanctions.

If intensification of sanctions proved effective, the result might conceivably be armed reaction by Italy. In the face of that possibility, are States Members of the League prepared to cast aside their express or implied determination not to be involved in war ? Are they prepared to meet armed force with armed force ? In view of their past attitude and in the light of many recent declarations, it is difficult to believe that any nation would be prepared to reinforce economic and financial sanctions with military sanctions, should it become necessary to meet armed retaliatory action. That view is strengthened when one considers the acute anxiety which the present European situation is causing.

We are therefore face to face with the fact that, unless the nations are prepared to meet force with force, the achievement of our goal by the maintenance of existing, or the imposition of additional, sanctions is quite impossible. There remains, then, no alternative but to admit failure and to set ourselves resolutely to the task of considering whether there is not a more practical and effective basis upon which collective security and the rule of justice and law in international relations can be founded. Surely that course is the wisest in the interests of the League itself.

It would be disastrous for the League to continue sanctions now with an apparent show of strength and have to capitulate a few months hence owing to the impossibility of maintaining them. Is it not also fairer to Ethiopia that we should declare ourselves here and now ? Have we not misled that unfortunate nation long enough ? Only if we were certain that we could ensure the faithful observance of collective action, in the face of all eventualities, would we be justified in still encouraging Ethiopia to base its hopes upon our assistance.

In view of all the facts, His Majesty's Government in the Commonwealth of Australia is of the opinion that the moment has now been reached when, so far as the Italo-Ethiopian dispute is concerned, sanctions are of no further avail and should be lifted; and I am instructed so to inform this Assembly.

The Australian Government desires, however, to co-operate to the maximum with other States Members of the League in reviewing the system of collective security in the light of the experience of the past few months. My Government hopes that, when the Assembly meets in September next, it will be possible then to examine the situation fully with a view to arriving at a practical and effective basis for future international co-operation. I appreciate, of course, that, if this question, which is of transcending importance, is to be reviewed at the September meeting of the Assembly, it is undesirable that we should deal with it now. There are, however, some observations that can usefully be made in the light of experience gained as the result of the League's first attempt to apply the provisions of Article 16.

Recent events have created serious doubts in the minds of many nations as to the effectiveness, in practice, of the system for co-operative action envisaged by the Covenant. Two questions have to be considered in that connection. The first is whether, if fully implemented, there is a defect in the system of collective action contemplated by the Covenant. The second is, If no such defect exists, why has the system failed in operation ?

The answer to the first question would appear to be that there is no defect in the system embodied in the Covenant if it is fully implemented. Article 16 provides for military, economic and financial sanctions. Had those measures been applied fully against Italy, there could be little doubt that, notwithstanding the non-universality of the League, the position of Italy would have been rendered untenable. In arriving at that conclusion, however, we have to recognise that, however perfect the machinery may be in theory, its efficacy has to be qualified, in practice, by taking into account the human element.

The human element is that, despite their devotion to the principles of the League, nations are not prepared to commit their peoples to war for a cause which does not vitally concern their immediate national interests. In devising any modification in the machinery for collective security, that essential factor must be taken fully into account.

We have to recognise also that the experience as the last few months has made abundantly clear that the imposition of economic and financial fonctions, limited to such sanctions as will not

provoke retaliatory hostile action, is a futile and ineffective application of Article 16. Only the imposition of the maximum practical financial and economic sanctions, backed by a readiness to accept full responsibility in meeting retaliatory military action with armed force, would enable the financial and economic sanctions contemplated by Article 16 to be applied effectively. In my opinion, economic and financial sanctions, so applied, would probably prove effective even in a non-universal League.

Our recent experience proves that it is not possible to maintain any system of collective security unless the nations parties to such a system are convinced that, when invoked, the system will prove effective. The present system creates a false sense of security and involves undertakings which cannot be honoured. The tragic example of this is the fate of Ethiopia. It involves also obligations of a far-reaching effect, severe economic and financial losses and dangers of retaliation. What we have to seek is some method of remedying the defects which have been shown in the existing system; otherwise the League will inevitably be destroyed.

Last autumn, with the League's action in the Italo-Ethiopian dispute, a new hope came to millions of men and women throughout the world — the hope that the phrase "collective security" had reality and that, through the action of the League States and the goodwill of great Powers now outside the League, the collective judgment of the nations would ensure justice in the world. That hope to-day is extinguished. It is for us, when we meet in September, to rekindle it and by wise action ensure its realisation for all time.

The President:

Translation: M. Guani, first delegate of Uruguay, will address the Assembly.

M. Guani (Uruguay):

Translation: The problem with which the League of Nations is now faced, as a result of the unfortunate events that have taken place, far transcends the usual orbit of our discussions. To-day the very existence of our institution is at stake; and, in any case, its principles and its future will have to undergo the supreme test in the midst of the present grave crisis.

In these circumstances, the delegation of Uruguay will gladly give its close attention to all proposals for the detailed study of these problems in an atmosphere of calm and patience such as is necessary to protect the League against the dangers which threaten it.

I venture, however, to lay before you here and now my Government's views on the economic and financial measures decided upon by the Co-ordination Committee in application of Article 16 of the Covenant.

To face facts does not, in my opinion, connote any judgment for or against certain principles which are to-day under discussion in connection with the organisation of international life by the League of Nations. But it is obvious that, in the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, the policy of collective security, as originally conceived, has succeeded neither in preventing nor in stopping a war, nor has it saved the country which is the victim of aggression.

This is not the time to theorise about the causes of this failure, or to criticise the attitude of any Government in this first and unsuccessful attempt to apply Article 16.

May I therefore confine myself to an explanation of the more strictly juridical reasons which have led my Government to advise the abolition of these coercive measures?

The Government of Uruguay, when agreeing, with certain reservations, to the collective decisions proposed by the Co-ordination Committee, did so in the spirit of the Covenant — that is to say, in the belief that these decisions were destined to end the war. At no time should the economic and financial measures provided for in Article 16 have had attributed to them the character of "sanctions", as these measures were generally called. Perhaps the intention to give such measures the character of penal measures against the aggressor State may account for the erroneous reasoning of those who advocate their maintenance or their reinforcement after the events of which everyone is aware.

Neither the Assembly, nor the Council, nor the Co-ordination Committee, nor the States Members of the League, exercise any penal jurisdiction in respect of each other when they decide to apply Article 16. On examining the origins of the text of the Covenant, no such interpretation can anywhere be found. Article 16 was intended to prevent or stop war, but not to punish States designated as aggressors.

As these definite objects have not been attained, then the League's sole mission must be to discover means for attaining peace as immediately and fully as possible within the spirit of the Covenant.

Moreover, Article 16 indicates neither the duration of the measures nor the time when they should end; we think it logical, however, that, when the cause that led to their being imposed has ceased to exist, the measures themselves should also cease to operate.

If Article 10 of the Covenant were invoked as a ground for the maintenance or reinforcement of these measures in view of the obligation to guarantee the territorial integrity and independence of all Members of the League, the Assembly, or the countries which compose that body, would be faced with a new question, and the means for ensuring the execution of that obligation would seem to be a matter for the Council to examine.

Since the measures hitherto adopted under Article 16 have not given the results foreseen, we are of opinion, in accordance with the letter of the Covenant itself, that they should not continue to be applied.

With regard to the statements made by the delegation of the Argentine Republic, my Government reasserts its willingness to co-operate in the work of justice and peace to which all the nations of our continent are contributing indefatigably. Wars of conquest have always been regarded at the Inter-American Congresses as unjustifiable acts of violence and spoliation.

On August 3rd, 1932, nineteen American republics represented at Washington in connection with the Chaco conflict declared that they would not recognise any territorial arrangement of that controversy which had not been obtained by peaceful means, nor the validity of the territorial acquisitions which might be obtained through occupation or conquest by force of arms.

The countries of the New World are making a very great common effort to build up in their continent a solid organisation of international peace such as will preclude the hideous barbarism known as war. We are determined, therefore, to maintain our confidence and hope in the future of the League, however dark the present hour may seem.

In expressing before you that confidence and that hope, may I say that we will support any action taken to reform the Covenant in the light of the lessons of experience and the realities of international life? We will remain loyally attached to the principles of the Covenant and to the action

for human collaboration which is being made at Geneva. We earnestly hope that the present difficulties will be solved without any injury to that world prestige which the League of Nations requires to enable it to carry out its work of civilisation and peace throughout the world.

The President:

Translation: M. Munch, first delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

M. Munch (Denmark):

Translation: I, too, should like to thank the Government of the Argentine Republic for giving us this opportunity of discussing the present position of the League. As the first delegate of the United Kingdom very well put it yesterday, that position is a painful one for all of us. It would certainly have been difficult for the public to understand how we could let several months elapse before dealing with the grave problems raised by recent events.

With regard to the abandonment of sanctions, I shall confine myself to a few remarks.

I do not wish to revert to the question whether the maintenance of sanctions might have led to that equitable peace which the Council has, on several occasions, proclaimed to be the object of our efforts. In any case, we are now faced by the fact that a number of States for which sanctions might have far-reaching political and economic consequences have announced their determination to abandon them. It would therefore be a pointless demonstration if other States, for which the consequences of sanctions are comparatively unimportant, decided to continue them. It is perfectly clear that the desired result could not be achieved by this means. From another point of view, it is undeniable that the way in which sanctions have been applied, and especially their abandonment without their object having been achieved, constitute a precedent which clearly establishes that States are entitled to decide for themselves, in every case, whether the situation is such that they are bound to establish and maintain economic and financial sanctions.

As to the recognition of a situation created by force, we cannot but support the declarations of principle we have heard, in the first place, from the Argentine representative and, later, from the representatives of other Powers. We cannot allow a country to cease to exist as a State simply because it is partly or wholly occupied by a foreign army, even though the occupation has led to the departure of its Government.

Having pronounced upon these two points, we must turn our attention to the consequences which these most serious events involve for the League.

The *communiqué* issued by the seven States which regularly collaborate has given expression to the doubts that have arisen, as a result of the events of recent years, both in Denmark and in the other six countries, as to the operation of the League. Experience has shown that the League was able to smooth over disputes between States which are not great Powers, and that, as an organisation for negotiation, it could play a moderating part and enable time to be gained in cases in which a serious and far-reaching conflict was to be foreseen. That in itself is undoubtedly a very substantial result. On the other hand, experience has also shown that, in view of the existing dissensions between different groups of Powers, the League is not in a position to afford its Members adequate protection in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant.

The Danish Government is of opinion that the difficulties that have arisen are due, not to the provisions of the Covenant, but to political and economic dissensions between States, and to the consequent inadequate enforcement of the rules of the Covenant. We are prepared to consider any suggested amendments to the Covenant; but, in view of the extreme difficulty of securing the adoption of such amendments, we think it necessary to attempt to remedy the present difficulties by improving the working of the League.

For this purpose, more complete preparations must be made for the application of those articles which are designed to avert conflicts and to prevent the violation of the League's principles.

It is also essential that the League's activity in every field — political, economic and moral — which has been weakened in this period of crisis by the sense of imminent danger, should be resumed.

Accordingly, the Danish Government wishes to call attention to the following problems:

The first task, in the performance of which the Council must take the initiative, is to ascertain whether a larger number of States could be brought into the League than are now Members of it. We are convinced that, until this has been done, the League, as an instrument of peace and justice, will remain imperfect.

In cases in which actual membership of the League is impracticable, an attempt must be made to secure regular co-operation, both by better-organised participation in the League's non-political activities and by the conclusion of a consultative pact embracing both the countries Members of the League and the States in question, in conformity with the views expressed in the schemes for consultative pacts that were submitted during the Disarmament Conference.

As soon as the possibilities of increasing the membership of the League and strengthening its co-operation with non-member States have been ascertained, and it has accordingly been found that the necessary conditions are fulfilled, further efforts must be made — again on the Council's initiative — to put into effect the fundamental principles laid down in Article 8 of the Covenant. We are convinced that a general reduction of armaments would in itself amount to a strengthening of collective security, as has been clearly demonstrated by the first delegate of France in his interesting and important speech. Such a reduction certainly seems very difficult at a time when armaments are assuming fantastic proportions, but one at least of the obstacles that prevented the success of the Disarmament Conference — the inequality existing at that time between the armaments of various countries — has now disappeared. We have therefore observed with satisfaction that, in all the plans for agreement among the great Powers that have been published by those Powers, attention has again been paid to the problem of the reduction of armaments.

Next, it is important that a system of guiding principles should be established for the application of Articles 10 and 11. It is also desirable to lay down provisions for the application of the unanimity rule when conflicts between States are referred to the Council or the Assembly, in order to prevent that rule from paralysing the League's action.

It is likewise essential that an effort should be made to secure general accession to the Conventions of 1930 and 1931, dealing respectively with financial assistance to States attacked in violation of the Covenant and with the means of preventing war.

In view of the present insecurity and the consequent inadequate enforcement of the Covenant, my Government is obliged to assert that States are entitled eventually to take that fact into account in the application of Article 16.

On the other hand, we realise that the principles adopted in 1921 afford valuable guidance for the application of Article 16. That the first attempt to apply sanctions has not succeeded in putting a stop to the aggression committed by a great military Power upon a weaker State does not show that economic sanctions, even if limited in character and applied by a limited number of States, may not prove valuable in other cases. What is essential is to take advantage of the experience gained and lay down additional principles.

It would also be desirable to resume the enquiry into the best ways of using education, broadcasting and the Press to weaken the currents of dissension and mistrust that are at present dominating the relations between a large number of peoples. The International Committee on Intellctual Co-operation must be asked to produce draft Conventions to this effect as soon as possible for submission to the Assembly.

One of the most important of the factors that have made international understanding and co-operation difficult during the last few years is undoubtedly the state of commercial war produced by economic isolation and currency difficulties, leading as it has to violent exchange fluctuations, prohibitive tariffs, Customs preferences, quotas, and, lastly, the system of foreign-exchange control. Little by little, these systems have become so firmly established that it is now extremely difficult to return to a satisfactory degree of freedom in trade. The League must maintain, however, that the proper objective is the greatest possible freedom of international trade and, until that objective is attained, it is the League's duty to do its utmost to limit the difficulties due to present conditions and to see that the agreements on which international trade relations are now based are such as to lift international trade from its present depressed condition.

Since the breakdown of the Economic Conference of 1933, efforts in that direction have had to be suspended. They must be resumed as quickly as possible. But they are so far-reaching and so important that it is essential that the League organisations concerned with them — the Economic and Financial Section of the Secretariat and the Economic and Financial Committees — should be so strengthened and developed as to be able, by constant activity, to prepare in detail for the discussions of the annual Assembly and of its Economic Committee.

The examination of three essential questions must be resumed forthwith: *(a)* the creation of a stable monetary basis for world trade; *(b)* the amendment of existing agreements with the object of developing trade; *(c)* the restoration of a sense of security in regard to the possibility of buying and selling in the countries producing raw materials.

The Covenant entrusts to the League of Nations the duty of enforcing the law when a State is the victim of an aggression contrary to the rules of the Covenant. Many States have always looked upon that as the League's fundamental purpose. So far, however, it cannot be denied that the League has not been able to perform that task. The fact has been demonstrated by experience, not merely in the conflict with which we are at the moment concerned, but also in that between China and Japan and in the Chaco conflict. We must not conclude from this that we ought to abandon this task for which the Covenant provides; but we must realise that the possibility of performing it in any new conflicts that might develop depends on the political situation — especially the relations between the great Powers — on the technical evolution of armaments and, lastly, on military events.

It must be admitted that in the present situation, characterised as it is by profound mutual suspicion among a large number of States and by a competition in armaments, the possibilities of accomplishing this most important task are somewhat limited. They can only be improved to the extent to which it may be feasible to weaken the tendency to isolation and the exaggerated sense of nationalistic egoism that now prevails both in the political and in the economic sphere. That will lead to the growth of the spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation, which alone can give the people the security they so much desire. Here again the League has a task set before it by the Covenant; for it was created to be a centre of conciliation and co-operation.

Much has been said of the crisis through which the League is passing; but the expression is too restricted. The crisis through which we are passing is one that jeopardises the whole of modern civilisation. Ancient civilisations have gone down beneath the consequences of devastating wars, though the means of destruction that the men of those days possessed were very weak compared with those with which technical progress has endowed the men of our time. It has become plain that the maintenance and advance of civilisation are not compatible with great wars in which modern methods of destruction are employed.

The trend of events since 1929 has driven the majority of peoples into a deeper and deeper pessimism. That must not stop us; on the contrary, the difficulties of the present time should urge us to make a supreme effort to solve the problems from which the present dangers derive by means of an agreement between the nations now antagonistic to one another. For that purpose, we must appeal to the goodwill of all peoples, both outside the League of Nations and within it.

It is the duty of the League, and it is at this moment our chief task, to set in motion this effort upon which the future of man depends.

The President:

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

M. Motta (Switzerland):

Translation: No one will criticise the Argentine Republic for having asked for the Assembly to be summoned. On the contrary, it seems natural that it should have been summoned, since its proceedings had not been closed. The Argentine Government has informed us, through its first delegate, that, in taking this step, it had in mind two ideas to which we attach special importance — the legal equality of States and democracy in international relations. I think it only right to draw particular attention to these statements.

I shall be brief. But I should be failing in my duty if I did not try to explain, in a few words, why it is imperative, in our opinion, to raise sanctions at once.

I had the honour, on October 10th, 1935,[1] to explain to the Assembly what attitude the Swiss Federal Council intended to adopt towards the enforcement of economic and financial sanctions. May I remind you of what I said then? Our policy was the subject of lengthy discussions in both Chambers of the Federal Parliament, where it met with unanimous assent, founded on ethical considerations.

The object of sanctions was to prevent, if possible, and to stop the war. That object has not been achieved. There are two main reasons why it could not be achieved. The first is that the League of Nations is far from being universal; the second is that, from the outset, there was a tacit or

[1] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, page 106.

explicit agreement to avoid military sanctions or economic sanctions the effects of which would ultimately have merged into military sanctions. There was no desire that the war in East Africa should develop into a European or perhaps a world war.

The war is now over, and the League has had a reverse. Was this reverse inevitable? No one will hazard a definite reply to that very complex question. But it seems quite plain that, were sanctions to be maintained now the war is over, their character and significance would undergo a complete change. They would no longer represent an attempt to stop action that was actually being taken; they would be a punishment or an expression of political or moral judgment. But Article 16 of the Covenant was neither conceived nor drawn up for that purpose. To continue to enforce economic sanctions would be to maintain, to engender, general disturbance, irritation and insecurity. The Assembly has the right, and indeed, in our opinion, the duty, to declare that there is no longer any ground for applying sanctions. The Co-ordination Committee — by origin and purpose a conference of sovereign States — should now suggest that Governments should take the decisions that follow from that pronouncement.

That, it seems to me, is the legal and moral bearing of the facts. The League has been badly shaken, but it will not perish; for it fulfils one of the vital needs of mankind and of the world — the need for an international organisation and for co-operation between the States. The League will go forward again, provided it learns from its experiences.

Collective security is still the central problem. We shall discuss it freely in a spirit of untroubled friendship when the times comes, and we shall never forget that we are all inspired by the same ideal.

If we were to invite the Governments to send in suggestions, opinions and proposals before the next Assembly, I believe we should soon have useful material for study. I will refrain, for the moment, from making general suggestions as to the best means of adapting the Covenant to the needs of the future; I will confine myself to saying that conciliation procedure and action should come into play, and more speedily, from the very beginning of a conflict; that the rules for determining unanimity should be made more elastic, and thereby more rational. In particular, I think the procedure for asking the Permanent Court of International Justice for an advisory opinion should be far simpler — a mere majority in the Council or the Assembly, without the votes of the parties, should suffice.

And then — and this will be my *ceterum censeo* — no effort must be neglected to attain that great postulate, universality. Whatever may be said, universality is essential. The world has become smaller. The continents themselves can no longer be wholly self-sufficing. If, in the near future, we cannot hope to achieve universality, in the normal sense of the word, we must not neglect new forms of co-operation between the League and certain great States, for, if these States remain completely isolated from the League, the full realisation of its ideal will be delayed for a long time to come.

The President:

Translation: M. Lozoraitis, first delegate of Lithuania, will address the Assembly.

M. Lozoraitis (Lithuania):

Translation: The principal problem before the League of Nations to-day is so important that the States Members have no right to dissociate themselves from its solution, for it is highly probable that the security of several nations represented here will depend on that solution. We cannot underrate the dangers that beset the League at this turning-point in its affairs, should it be inferred that, because the Covenant has been ineffective in practice, a change must be made in the fundamental principles underlying it.

I make no charges in respect of the past; nor do I lightly criticise methods — however inadequate they may have proved — upon which our attention must be centred. I do not even advocate the reform of the League, which too often has thrust upon it responsibilities which do not belong to it. If we examined our consciences carefully, we should find it more expedient to reform ourselves first, within the admirable setting of the charter of the League — a charter which was the outcome of a severe and bitter struggle and took the form of a sacred vow to have done, once and for all, with the nightmare of 1914-1918. It would be fatal to follow a course that would weaken the Covenant, solely in order to compromise with realities.

If there is one matter about which we should be exercised, it is the need for strengthening the obligation, in international affairs, to submit, all of us, without exception and without flinching, to pacific methods for the settlement of any problem that may arise between nations.

It is solely in this direction, in my opinion, that we should seek to improve the League. Moreover, the Lithuanian delegation for the first time placed a similar suggestion before the Assembly eight years ago. What now seems so disturbing and alarming, from the point of view of League policy, is not the shortcomings of the Covenant, but rather the possibility of making attempts to evade it when the rules laid down trammel enterprises of which no one but those concerned can approve.

It is true that the League has not always been successful in placing them within the legal framework; but not the slightest blame attaches for that reason to the institution as such. Far from it. Such facts only show that the League has still far to go to achieve success.

It is lightly repeated, too, that the question of sanctions — of these sanctions which have proved ineffective — is a challenge to the very existence of the League. I see no direct connection between these two entirely different matters, and there is no shame in acknowledging that acts contrary to the principles underlying our own policy have brought about our failure. If we are really sincere in our policy here, we shall simply regard a reverse of this kind as a summons to seek more effective methods for safeguarding peace. Nor is it a sign of weakness to abandon methods that have been unsuccessful. Not only would it be useless to persist with them in spite of everything; it would be contrary to the prestige of an institution our hope for which is that it will successfully pursue its aims. We can only try, in the light of experience, to do better in the future. Some States have already hampered the new international policy introduced by the League of Nations. Two of them have even left Geneva. But should we be deterred by their example? Should the principle of the pacific settlement of disputes and the intervention, for that purpose, of the community of States be abandoned? Is there any need for me to answer that question?

Lastly, is the system of sanctions for ever discredited because, in one particular case, it was not altogether successful? On the contrary, precisely because is was not successful, we must arrange that it shall be easier to set in motion and

shall be enforced more strictly and effectively — in the light of experience, of course — a bitter experience, but one from which we may learn much. There is nothing in Article 16 to prevent us from adopting the new methods which must be worked out if it is to become effective. As long as States, beginning with the Members of the League of Nations, are unwilling to suffer the restraints imposed by international good conduct as defined in the Covenant, sanctions must remain as the sole disciplinary measure. It would be a tragic mistake for mankind, were we to conclude from our present experience that the whole system should be done away with. The League would then be nothing but an illusion and would not deserve to continue. No good sailor was ever discouraged by shipwreck, and the League should follow this example. The eclipse of the League's activity for a long time to come, the absence of a few communities which are unwilling to accept its rules, must not turn us from what we consider to be the right path — namely, collective and general peace for all nations desirous of building their future on respect for the rights of others and on the achievement of reciprocal and general prosperity by joint action.

I feel I have a special right to voice these sentiments, because my Government — Lithuania — was victimised sixteen years ago, owing to the weakness of our new international morality, as it was to have been practised by the League. At that time, the League had to deal with aggression on the part of another country against my own country, which was less well armed. For this *coup de force* there was not even the excuse usually described as " colonial ". The League, still full of ideals, adopted the attitude commanded by duty. We certainly should not blame it for that. And though it subsequently gave way, it did so only on account of an act which was outside the purview of the League, and which was brought within its purview, so that it was forced to do exactly the opposite of what it should have done.

Lithuania took means of her own to defend herself, in view of the League's failure to take action, and especially to defend herself against unlawful and unauthorised intervention outside the scope of the League. But she never wavered in her faith and hope that, just because of this weakness from which she herself had suffered, the League would in time be strengthened, that its machinery would be improved, that its effects would, as it were, become totalitarian, that it alone would become competent to settle international disputes, and above all that it would effectively prevent the violation of treaties or undertakings.

Shall, then, this faith be extinguished at the first setback, however serious it may be ? Is it possible that our faith in a supremely just ideal should waver solely because that ideal is still too lofty when viewed in the light of past and present facts? We might at the worst be constrained to stand impassively before the facts, but it would be wrong and dangerous to adopt a new rule of conduct because of them. I venture to hope that, in spite of all, we have not yet come to that. We cannot turn back from the pursuit of our aim — to check any possibility of armed conflict — if it is clearly understood that, despite any failures or inaction in the past, disputes may be settled only within the framework of the Covenant.

If we cannot undertake such a task at present, let us at least keep it in mind for the future. Let us see, in any event, that the machinery of the Covenant is improved and let us make sure that it continually grows more effective for the organisation of that lasting peace to which all men of goodwill must devote themselves.

The President :

Translation : M. de Graeff, first delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

M. de Graeff (Netherlands) :

Translation : I should like briefly to state the point of view of the Netherlands Government with regard to the problems now before us. The application of Article 16 of the Covenant in the Italo-Ethiopian conflict has not led to the result contemplated. When we face the facts, we must admit that the League of Nations has proved powerless to protect Ethiopia from an act which all its Members, with few exceptions, described as an act of aggression.

In existing circumstances, in view of the attitude of the great Powers, and despite all our disappointment at this failure on the part of the League, we must recognise that the maintenance of sanctions against Italy would prove inoperative. That is why the Netherlands supports the proposal to raise sanctions at an early date to be fixed by common agreement.

There is no shame in having to recognise that the forces of the League of Nations have failed in the defence of right. But it is the imperative duty of all those who hailed the League as the defender of peace and the bulwark against illegal aggression to enquire into the causes and consequences of its failure in this case, and to reconsider their attitude towards it.

There are some who say that the failure of the policy of sanctions is not due to the inadequacy of the provisions of the Covenant, but purely to the defective manner in which they have been applied in this particular case, and it is felt that better results may be expected in the future without there being any need to amend the Covenant. I should like to be able to share this optimistic view, but the experience gained in the Italo-Ethiopian conflict has deprived me of any hope that a more satisfactory result would be attained if a similar case were to arise.

If we could believe in an immediate reform of men's minds, in a moral reform of the mentality of peoples and their governors, we should of course be the first to admit that the Covenant, as it is, would suffice to co-ordinate the efforts of men of goodwill anxious to spare the world the horrors of another war. But, as has been rightly observed, such a tardy spiritual rebirth is not to be expected. Action is necessary, for the present situation, which merely offers the Members of the League a simulacrum of collective security and demands their co-operation in joint measures without offering them any effective guarantee of assistance against the risks they run by doing their duty, seems to me inadmissible, and it is essential that the possible means of improving this situation should be thoroughly investigated.

As regards the reform of the Covenant, there are two different schools of thought. One school wishes to strengthen the Covenant by regional agreements within the framework of the Covenant and under the control of the League. I need hardly say that my Government will give the most careful consideration to any proposal on this subject. Nevertheless, anyone who is familiar with the traditional policy of my country, which has always shown itself hostile to any participation in political or military alliances of a regional character, will understand the attitude of extreme reserve which the Netherlands Government at present feels bound to adopt towards such a solution of the problem.

There is another school of thought which contemplates the total abolition of sanctions in their present form and the reform of the charter of the League so as to make it a " consultative pact ". According to this view, the whole of the

present system of sanctions should be superseded by a single sanction — the automatic exclusion of the aggressor from the League.

At first sight, this backward step may seem highly objectionable. None the less, we are bound to consider whether it would not be justified, if the League could be endowed with the universality which it lacks at present and which forms such an essential element of its existence.

It is notorious that the system of sanctions constitutes the essential objection of certain States to participating in the work of Geneva. Moreover, the events of the last few months have clearly shown that any system of economic sanctions is doomed to failure unless it is generally applied. It might therefore prove that the aim of the Covenant would be attained more rapidly in this way than by following the path we have hitherto pursued. Furthermore, it does not seem to me impossible to combine this idea of widening the basis of the League with that of "regionalising" certain obligations which exceed the scope of the general obligations binding upon all Members; but it must be plainly understood that the limits of these regional provisions must be traced by the charter of the community itself. They cannot be left to the arbitrary judgment of groups. We consider it necessary that Governments should examine all these problems with the greatest care, so that they may be able to state their views more explicitly at the September Assembly.

Whether any changes made should take the form of amendments to the Covenant or should be adopted in the form of interpretative resolutions is a question that need not detain us long. This matter of procedure cannot usefully be broached until the study of the nature and scope of the changes to be made has been completed. We should obviously spare ourselves many difficulties if the method of amendment of the Covenant could be avoided and if the result could be achieved by means of interpretative resolutions.

In concluding the speech which I had the honour to deliver to the Assembly on September 12th [1] last year, I ventured to point out that a failure in the difficult situation that had arisen, following upon other occasions when the League had fallen short in recent years, would affect its prestige to such an extent that reconstruction work over a long period would be necessary before we could restore what had been demolished.

The failure has now become plain. Let us set our teeth and start the work of reconstruction, and let us not despair.

[1] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, page 62.

TWENTY-SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Thursday, July 2nd, 1936, at 3.30 p.m.

CONTENTS :

President : M. VAN ZEELAND.

96. — SITUATION ARISING OUT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY : GENERAL DISCUSSION (continuation).

The President :

Translation : M. Rivas Vicuña, first delegate of Chile, will address the Assembly.

M. Rivas Vicuña (Chile) :

Translation : The self-determination of peoples and their right to decide their own destinies are the fundamental principles on which American independence has been based, and we must come back to these principles whenever we have to test the reality of the situation arising in any particular part of the world.

A series of conferences, agreements and conventions, which have been carefully recapitulated by the Argentine delegation, have been based on these principles and have culminated in the agreement of August 3rd, 1932, the text of which is so well-known that there is no necessity to repeat it.

Nor need we repeat that Chile upholds that agreement in its entirety, since everyone knows how loyally my country maintains and fulfils its international obligations.

Not only do we give our support to the statement made by the Argentine delegate, M. Cantilo, but we endorse it as a proof of the brotherhood which unites our peoples since the birth of their independence, and we reserve the right to examine each case that may arise with a view to the strict application of the principles to which we have subscribed and which constitute one of the bases of law in America.

At the meeting of the Council held on June 26th, 1936, [1] I had the honour to propose, on my Government's behalf, the study of the reform of the Covenant. An attempt has been made to diminish the importance of this question by linking it up with a text intended to modify individual articles of the Covenant. It has also been attempted to link it up with the present situation — that is to say, with the result of the application of the Covenant in the last conflict. My Government's view goes beyond these facts, which may be regarded as of secondary importance to that of the problem itself.

Nearly a year ago, I said on this same platform that it was a mistake to ask from the League of Nations what it could not give, and that to subject it to a test beyond its powers was to force it to sacrifice its prestige.

I went on to point out that the League must be universal if it was to carry out the whole of

[1] See *Official Journal*, July 1936, page 751.

its programme. I added that the existence of certain disputes and the work of the Committee appointed by the Council to study the Covenant in order to strengthen collective security had demonstrated the necessity of reform on certain points. I concluded by saying that as long as that result had not been achieved, the League's work must be as serene as justice, as prudent as wisdom and as strong as truth. [1]

We do not wish to modify the constituent bases of the Covenant, which, with the League or without it, form the creed of Latin America. But experience shows us that a time comes when the League's action cannot go any further if it is to remain effective, and when the finding of a solution must be entrusted to the nations most directly concerned.

You yourself, Mr. President, shared our opinion when, in the Co-ordination Committee, you called for a fresh effort of conciliation on the part of the Powers directly concerned. A few weeks previously, a similar step had been taken by the American Members of the Council.

But I do not desire to give a history of recent events or to discuss whether the fault lies with the Covenant or with men. On that point, I entirely share the views expressed in the Council by the Portuguese Foreign Minister.[2] The Covenant is in our opinion a legal structure which, like any other human device, must be capable of constant improvement if it is desired to achieve the noble aims underlying it and to put into practice the humanitarian principles it must serve.

We have placed our whole faith in the League. We enthusiastically accepted the Covenant. We had confidence in the material and moral disarmament of the world.

We are now wondering whether the Covenant is doing anything to promote at least one great task — material disarmament. In reality, Articles 8 and 9 of the Covenant are quite inoperative. My country has always been a great advocate of disarmament. The first agreement of this kind was concluded between Chile and the Argentine Republic at the beginning of this century. We actively co-operated in the work of the Disarmament Commission by carrying out the duties entrusted to us by the Council. President Alessandri has been the initiator of common action by all the people of Latin America in this important matter, and he has just asked for the inclusion of the subject in the programme of the forthcoming Peace Conference at Buenos Aires.

In our far-off corner of South America, we ask ourselves, somewhat ingenuously perhaps, why the world is arming when there is an institution like the League of Nations to settle conflicts and impose justice and peace throughout the world.

President Blum, in his magnificent speech, dealt with this problem with complete frankness and sincerity, and naturally he did not conceal the danger of the present situation and of the armaments race.

A fact which seems to constitute one of the most important answers to our question is that the League is not universal; some Powers are absent, and we know that, despite all assertions to the contrary, without the assistance of these Powers no solid and lasting peace can be assured. It therefore seems to me our duty to seek to attain universality for the League.

To secure this universality, we must see whether it is necessary to introduce certain reforms into the Covenant or to adopt certain interpretations of its provisions, in order that we may achieve useful co-operation without touching its essentials, without affecting its principles and without diminishing its effectiveness.

I am the first to recognise that the task is no easy one; but the difficulty must not prevent us from shouldering our responsibilities and from making every effort to give humanity justice and peace.

One of us once said: "When we signed the Covenant, we renounced our neutrality in exchange for collective security". We now see that this security has no other value than that of a programme to be achieved when circumstances permit. We also see that the system of the Covenant is leading us to a world war, and we think that this is a situation which calls for reflection. Everyone condemns war, but war preparations still continue, and war is even spoken of as a very near reality.

Public opinion in Chile, as in other countries, is losing its confidence in the effectiveness of the League's action. If we cannot obtain peace or collective security, we must resume our neutrality.

I do not want to repeat all that I said in the Council, in the interests of peace, on the necessity of permitting part of humanity to remain outside conflicts and of maintaining that reserve force which, especially in great catastrophes, must be retained for the restoration of the progress and welfare of the world.

M. Blum referred in his speech to the plan of adjustment confining war to the Powers geographically or politically nearest to the Power attacked. We are awaiting this plan with the keenest interest, hoping to find in it the means of satisfying public opinion in our countries.

As I said the other day in the Council, as long as the present situation remains, and pending a reform of the Covenant, my Government reserves the right to study carefully each conflict that may arise, and to analyse its causes, effects and responsibilities before taking the measures laid down in the Covenant for such cases.

I must also remind you of the words of that great friend of peace, President Alessandri, who, in his message to the National Congress, said:

> "My sincere support of the idea of a commonwealth of nations as a basis of international organisation shows me the danger of a total collapse of this first attempt at a League of Nations in modern times, because no proper provision has been made for this eventuality by means of a rational reorganisation of the political structure of the League of Nations. The delay in effecting that reorganisation might compel us to take other decisions."

The Government of Chile, following its own ideas and interpreting a large body of public opinion, has invited the Council, and now invites the Assembly, to undertake a study of the Covenant with the object of achieving the universality of the League and of ensuring the effectiveness of its action, due account being taken of regional interests.

We are ready to co-operate in the proposed study and to consider on the broadest basis the points on which the text of the Covenant might be reformed or the interpretative declarations which might achieve that end.

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[1] *See Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, page 68.

[2] *See Official Journal*, July 1936, page 754.

The Government of Chile believes that, in this way, it will be rendering a great service to the cause of justice and peace and to the League itself, whose task is to ensure the rule of these principles throughout the world.

The President:

Translation: M. Westman, first delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Westman (Sweden):

Translation: Public opinion in Sweden has been profoundly affected by the general sentiment of anxiety which has spread throughout the world as a result of recent tragic events.

The present session of the Assembly affords all Members of the League an opportunity of common consultation as to the steps which should be taken in order to find a pathway through present difficulties towards a better-ordered, and above all a more confident, form of co-operation among nations.

In connection with the various problems with which we are faced at the present moment as a result of the conflict between Ethiopia and Italy, one fact must at once be recognised. It is this: As a result of the decisions taken and the opinions expressed by various Governments, the front of the sanctionist nations is already virtually broken. Sanctions were based upon collective action; and collective action was the *sine qua non* of their effectiveness. From the moment that certain Members of the League of Nations, including some of the most influential, decided, in the exercise of their sovereign right, in favour of raising sanctions, the other Members will necessarily be led in a few days' time to recognise that sanctions are a thing of the past.

As a consequence, a second problem will arise in connection with the situation which has been created by the military occupation of Ethiopia. No developments have taken place of such a character as to affect the judgment pronounced by fifty Members of the Assembly concerning the responsibilities in this affair. To-day, we may ask ourselves whether, as in the case of sanctions, we shall shortly be confronted by a further series of *faits accomplis* also as regards the situation of Ethiopia.

Having said that, I should like to add one or two observations. In Sweden, as in many other countries, the lack of universality of the League of Nations gave rise from the outset to the most lively apprehensions. At the time of the foundation of the League there was keen discussion in my country as to whether Sweden should become associated with an institution in which it was not certain that all the great Powers would be represented. These hesitations were the more intelligible in a country like Sweden, which, in following a policy of strict neutrality, has enjoyed more than one hundred years of peace. Sweden nevertheless joined the League of Nations, in the hope that the League would develop into an efficient organisation for the promotion of good understanding and peace among the nations and for the protection of the freedom and independence of the peoples.

Since then, Sweden has done her best to approach all disputes with which she has had to deal in her capacity as a Member of the League in a spirit of loyalty and goodwill, with a view to the observance of the principles that are the very foundation of our institution. So long as the League serves the aims of the community of nations and does not become the instrument of special interests, Sweden is prepared to contribute to the common work to the best of her ability.

It is natural, however, that the set-back which the League has suffered in the Italo-Ethiopian dispute, as in other cases in which it proved incapable of preventing hostilities, should have reacted powerfully upon Swedish public opinion and should have led to a reconsideration of the problems involved in Swedish membership of the League.

It must be remembered that the provisions of the Covenant were conceived and drafted in the belief that all States would join the League. The actual position is very different; and we know by sad experience the extent to which this lack of universality prevents the League from fulfilling certain of its essential functions.

Moreover, the disarmament provisions of Article 8 of the Covenant have not been carried into effect; and it must be acknowledged that opportunities of achieving tangible results in that direction were not seized. In a world which is armed and over-armed, the activities of the League have been slowed down and rendered more than a little arduous.

The States which have carried out the provisions of Article 16 — notwithstanding the non-fulfilment of the two primary political conditions to which I have referred — have been compelled to admit their failure to safeguard the Covenant and to achieve the essential object of protecting the freedom and independence of the League's Members.

It has been apparent in the course of the League's work that the enforcement of the provisions of the Covenant has been at once inadequate and lacking in coherence. The application of the Covenant has even been described as taking place "by a series of eclipses". Misgivings and uncertainty have thus been rife among the nations and have given rise to divergent interpretations of the Covenant and of the obligations it entails.

Can it truly be said in such circumstances that collective collaboration is assured to such a degree as to justify the expectation that all States Members should feel bound to participate in whatever measures of coercion may be recommended by the League?

In that connection, I should like to draw attention to two observations which appear in the communication published yesterday by seven delegations.

The first of these observations refers to the wish expressed therein that the League should undertake to develop the means of preventing war. The second deals with the enforcement of Article 16, in regard to which it is stated that, so long as the Covenant, as a whole, is only applied incompletely and inconsistently, the seven States in question are bound to take these circumstances into account in executing Article 16.

The discussion in the present session of the Assembly concerning the reform of the League appears to be of a preliminary character and in the nature of a first exchange of views. It is only at the next Assembly, when Governments have had the necessary time for the careful consideration of the important problems involved that it will be possible with profit to resume the discussion of this subject. The Government of Sweden will be duly prepared to take its part in such discussion.

The President:

Translation: Mr. de Valera, first delegate of the Irish Free State, will address the Assembly.

Mr. de Valera (Irish Free State). — However it may be disguised, it can only be with a feeling of bitter humiliation that each successive speaker has, during these days, come to this tribune.

Over fifty nations pledged themselves to one another in the most solemn manner each to respect the independence and to preserve the integrity of the territories of the others. One of these nations turned its back on its pledges freely given, and was adjudged almost unanimously by the remainder to have been an aggressor, and now, one by one, we have come here to confess that we can do nothing effective about it.

Over fifty nations, we banded ourselves together for collective security. Over fifty nations, we have now to confess publicly that we must abandon the victim to his fate.

It is a sad confession, as well as a bitter one. It is the fulfilment of the worst predictions of all who decried the League and said it could not succeed.

As has been said already, we are all of us in some measure responsible for this pitiable position, some much more responsible than others. Read the speech delivered here by the Emperor of Ethiopia. Does any delegate deny that, so far as it relates to what has happened here, there is, to his knowledge, truth in every line of it?

Perhaps, as the representatives of a small nation that has itself had experience of aggression and dismemberment, the members of the Irish delegation may be more sensitive than others to the plight of Ethiopia. But is there any small nation represented here which does not feel the truth of the warning that what is Ethiopia's fate to-day may well be its own fate to-morrow, should the greed or the ambition of some powerful neighbour prompt its destruction.

Mr. President, you had indeed very good reason to warn us, at the opening of these proceedings, against the pitfalls of bitterness, scepticism and discouragement which the present situation has spread around us. Nothing surely could be more disastrous than to abandon ourselves to despair, but is it not equally the height of folly to think that we can go on just as if nothing had happened?

Many delegates have stated the circumstances of the present position and given us an analysis of its development. The representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has stated in precise terms the kind of League we would all like to see established as a guarantor of peace, but except to say that the masses must be educated he has not shown how such a League can be built up. He has not shown how, in the present conditions, the masses can be led to feel any confidence that obligations, no matter how explicitly they may be undertaken on paper, will in fact be carried out when the testing time comes. How can the plain man be convinced that obligations entered into will not in the future, at the prompting of some selfish interest, be ignored as the existing obligations have been ignored?

Unless the League can inspire confidence, it clearly cannot stand. Subscribing to what has been proved to be a delusion is not the way to secure confidence. If confidence is to be restored to the masses, it can only be by rigidly restricting commitments to those we know can be loyally carried out, which the average man can believe will be carried out. By all means let us keep before us the ultimate ideal which we desire to reach and work as far and as fast towards it as we can, but let us contract only for that which we can, in the time of test, certainly perform. Let us face the fact that economic and financial sanctions can be made effective only if we are prepared to back them up by military measures. Let us face the fact that every nation may, when the test comes, have many good reasons for shirking the terrible responsibility of entering upon a war. Let us face the fact that not one of the fifty nations represented here is prepared to face war to preserve the principles of the League in the present dispute. For the sake of a nation in Africa, apparently, no one is ready to risk now a war that would be transferred to Europe.

That is the position to-day, and does anyone doubt that some similar position can occur to-morrow?

Europe is obviously the danger point. If we want to be realists we shall concentrate upon Europe without delay, and once our common commitments under the League are explicitly defined (and clearly these commitments do not include, and cannot at this time be amended to include, an obligation to go to war to maintain the principles of the League), let us, thinking only of the future, set about the urgent task of preserving peace in Europe, and leave aside for the moment such questions as how the Covenant should be altered to make it, as a world organisation, effective and universal.

The peace of Europe depends, as everybody knows, on the will of the great Powers. If the great Powers of Europe would only meet now in that Peace Conference which will have to be held after Europe has once more been drenched in blood; if they would be prepared to make now in advance only a tithe of the sacrifice each of them will have to make should the war be begun, the terrible menace which threatens us all to-day could be warded off. The problems that distract Europe should not be left to the soldiers to decide. They should be tackled now by the statesmen. If the problems cannot be settled by conciliation, let them be submitted to arbitration. I shall be told that there are difficulties. Of course there are difficulties. There are difficulties in every direction that lies open to us, but in which direction are there the least difficulties? Are there more difficulties along the way of peaceful adjustment by conciliation or arbitration than along the alternative way of a modern war?

In 1925, when advocating in Geneva the acceptance of the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of Disputes, a French statesman, whom I am glad to see still with us, deplored that no great conflict for which mankind had bled, and not one of the vital causes, or what were believed to be vital causes, which led to those conflicts had ever been brought before a Court of Arbitration. Is it too much to recall that statement now and to urge that the machinery provided in the Covenant should be utilised forthwith to remove obvious injustices and make the territorial and other adjustments which present conditions demand; in other words, to remove obvious causes of the war that is now threatening? It would be worth great sacrifices to bring about understanding and friendship between the great peoples of Europe. No losses could be greater than those which preparation for war and war itself entail. "Not an inch" is out of place in a situation where war will vanquish everybody.

It has often been urged that if there had been a League of Nations in 1914 — if there had been a Council or an Assembly — where the problems and the dangers that then threatened could be discussed, the great war could not have happened. It was argued that, in the absence of a League, the military machines were set in motion before the statesmen could get together. The statesmen can now get together, but what are they doing? Millions are being squandered on armaments,

but are the root causes of the trouble being sought out and effective steps taken to remove them?

Ten years ago, a Norwegian representative reminded you that you must deal in time with situations that might one day become acute. Two miles above Niagara, he said, it is possible to land, but wait until you are a hundred feet from the Falls and you are lost. How much more necessary is this advice now than then. How much nearer is Europe to the Falls. Will it be said, when the array of tombs which stretch from end to end of Europe has been multiplied, that there had been plenty of time to land but that the statesmen waited too long and the soldiers took control?

If the major problems of Europe can be settled, all can be settled. If the problems of Europe are not settled, it is vain to talk in the wider terms of a world League.

The French Prime Minister has spoken of disarmament. If Europe can be persuaded to settle its present problems peacefully, the policy of a rapid reduction of armaments will for the first time get a chance, and the wealth that is being wasted in preparing instruments of destruction can be made available for improving the conditions of life of many millions of people.

Despite our juridical equality here, in matters such as European peace the small States are powerless. As I have already said, peace is dependent upon the will of the great States. All the small States can do, if the statesmen of the greater States fail in their duty, is resolutely to determine that they will not become the tools of any great Power and that they will resist with whatever strength they may possess every attempt to force them into a war against their will.

The President:

Translation: Sir James Parr, delegate of New Zealand, will address the Assembly.

Sir James Parr (New Zealand). — Of all the Members of the League, New Zealand 14,000 miles distant, is the furthest away from Geneva, and furthest away from the influence and atmosphere of the League. Yet New Zealand has always been a stout and unswerving protagonist of the Covenant and of the principles of collective security. To-day, my country still adheres firmly to the League of Nations, believing as she does that, notwithstanding its recent misfortune, the League still offers the only promise of security for the small countries of the world.

But, at the moment, the people of New Zealand are disappointed and distressed. They profoundly regret that a combination of untoward and unforeseen circumstances, and certainly not omitting the weakness of the human element, has defeated the League in its attempt to curb aggression. Yet New Zealand has not lost faith. We find it impossible to believe that something useful and effective in the future cannot be welded from the coming together of fifty nations. We cannot believe that the League is finished, as some critics declare. We feel that the goodwill and friendship of fifty nations can surely be reorganised to accomplish useful measures for the peace and happiness of the world. The League may surely profit from the lessons emerging from the Italo-Ethiopian conflict; and indeed, if it is to live, it must bring about a real solidarity among all its Members in the application of League principles. The representatives of New Zealand will come to the League in September next prepared to co-operate to the full with their colleagues in devising methods and means which we hope will make for success another time.

As I understand the position, however, we are here to deal with the particular issue of sanctions, and I shall confine my few remaining remarks to that question.

New Zealand, in common with fifty other nations, strongly supported the imposition of sanctions in October last. The Government of New Zealand still favours sanctions. It favours their maintenance and intensification. If there were an effective majority of the League ready to go along that road, the New Zealand Government would travel it with them. But one cannot blind oneself to facts. The speeches that have been delivered here, and the general atmosphere, as I glean it, indicate to us that an overwhelming majority of League Members will not support sanctions any longer. Their maintenance, with any chance of success is, therefore, impossible.

There is a further consideration which presses strongly on my Government. New Zealand is far distant from the conflict, and its Government and people recognise the fact that New Zealand is quite unlikely to share materially either in the dangers or in the losses of trade that would be involved in keeping sanctions going against Italy. We feel that we cannot, under these circumstances, with propriety complain if other Members of the League take a different view and decide for the revocation of the measures taken in October last. I am therefore instructed by His Majesty's Government in New Zealand that, if there can be no generally accepted determination by our colleagues here to continue sanctions, I am to acquiesce, on behalf of New Zealand, in their removal. But the acquiescence of my Government is on the clear understanding that the whole question of the Geneva peace structure (as it is called) will be considered at the September meeting of the Assembly, and New Zealand would wish that not only the present Members of the League, but that all nations of the world — whether Members of the League or not — should be invited to take part in the September meeting, so that a thorough search may be made for universality.

There are rumours that the annual Assembly in September is likely to be postponed. I hope there is no truth in this rumour. My Government feels that one of the past weaknesses of the League has been its tendency to avoid or postpone decisions of difficulty. The questions that will be at issue next September will certainly be difficult, but with proper preparation, each on his own account, and also with the aid of expert Committees, it should not be impossible to reach decisions. In any event, while a short delay may be necessary, the New Zealand Government believes that an indefinite or lengthy postponement would be against the best interests of the League. We shall hope, therefore, that fifty nations will meet here in September, each to make its contribution to the all important question, the plain issue of how best to make the League really efficient in deterring any future aggressor against the world's peace.

The President:

Translation: M. Pflügl, first delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

M. Pflügl (Austria):

Translation: The secret of the art of government, it has been said, is the power to foresee. The experience we have had to undergo would seem to show that the secret of the effectiveness of the League will be to prevent. The great undertaking for the reform of the League, with which so many minds are now concerned and which awakens so many hopes, will have the fullest support of Austria — for no one will dispute the vital interest of Austria in this problem.

We have two definite aims before us — to safeguard, in the immediate interest of the world, universal peace, which to-day is threatened, and to maintain the League, in the future interest of the world.

I would venture to quote an utterance of our eminent President who said, the other day, that it seemed to him as though the destinies of great peoples, the destinies of a large part of humanity, were in the balance. I can imagine no more effective summing-up of what Austria feels in regard to the seriousness and the urgency of the two tasks to which I have referred.

Some of the most authoritative voices of the world have been heard in the Assembly's discussion, seeking to throw light on the road we have to tread. To these voices there has been added another — the voice of Italy. The tone of the Italian note which has been read to the Assembly [1] is one to which we cannot remain indifferent. The spirit of the Covenant by which the note is informed, and the principles of Article 22, taken in many cases literally, to which Italy proclaims her desire to conform in the sacred mission of civilisation which, with the fall of the Ethiopian Empire, she has assumed, cannot fail to strengthen the confidence of those — among them, Austria — who, in accordance with the inexorable exigencies of the moment, await, and are entitled to await, a definitive solution of this dispute, a solution which will take into account both the world's imperious need of appeasement and security and the authority of the League of Nations.

The President:

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

Dr. Wellington Koo (China). — A series of violations of the Covenant and international treaties by certain Members of the League has brought on a crisis with which we are confronted to-day, and which threatens the very foundation of the existence of this world institution. The unhappy events of recent months are a natural sequence in our minds to the League's failure in the case of armed aggression started in September 1931 by one State Member of the League against another.

As a humble member of the original Commission which drafted the Covenant in Paris in 1919, I must confess a deep feeling of disappointment which, I note, in all its poignancy, is fully shared by the speakers who have preceded me in this Assembly. The spell of gloom and disillusionment which envelops the atmosphere of the League is a sad contrast to the noble thought and high-mindedness with which the framers of the Covenant conceived it, and to the almost universal enthusiam with which its birth was welcomed and acclaimed.

China feels all the more keenly this loss of prestige and authority on the part of the League. She not only sincerely believes in the principles on which the League is founded, but has always loyally and faithfully supported it. She feels profound sympathy for Ethiopia in her hour of national crisis and values highly, at the same time, the numerous manifestations of friendship on the part of Italy. But, in the interests of solidarity for the League, China has set aside her national sentiment of friendship towards one of the parties in the Italo-Ethiopian conflict and has accepted every decision of the League; and, though herself a victim of continued aggression, she has done her best to carry them out. If she accepts a new collective decision of this Assembly, notwithstanding her profound sympathy for the other party in the conflict, she will do so in the same spirit, provided only that such acceptance would in no way prejudice the fundamental principles of the Covenant.

But the main problem before the League as an institution for the maintenance of international peace and justice remains. We find the League to-day at the cross-roads, paralysed by the failure of its efforts and lost in a dense fog of depression and distrust. Shall we turn back on our road to organised peace through collective security, or shall we branch off into the perilous by-path of compromising amendments to the Covenant?

It is the view of the Chinese delegation that the failure of the League in the matter of sanctions has been due, not to the insufficiency or the inefficacy of the measures provided in the Covenant, but rather to the policy and methods of application adopted. Instead of being applied in their entirety they were applied partially, and even the partial application was effected haltingly, with equivocation and without that determination and promptitude which would have caused them to produce a far greater effect than they actually did.

I have no intention, however, to resurrect the past or dwell upon the present. I wish only to deal with the future. If the League has hitherto failed, and failed signally, how can it avoid similar failures in the time to come?

The kernel of the problem lies in the principle of collective security, which is the basis of the system of organised peace envisaged in the Covenant. It is the very essence and spirit of this fundamental instrument, Article 16. Do we want it to remain so, or do we want to do away with it? In the view of the Chinese delegation, it is the only system of security that can, in the end, ensure the maintenance of universal peace and the prevention of armed aggression. For it is based upon the sound axiom that the collective force of the whole body must be greater than the force of any of its parts.

But if the Members of the League wish to retain it and rely upon it for security, then they must, as the chief delegate of the Soviet Union has so well said, defend it by all means. Even resort to armed force should not be excluded where peaceful means, such as financial and economic measures, are not sufficient to prevent or restrain aggression. Measures of a military character are, indeed, expressly provided for in the Covenant, and the Members of the League have a common obligation in this regard. Whether such measures should at once be undertaken by the entire body of Member States or first by those only who, by their geographical position and state of preparedness, are in the best position to carry them out effectively is a question of application.

What disturbs the peace of the world and threatens even the existence of States is war and armed aggression. To stop either it is necessary, as experience has shown, to be prepared to use force, for readiness to resort to force, on the basis of international solidarity, to maintain peace will have a strong deterrent effect upon ambitious and aggressively inclined States. The certainty of meeting with a determined opposition, supported by an overwhelmingly superior collective force,

[1] See page 19.

will stop such nations from taking chances and persuade them, perhaps more effectively than any argument in words, to participate and collaborate in the maintenance of peace and agree to a general reduction of armaments.

Objection is occasionally raised to the application of military measures against armed aggression, on the ground that the burden will fall principally upon the major Powers. That such may be the case cannot be avoided in the nature of the circumstances. It is not only natural, but fair, that the stronger should contribute more. Since they have greater interests at stake, the benefits of peace accruing to them will likewise be in fact greater. It is like paying a premium for insurance: the greater the value insured the larger the amount of premium to be paid.

Again, to the effective organisation and maintenance of peace, the principle of universality is indispensable. As the Prime Minister of France said yesterday, in his frank, forceful and far-seeing speech, peace is indivisible, not only for Europe, but for the whole world. Indeed, science has, as it were, reduced the distances separating continents; the farthest corners of the earth are easily accessible by improved means of communication and transportation. The outbreak of a conflict in one part of the world is bound to have repercussions in other parts. It is, therefore, not only desirable but necessary to organise peace on a universal basis and ensure security by the collective efforts of the League Members, and if possible, in collaboration with non-member States.

China, on her part, will always be ready to contribute her full share to the realisation of the principle of collective security. And I feel confident that our fellow Asiatic Member States are equally devoted to the principles of the League, and are no less anxious to discharge their obligations in the cause of peace and justice.

We believe that the League of Nations not only represents an ideal, but fulfils a vital need of the world. If it has failed in the past, the course for us to take now is to correct the mistakes, mend the defects, and improve its workings, without impairing in any way the fundamental principles of the Covenant. But above all, as I said on the same platform three years ago: [1]

> "If 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."

The President:

Translation: M. de Velics, delegate of Hungary, will address the Assembly.

M. de Velics (Hungary):

Translation: Hungary's attitude in the question on the agenda is sufficiently well known. The grounds on which it is based have been explained from this platform. They are founded on a dynamic and not a static conception of the aims of the League of Nations.

In view of the conciliatory spirit which is being evinced in the discussion that has taken place here, and of the conciliatory note which the Italian Government has just sent to the President of the Assembly,[1] it may justifiably be hoped that, as the outcome of the present meetings of the Assembly and those of last autumn, a solution of the question will be found such as may reconcile the various interests and thereby help to strengthen the League of Nations in its rôle of guarantor of world peace.

For this reason, I will simply make a few brief observations on the reform of the League, in order to define the conception that my country and the Hungarian Government have always had of the League and its charter, the Covenant.

I should like to say, first of all, that the Hungarian Government, while recognising the great practical utility of the League in international life, fully realises the laborious efforts the League has made since its foundation to attain its fundamental aim, which is the maintenance of peace and the development of international collaboration on the basis of justice and of the equality of the rights of all States, large and small.

Nevertheless, in the light of long years of experience as a Member of the League, the Hungarian Government too has perforce realised that there are certain imperfections in its machinery, due either to certain imperfect provisions of the Covenant itself or to its practical application.

Consequently, the Hungarian Government declares itself in favour of a reform of the Covenant as regards the methods of applying it, and on that point its ideas may be briefly summarised as follows:

The Hungarian Government cannot associate itself with the view that the League's task should be exclusively to ensure the strict application of the punitive provisions of the Covenant. The Hungarian Government would like to bring these punitive provisions into equilibrium with the other provisions of the Covenant, which — in particular, Articles 11, 13 and 19 — provide pacific and preventive means of settling disputes that may arise between States Members and offer possibilities of remedying situations the maintenance of which might imperil world peace.

The Hungarian Government, which, ever since Hungary entered the League, has constantly directed all its efforts towards the eventual attainment of this equilibrium, is glad to note to-day that it is not alone in professing these ideas and in pursuing this end. Indeed, the demands that the whole of the Covenant shall be applied are daily becoming more numerous and more urgent.

The Hungarian Government would fain hope that, if this course is taken, there will be a better prospect of attaining the aims embodied in the Preamble to the Covenant. Those views are held by Hungary also, and my country will always do its best to collaborate towards that end with other States Members of the League.

The President:

Translation: M. Sepahbodi, first delegate of Iran, will address the Assembly.

M. Sepahbodi (Iran):

Translation: The delegation of Iran has followed with keen interest the discussions that have taken place in the last few days regarding the failure of our common action in applying Article 16 of the Covenant. The distinguished speakers who have preceded me have shown very clearly that,

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[1] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 115, page 47.

[1] See page 19.

if our common action has not succeeded in stopping the aggression of which one of the Members of our League has been the victim, the cause of that failure lies neither in the Covenant nor in the imperfection of Article 16, but rather in the imperfect manner in which it has been applied. That fact is so evident that there is no need to examine it in detail.

In the light of this failure in the application of Article 16, it would seem, as I realise, that if we introduced certain changes in our fundamental charter, we should have a very favourable prospect of rendering it easier to apply in future. It is clear that there are gaps in that charter which must be repaired; but I very much doubt whether any better result would be obtained from the action that is now proposed to us.

In truth, it is not the Covenant and its articles that we must change, but rather the spirit of those who have to apply them. So long as there is in this Assembly no such spirit of sincerity in carrying out the undertakings entered into, no Covenant, however perfect, will prevent war or safeguard peace.

Such is the lesson we have been able to draw from the tragic events of these last few months, in the course of which Article 16 has been put to the test. My country has taken part, in all sincerity and with the firm intention to put its undertakings into effect, in the common action advocated by the League. Its future intentions will be the same, and it will loyally do its part in carrying out such measures as are taken by the international community to safeguard peace.

We may be told that the small States are not materially strong enough to render effective help in the common action against the aggressor, that it will always be the great Powers who will have to bear the brunt of the danger and that, consequently, the attachment of the small States to the Covenant and their loyalty to their undertakings will not be decisive in the solution of the problems that arise. At first sight that reasoning may seem logical, but, on reflection, it will readily be realised that the help and effective support of the small States scattered throughout the whole world would, if united, form a force so great that no aggressor, however powerful, could ever challenge it. Therein lies the true power of a world League of Nations united in the fulfilment of its duty.

I will be brief, and, accordingly, I will simply point out to this Assembly that the new direction we are being asked to take and the new road that it is proposed to mark out for us are so obscure that it is necessary to think twice before entering upon them.

My country would be happy to help in finding any solution that would render our Covenant more effective and its application simpler and above all less slow. Nevertheless, I feel in duty bound to say in all solemnity that my country can never take part in a reform of our fundamental charter such as will restrict its scope or create legal inequalities between the Members of the League, or in any way impair the strength of its fundamental principles, since it is for the sake of those principles that we are taking part in this international institution.

TWENTY-THIRD PLENARY MEETING

Friday, July 3rd, 1936, at 10 a.m.

CONTENTS:

President: M. VAN ZEELAND.

97. — PREPARATION OF A DRAFT TEXT FOR SUBSEQUENT SUBMISSION TO THE ASSEMBLY: PROPOSAL OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President:

Translation: The General Committee met last night and instructed me to submit, for the Assembly's approval, the following proposal in connection with the progress of the Assembly's work:

"The General Committee should be asked to take any points in the Assembly's discussions at recent meetings that might be included in a draft text for subsequent submission to the Assembly.

"In connection with the preparation of a text, the General Committee would be able to make such consultations and call for such assistance as it might consider useful."

That is the proposal I am instructed to put to you on behalf of the General Committee. Does it meet the wishes of the Assembly?

If there are no observations and no delegation desires to speak, I shall interpret the Assembly's silence as a sign of its assent, and shall accordingly convene the General Committee in the course of the day to carry out this study and to draft the proposed text under the conditions indicated.

The proposals of the General Committee were adopted.

98. — ELECTION OF TWO JUDGES OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE: INCLUSION OF THIS ITEM IN THE AGENDA OF THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President:

Translation: The General Committee, at yesterday evening's meeting, further instructed me

to put the following proposal with regard to two vacant seats on the Permanent Court of International Justice:

"The Council of the League of Nations decided, at its meeting of June 26th, 1936,[1] that, subject to the Assembly's approval, the elections to be held for the purpose of filling two seats which have become vacant at the Permanent Court of International Justice should take place at the seventeenth ordinary session of the Assembly in September next. The seats in question are those which have become vacant owing to the death of M. Schücking and the resignation of Mr. Kellogg."

If, therefore, the Assembly agrees to the General Committee's proposal, it will be endorsing the decision taken by the Council, and will hence be deciding, for its own part, to place the election of the two judges on the agenda of the seventeenth ordinary session of the Assembly.

If there are no observations and no delegation wishes to speak, I shall interpret the Assembly's silence as meaning that it approves the General Committee's proposal.

The proposal of the General Committee was adopted.

99. — SITUATION ARISING OUT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY: GENERAL DISCUSSION (continuation).

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the dispute between Ethiopia and Italy.

M. Monteiro, first delegate of Portugal, will address the Assembly.

M. Monteiro (Portugal):

Translation: The Portuguese Government recognises that the maintenance of the sanctions against Italy voted in October last is impossible and, in any case, useless.

The opinion of the Powers with which the real decision rests in this matter of sanctions weighs heavily in the balance to-day, as it did some months ago.

It is certain that no one unfurled the flag of sanctions with a light heart, and my own country's decision was taken with profound distress. We had no direct interest in the conflict. Sanctions represented a heavy sacrifice for us, which we accepted regretfully. We had to apply them against Italy, a country to which we were bound by firm friendship and a sincere admiration for its great record of achievement in recent years.

I should wound the pride of my fellow-countrymen if, ignoring the deference due to the vanquished in the present tragic circumstances, I make no mention of our old friendship with Ethiopia; in the sixteenth century, Portugal established relations between Ethiopia and Europe, and assisted the former to set up (as stated by an eminent English author) the religious and political structure which has lasted to the present day.

But the hour came when the defence of the principles of the Covenant appeared to us to be fundamental. Not to attempt to maintain those principles might have meant the extinction of the last hope of peace through collective security. It was our duty to take up the struggle for right, and we listened only to that dominant appeal.

We endeavoured as a loyal Member of the League to rise, in all the matters entrusted to us, to the high responsibilities incumbent on all countries. With complete loyalty, we followed the ideal of the Covenant. We believed the experiment we were making was to be carried through to the end.

To-day, we can say that sanctions have lost their *raison d'être*. They have not been successful in preventing war or in rendering it shorter or less distressing. Collective action has failed to safeguard the territorial integrity of Ethiopia. To persist in the present course would not merely be useless for the high cause of collective action and for the vanquished, it might even be dangerous for the peace of the world. The maintenance of sanctions would mean, at the present stage, the prolongation of conditions of uncertainty and unrest in Europe without infusing fresh life into Ethiopia. The intensification of sanctions would lead to war. So far as the world of political realities is concerned, sanctions have lost their meaning. The last crusade is over.

The Portuguese Government agrees with those previous speakers who have argued that sanctions must be raised. I have only to add that the effort of these last months should retain to the last the character it has borne hitherto. What was undertaken and enforced as a collective measure should be brought to an end as such.

But let it not be forgotten that the resolution which in present circumstances we consider to be inevitable is pregnant with consequences for the future. To ignore or underestimate those consequences would not be wise; still less would it be a service to the League of Nations.

Articles 11, 15 and 16 of the Covenant are only the means for rendering effective the guarantee of independence and territorial integrity which is embodied, with the support of the nations behind it, in Article 10. Article 10 contains the vital principle of the League, and is its very backbone. Take that article from the Covenant and the League is dead. Weaken it, and you weaken the organ for whose vitality and expansion we should all be proud to labour.

I have often heard it said that the Covenant is an instrument intended to achieve peace at any price. I object most strongly to that interpretation, which in no sense represents the spirit of this fundamental statute. The purpose of the Covenant was to guarantee the independence and territorial integrity of nations, even by war. Its aim is peace; but it could not play its proper part in human affairs if it did not make provision for contingencies in which present peace should be sacrificed to secure a lasting peace in the future. The Covenant made such provision.

We must simply recognise that the guarantees of Articles 15 and 16 have been inoperative in practice.

In raising sanctions, we admit the impossibility of ensuring the observance of certain fundamental provisions of the Covenant. That is the meaning of the act which I have just described as inevitable. It is a tacit avowal of a serious character.

It is clear that the measures prescribed in Articles 11, 15 and 16 are very vague and temporising and cannot arrest aggression. They do not increase the victim's means of defence. By creating an illusion of solidarity which does not exist, by exaggerating the victim's belief in his powers of resistance, they prolong war, intensify animosities, render agreement more difficult and defeat more tragic. In fact, the weaker party is thereby left as isolated in the struggle as if the guarantees of collective security were no more than a fair dream of the future.

Economic and financial sanctions will never be able to check the aggressor, or prevent the first shock of the attack. They will come too late in the conflict and their effect will always be too feeble. Armed with this weapon alone, we shall almost inevitably find ourselves faced with the irreparable.

Are we to resign ourselves to dealing with future difficulties — I refer to the method of application of the machinery provided in Articles 11, 15 and 16 — by means of a weapon which we have not succeeded in applying effectively?

[1] See *Official Journal*, July 1936, page 756.

It seems to me useless to discuss, at this disturbing juncture, whether the responsibility rests on man or on the written texts. I readily admit that all the evils have their origin in the lack of understanding, intelligence or goodwill on the part of public opinon: but that conclusion will not greatly assist, I think, the solution of the problem.

To say that all means of action are provided for in the Covenant, and that, if collective decisions have not stopped or prevented war, that is because we were too slow and hesitant, too conciliatory, weak and optimistic, is merely to admit that the texts are not in accordance with our present possibilities, perhaps because they are too idealistic and we on earth too imperfect. I know some will repeat that there must be a change of heart and not of the Covenant. I envy them their attractive optimism. Even if I thought such a metamorphosis possible, I should have difficulty in believing it could be rapid. I fully realise, however, that, as public opinion governs international affairs in a number of countries to-day, the education of the masses would serve a useful purpose; unless everyone understands the great needs of the commonwealth of nations, how can we prescribe the necessary remedies in time of crisis? But we must cherish no illusions; it will take much time to achieve results in this direction.

Until the nations are imbued with a new spirit, how shall we deal with ambition, violence, hard national egoism? How shall we achieve peace on earth, respect for elementary rights, a measure of justice and stability?

I am bound to admit that the Italo-Ethiopian dispute is a case in which it was exceptionally easy to take collective action. Unanimity was achieved almost spontaneously. If, in these circumstances, our efforts were unavailing, how can we hope for visible results in a more complicated case, when the nations may be more divided because of their interests or feelings?

Present methods have failed; we must find others. Otherwise, the nations here present will be responsible for I know not what impending disaster.

The technical and political difficulties in the way of reform are obviously enormous — they are so formidable that we may say the more cautious spirits shrink from them.

Do not let us imagine that they can be overcome with words alone. They create merciless scepticism, which will only yield to facts, to practical demonstration. I venture to affirm that, as long as treaties continue to be ignored with impunity, we cannot expect by promises or undertakings, however solemnly entered into, to restore faith in our actions. In the present state of affairs, collective security has more to gain from a grain of fact than from a thousand tons of words.

We must bear in mind, however, that our recent experience has brought to light certain valuable factors — positive and constructive factors — the importance of which must not be underestimated. In my opinion, they contain the key to useful modifications.

In the first place, we must put it on record that collective security is strongly supported by the medium and small countries, by those which have to rely on mutual support for the defence of their rights. These Powers have shown a strong desire to give practical effect to the principles laid down in the Covenant, and it is a not unhopeful sign that, in these distressing times, they have had the support, advice and guidance of certain big nations.

It is natural that we should anticipate great difficulties in uniting everyone in this very dangerous enterprise, for most of the Members of the League were not interested in the dispute and for them the Ethiopian drama was only a question of principle. Its significance did not touch many of them closely.

But it must be emphasised that the common sanctionist front was formed effortlessly, simply, naturally.

History will doubtless record the imperishable memory of fifty nations, in pursuance of a high ideal of peace, taking a decision — in this very hall which to-day witnesses its abandonment — that should in future exorcise the spectre of aggression and conquest. For one instant, we dreamed that the weak were at last heavily armed against the strong.

I must add that nearly all Governments faithfully fulfilled their obligations. In this last moment of struggle, the sanctionist front retains its original unity and discipline. It can truly be said that nearly every one of these fifty nations showed a spirit of self-sacrifice. They all made the effort which the collective organisation demanded of them, and if they did not press economic and financial sanctions further, it was because they recognised that more extensive action would be useless. That is proved by the work of the Co-ordination Committee. It is true that in many cases the measures enacted were put into force excessively slowly; our procedure was not intended for emergencies. But they were set in motion on a sure and broad basis; only the defeat of Ethiopia broke them down more rapidly than we anticipated.

We had, in the thick of the battle as it were, to devise a complex organisation for the study — I was going to say the invention — of methods of resistance, and the sanctionist machine was assembled in all its parts. Only one indispensable lever failed to operate: the great Powers did not always show the same spirit of solidarity as the others.

In my opinion, our experience proves not that the organisation is weak, but that the machinery, the means available, are weak.

We have seen clearly that collective security can be guaranteed by military sanctions alone. As in personal affairs, the time always comes when right must be supported by might. Eliminate sanctions from the life of right and crime, violence, unscrupulous audacity will triumph. Abandon once and for all the use of military sanctions, and you will have abandoned international order. You will have proclaimed the law of the jungle in the life of nations. You will never be able to realise your vision of disarmament. You are condemning yourself for ever to the slavery of war.

Statesmen, beguiled by a great ideal, will repeat that they want to make collective security a reality. But the reality will always belie their words.

We must confess to the nations that there is only one way to prevent aggression and conquest —the ability to enforce collective military sanctions.

The present instance has shown that no Government had the political means to go to that length. The nations are already willing to sacrifice certain material interests for the sake of collective security. But as yet they are unwilling, when their vital interests are not at stake, to run the ultimate risk for love of justice and for the sake of the independence of others. That is the melancholy lesson to be learned from the facts.

Without the League, Ethiopia would have paid for her weakness with her life; but, despite all its efforts, the League has not spared her her tragic death.

This being so, what can be the hope of the Members of the League? What justification for confidence in justice, right, equity are we giving

to those who, while they will never have big armed forces at their disposal, nevertheless desire to retain their place in the world as real forces of humanity, as traditional builders of civilisation?

Must we admit that there is nothing new in international life, and that, the search for stability based on collective guarantees having failed, nothing remains but the old friendships, the old co-ordination of interests, the traditional factors of security?

I believe one burning question is on the lips of many delegates — what will become of the League of Nations? Shall we not follow up the praiseworthy step taken by the Argentine Republic — a step that has given us this invaluable opportunity to discuss future co-operation parallel with a problem of justice which is giving us much food for thought?

We are certainly not prepared to adopt resolutions concerning the Covenant at this moment, but we must prepare those resolutions. There must be a full debate in September. Until then, we must endeavour to collect all the necessary material for a study of the problem. We must not part without telling the nations represented here that we intend to attempt the modest task of bringing the League back to the practical and possible. No one would wish it to be said that, after all our efforts, the League of Nations has been — and will be — nothing but a great market-place for the dreams of humanity, a great fair for the exchange of unrealisable promises.

At this hour in history — an hour the gravity of which has been recognised by all who have spoken — there are some nations which are entitled to know exactly what the League is able, loyally and effectively, to achieve. They have no doubt that the life of this institution will be brief if every time a dispute breaks out — and God knows what to-morrow will bring forth — we must rise to the heights, only to fall beyond recovery.

Let us quietly consider what guarantees the League can offer effectively, without ambiguity or hesitation. Let us be satisfied with little, but let that little be sure. Then step by step, we shall perhaps be able one day to reach the limit of our ideals.

My conclusion is that, in the sphere of collective security, a community which, though it offers but modest guarantees, does in fact provide them, is more valuable than an institution which, though it appears to give all, is in reality powerless. An institution of that kind leaves the nations as isolated and deserted in their struggle for independence, for integrity, for the right as if, in truth, it had no place in this world.

The President:

Translation: M. Barcia Trelles, first delegate of Spain, will address the Assembly.

M. Barcia Trelles (Spain):

Translation: I wish from the outset to express my gratitude to the Argentine Government for having promoted the convocation of this Assembly which gives us an opportunity to study and discuss the questions of worldwide importance now on our agenda.

It is neither strange nor surprising that we should all, in varying degrees, be troubled and perplexed. Our state of mind is but a reflection, in our own area of action within the League, of the crisis which is always experienced when the great universal principles of life have to be put into practice. Whereas, in the domain of thought, the governing ideas of social and international justice are gathering strength and achieving a greater measure of universality, in the sphere of acts and practical policy in the various countries, these lofty ideas are forgotten. This dramatic struggle between principles and facts, between ideas and action, produces situations of heartrending uncertainty such as that we are now witnessing.

Consequently, we must to-day — and this involves no paradox — assert more fervently than ever our faith in the League of Nations, our conviction that the world can only be saved by and through the League, by promoting its complete efficacy in the realm of collective security for the maintenance of peace. Otherwise the world will enter an era of suffering and will have to contend with difficulties of the worst kind.

Spain, by solemnly reasserting here her deep and sincere attachment to the League of Nations, is giving voice to an immutable national sentiment. I can say that Spain is second to none in her love of peace. Our people, at present in the throes of an internal struggle between conflicting political ideals and tendencies, between forces the contrasting character of which cannot be concealed, reverts to absolute unanimity when it is a question of maintaining peace and working to ensure the triumph of justice in international life. This is so true that when, without reservation or hesitancy, I assert this real and sincere attachment to the basic principles of the League, I am only fulfilling the strict duty imposed by our Constitution upon every member of the Spanish Government. The love of peace, the sentiment of justice and of law have led Spanish legislators to incorporate in the Constitution the essential rules of the Covenant. Thus Article 6 of our Constitution reads: "Spain renounces war as an instrument of national policy", a solemn declaration in our fundamental Statute which is without parallel in any other national political code.

In order to give expression to this national desire for external peace and international justice, Article 7 of the Constitution lays down that "The Spanish State will be governed by the universal rules of international law and will incorporate them in its positive law". The same peaceful intentions and the same respect for law are manifest in Article 65, which states that "all international conventions ratified by Spain and registered with the League of Nations having the character of international law shall be regarded as an integral part of Spanish law". Along this same juridical pathway, respect for treaties thus solemnly concluded has led the Spanish Parliament unhesitatingly to limit its own sovereign freedom by declaring, in its Constitution, that "no laws may be promulgated which are in contradiction with these Conventions unless the said Conventions have been previously denounced, in conformity with the procedure laid down in their text".

The Assembly will therefore readily understand that when, in no ambiguous terms, I assert Spain's attachment to the League and to the basic principles of the Covenant, I am not merely expressing a sentiment of peace which the Spanish people cherishes in its innermost soul; I am also fulfilling the duty imposed upon me by the fundamental law of our Republic.

That is in itself an adequate explanation of the fact that, whenever there has been any question of modifying the Covenant, the Spanish delegation has expressed doubt and hesitancy. But there are also other reasons which I will venture to explain to you. What is the scope and intention of this so-called reform of the Covenant? Up to the present, no one has stated its essential character or the bounds to be set to such reform, and I, for one, cannot see how it is possible to endeavour to reach agreement on a matter that has not been defined.

Let us leave on one side temporarily this insurmountable difficulty and for the moment admit what is inadmissible, that we are all agreed as to what is to be done. Even then, it would

hardly be possible to speak of "reform", because reform can only be carried out by means of amendments, and you are all aware how difficult this method is to apply. The history of the League of Nations, and experience, have proved that the system of amendments is very difficult to put into practice. That is why I still maintain that the policy of reform is beset with danger because, if the reform does not materialise, what will be the moral and juridical situation of the League of Nations, with a Covenant that has, in practice, been denounced by the proclamation of reform, while the new law — the reformed law destined to take the place of the Covenant — has not secured approval?

As the problem is not due to intrinsic defects of the Covenant but to its defective application, it is the method of application above all that calls for reform. The truth is not only that the Covenant has not been applied, but that — far worse — it has been badly and only partly applied. The law is good; what is bad is the way in which it has been administered. The best juridical instrument becomes bad when it is badly applied.

We have just conducted an experiment with the system provided in Article 16 against an aggressor. This experiment, it cannot be denied, has been an unfortunate one. But Article 16 has only been applied partly, in the form of its first clauses intended to prevent or repair an international evil. What we have to ask ourselves at present is whether we are prepared, in future, to apply the Covenant purely and simply. That is the whole problem.

In short, what needs reform is the practice, the procedure and spirit in which the Covenant is applied. Nothing but that, but nothing less than that. Our essential object is to prevent war and, if war breaks out, to overcome it and stifle it. Are we firmly decided and prepared to re-establish the authority of the League of Nations for this supreme purpose? If so, without altering the Covenant — rather, in fact, by adhering to its letter and spirit — let us seek means to achieve this aim.

Is it your intention to endeavour to strengthen Article 16 of the Covenant and to reinforce the authority of this great international organ? Do not forget, in any case, that Article 16 cannot produce its full effect without the application of Article 8. This article, which is essential to the life and working of the League of Nations, is — for reasons which I will not discuss at present — not only overlooked but entirely neglected. At the meeting of the Council in London in March last,[1] the Spanish delegation stated this opinion, which, we are honoured and glad to note, has now received both a personal and official endorsement by M. Léon Blum, the illustrious head of the French Government. He reminded us the day before yesterday in striking terms that it was the duty of all of us to apply Article 8, in order that Article 16 might acquire its full force and produce its complete effect.

You are aware that hitherto Spain has refrained from arming. She hopes that the military forces of all countries will at any rate be limited. Since she has set that example, she feels that she is morally entitled to say to you: Observe and respect the Covenant in its entirety, and the fruits we have not been able to gather to-day will be gathered later. The mere disappearance of Article 16 would necessarily and automatically lead to the formation of politico-military organisations which would constitute an undoubted menace, an imminent danger, and an inevitable evil.

This close relationship between Articles 8 and 16 is only one proof of the fundamental unity of the Covenant. Our fundamental charter should be regarded as a logically conceived effort to ensure international peace. In this effort, all the component parts are of equal value, and each is necessary to the others. Peace must be based on justice, and justice cannot be a frozen concept since life itself is essentially fluid. A further proof of the unity of the Covenant is afforded by the need to strengthen those of its clauses which provide for the peaceful modification of established international conditions.

There can be little doubt that the delicate situation in which we are placed to-day is largely a result of the tendency — the excessive tendency, in my opinion — to rely on the virtues of Article 16 and neglect those of Article 11. We cannot too often repeat in the Assembly that, whatever changes are made in its theory or practice, the Covenant will always be much more effective as an instrument for preventive action than as an instrument for punitive action.

I do not propose, after so many other speakers, to devote to the analysis of our failure any observations save those I have just made. I am in entire sympathy with the distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom when he asks us to look courageously at the facts. Of all the dangers which threaten the League of Nations, the greatest is that of allowing ourselves to be lulled by mere illusions or to work ourselves up to enthusiasm over splendid resolutions that will never be implemented. His Britannic Majesty's Secretary of State and other speakers have told us that sanctions as at present applied have lost their usefulness in view of the existing situation in Abyssinia.

If the Assembly agrees with this point of view, Spain will be ready to raise the sanctions.

It should, however, be observed that, although the sanctions we have applied are a matter of national sovereignty, the nations which decided to put them into force very wisely adopted a method of application which co-ordinated their efforts and gave them a general form of unity. We consider that for very many reasons, of which those of a technical character are certainly not negligible, we should adopt, to terminate sanctions, the same method we followed in inaugurating them.

If it is for the Assembly to take the necessary initial decision, we think it is for the Co-ordination Committee to make the proposal to the States responsible for the final decision. This decision cannot be regarded as any sort of modification of our principles.

In this connection, to prove the continuity of our policy, may I refer to the very words which my predecessor, M. Zulueta used in this Assembly on March 5th, 1932:[1] "Spain reaffirms in this Assembly the axiom enunciated by twelve members of the Council (including Spain) to the effect that the Members of the League cannot recognise any political or administrative changes brought about by force or in disregard of the principles of the Covenant or of the Pact of Paris".

We are entirely in agreement with those who consider that the decisions we are about to take should not in any way weaken our faith in the League. Circumstances have not made it possible for Members of the League to fulfil their obligations as fully as they would have wished; but it is by asserting on each occasion with greater force our will to fulfil our engagements as completely as conditions will allow that we will finally triumph

[1] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part I), page 330.

[1] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 101, page 54.

over these very disturbing circumstances, the most serious of which is the lack of universality, with all the dangers and uncertainties due to the existence of vast regions of the earth in which our writ is unfortunately not yet recognised.

The President:

Translation: M. de Blanck, delegate of Cuba, will address the Assembly.

M. de Blanck (Cuba):

Translation: I will confine myself to a very short statement, as I do not intend to go into the substance of questions which have already been fully discussed by the League.

My Government is happy to state that it supports the principles recalled by the first delegate of the Argentine Republic in his speech on Tuesday;[1] principles which, as he said, represent "the spiritual inheritance of the whole American continent". Realising, however, that nothing can change in any respect the events which have taken place, however great the goodwill of the large majority of Members of the League, my Government, desirous to do what it may to prevent the political situation in Europe from becoming more threatening than it is at present, will collaborate with the League in applying any measures it may consider advisable for the maintenance of peace.

I need scarcely add, therefore, as regards the question of sanctions (which, as has been said, have proved ineffective, and could only uselessly prolong the present economic and political crisis) that my country expects them to be raised as quickly as possible.

As regards the reform of the Covenant, which is again being discussed, my Government, although it holds that the Covenant is an admirable instrument which only needs very slight modification, but more obedience to its principles, and that the resources it provides have so far only been used to a very slight extent and in an uncertain manner, is nevertheless ready to examine any suggestion of value. Until international life has developed on lines satisfactory to every country, and until the League of Nations has become universal, and furthermore, in order that the justice administered at Geneva may not be incomplete and that the League may not have to meet with further setbacks, my Government wonders whether the League should not confine itself, as it did until a short time ago, to carrying out only the policy it followed for many years — that of conciliation. If it did not seek to do too much, this policy would no doubt help to strengthen with its growing moral force, to uphold and perpetuate that clear faith — which the Covenant seems to epitomise — that definition which the ancient jurisconsults gave to justice such as we all desire it for each other: A constant will to give every man his rights.

One word before I finish: The pessimists are taking delight once more — and it will not be for the last time — in burying the League of Nations. They exaggerate, for the League still has on its side the optimists, and those who are called simple men, but of whom there are, after all, very many. Those who are faithful to the League, but are disheartened by its weaknesses, and those who are only able to find fault with it, ought perhaps to remember that we cannot and ought not to expect too much from the brief existence of a very young organisation, slowly growing up in a world which is very old, and which sometimes shows very little wisdom.

The President:

Translation: M. Zaldumbide, delegate of Ecuador, will address the Assembly.

[1] See page 21.

M. Zaldumbide (Ecuador):

Translation: I will confine myself to a very short statement on my Government's attitude to the three questions which have been placed before this Assembly.

My Government, which was the first to declare that the sanctions proclaimed against Italy were no longer justified, since Italy, in response to the League's appeal, had declared herself ready to enter upon negotiations for peace, cannot but rejoice at the movement which has put an end to these measures; for there was a danger that they might have become solely punitive, which the Covenant never intended them to be. It repeats its ardent hope that this improvement in a situation which had become untenable may prepare the way for mutual understanding with a view to the attainment of lasting peace.

My Government regards the declaration made at Washington on August 3rd, 1932, and also the Treaty of Rio de Janeiro, of October 10th, 1933, as fundamental instruments, enjoining upon it the duty of proclaiming on this occasion its devotion to the principles of law and to the international guarantees which protect the territorial integrity of States.

These principles of universal law, which have already been recognised and given expression in Article 10 of the Covenant, and which have come down to us as part of a body of traditions, have been incorporated and more explicitly stated in certain American Conventions. When it signed those Conventions, my country proclaimed its unshakable devotion to principles which, in our continent, could not admit of exceptions or be given divergent interpretations. My Government thought it highly desirable therefore that the universality of these principles should be reaffirmed here, as has been requested by the country which included them in an important American pact.

With regard to the reforms of the League which this crisis has suggested to various Governments, my country holds that, if the League is to benefit by this experience, we should accept such reforms as would enable us to advance along the path opened up by the Covenant itself, in its present form, in the direction of regional agreements between countries whose community of interests and common destinies would ensure greater effectiveness in joint action, and, as regards the consequences of such action, a more natural distribution of the responsibilities assumed with full knowledge of the facts.

My Government, which is in favour of reforms that would widen and not restrict the framework of the League, reserves its right to present certain other points when the various proposals for reform are submitted to us at the next Assembly. Although sincerely desirous of collaborating in any measure which would promote conciliation and peace in no matter what part of the world — peace being a universal blessing — my Government does not think that the abstract conception of the universality of principles is enough to induce far-distant countries to intervene, at moments of crisis, in remote disputes that would be doubly foreign to them, and of which they would feel only the consequences while being unable to remedy the causes, which would escape them.

Just as, at the time of the Chaco dispute, you willingly relied upon us to settle that dispute among ourselves — which we did without going outside the framework of the League — so also it should be permissible for us now to rely upon Europe to settle, in the supreme interest of peace and for the greater advantage of the League itself, the situation in which Europe now finds itself.

The world's most urgent and vital need is peace in Europe. Our civilisation itself depends on it. Perhaps there is reason to hope that the very

complexity of the situation will provide the elements of a solution compatible with justice. My Government has wondered whether a special enquiry should not be made into all the aspects of this situation. It is only by a careful and thorough study of this kind that we can derive from this very special case — a repetition of which can hardly be conceived of elsewhere, both as regards its causes and its consequences — a valuable lesson for the future. Just as the application or the raising of sanctions — as has been recognised — depends upon the sovereignty of the different States, similarly it is in the exercise of their sovereignty that States must deal with the situation which has been brought about by these events. Since that situation imposes duties on the States, each Government must examine it with reference to its own obligations, and in accordance with the Conventions that govern its international policy and its moral conceptions, seeking a way out of the sometimes inextricable confusion of causes and of consequences.

The President:

Translation: M. Koht, first delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

M. Koht (Norway):

Translation: A few days ago, when the Assembly resumed its work, an Italian newspaper wrote: "Geneva has become the reign of equivocation". I hope that it will no longer be possible to make that assertion when we have finished our work, because it is a fair request and a duty common to us all that we should not remain on equivocal ground, but should find a clear settlement for our problems. We must therefore not be content with generalities, however true or brilliant they may be; we must try to tackle the questions involved and state our opinion on them in plain language.

We have been convened here to-day to consider the situation which has arisen through the development of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, and the first question which arises and which calls for immediate solution is that of the sanctions adopted last year.

We all admit — indeed, it is useless to deny the facts — that the action started by the League in this matter has ended in failure. We have not succeeded in stopping the war; we have not prevented the conquest of Ethiopia by the Italian armies. Does this mean, however, that we were wrong in making the attempt? Must we also admit that the reasons and motives by which we were actuated were unjust? Not at all.

You remember what those reasons and what our motives were. With very few exceptions, we all agreed in declaring that Italy, by sending her armies across the Ethiopian frontiers, had committed an act of illicit aggression or, to use the very words of the Covenant, that she had resorted to war in disregard of her covenants entered into as a Member of the League. After noting that fact, we similarly agreed to follow up our conviction by material sanctions, in order to prevent the consequences of the regrettable action taken by Italy. Here we were actuated by devotion to the ideal of justice, being anxious to bring about the triumph of that ideal. This action on the part of fifty nations, working in unison, constitutes an historic event.

Our efforts have not achieved the purpose we had in view. That means a defeat for us all, and we might perhaps say that it is a humiliation for the League. But we have no reason to be ashamed of admitting that we have been beaten. But it would be a shameful humiliation if, when accepting defeat, we lowered ourselves to admitting that the ideal we had before us was false. Every nation has its honour; and the League of Nations too has its honour to defend. It would be unworthy of our Assembly to recommend the raising of sanctions without proclaiming aloud that our action, undertaken to arrest the war, was based upon fair considerations and sacred duties. If, at this moment of defeat, we failed to recall calmly and without hatred the facts we noted and the decisions we took last year, that would be tantamount to adding moral defeat to material defeat, which the League of Nations could never survive.

For my part, I hope and believe that our League will live on and will be strengthened to achieve its object of international peace.

I therefore turn to the second problem which arises from the present situation — that of drawing, from this defeat the proper conclusions, with a view to the future functioning of the League. I do not propose to repeat what has already been said here on this subject. We all know that the problem is too vast and intricate to be solved in the course of this session of the Assembly; it will be the business of the next Assembly to undertake a thorough discussion of the questions of reform, and I assume that this matter will be placed on the agenda of our meeting in September. I think, however, that it has been very useful to hear the opinions and the various suggestions put forward by so many eminent members of this Assembly, and I venture to add a few personal observations.

Much has been said in the course of our meetings last autumn, and also during these last days, of the loyalty which we owe, and which we intend to observe, to the Covenant, and we may say — despite the justifiable reservations made by the first delegate of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics — that that loyalty has proved to be a reality in the course of the present crisis.

Nevertheless, you cannot fail to have observed that these assurances and proofs of loyalty have had reference more especially to a particular article of the Covenant, which is, indeed, the article most bristling with difficulties: I refer to the famous Article 16, that deals with sanctions. But this article is in reality only the last stone in the great structure of the League. It deals with a case in which war has already broken out, and it leads, in the final analysis, to the taking of military measures — that is to say, to a war conducted by the League of Nations itself.

Now, nothing can be more certain than this, that the League of Nations was not founded to wage war; it was created as an instrument of peace, and it is as such that it should be maintained.

It is, therefore, important to demand, in the first place, that loyalty should be shown to the Covenant in respect of all those provisions which relate more especially to the safeguarding and organising of international peace; and if we look around us in the political world, I think we shall immediately agree in recognising that the greatest danger of war which exists at the present moment is the armaments race in which all nations are at present engaged. These increases of armaments are directly contrary to Article 8 of the Covenant, which imposes upon the Members of the League a categorical obligation to reduce their armaments. I was therefore extremely glad the other day when I heard the very definite statement made upon this subject by the first delegate of France,[1] and I take much pleasure in recalling his courageous words to the effect that "disarmament is the condition of complete security". We ought also to add that it is a condition upon which the possibility of carrying through to a successful conclusion coercive measures under Article 16 likewise depends.

On many sides, the idea has latterly been expressed, though in rather different ways, that,

[1] See page 27.

if it should prove impossible, or even undesirable, for us all to close our ranks and unite in making an advance towards measures of that kind, we might achieve the object of Article 16 by means of regional agreements. I must concur in the doubts expressed on this subject by the first delegate of the Netherlands.[1] It is useless to conceal the menace which might lurk in such regional pacts — that is to say, the possibility of their turning into military alliances. And if we do not wish to see the League of Nations take the form of a grand military alliance, all the less can we desire to witness the formation of groups of this kind within the League itself.

To safeguard peace it is far better to strengthen the operation of all those articles of the Covenant that are designed to prevent war and to prepare for a universal conciliation of the nations.

In this connection, I am in entire agreement with the remarks of the first delegate of Denmark on Articles 10 and 11,[2] which should not be allowed to remain a dead letter. But I desire, in this connection, to draw your attention to the hitherto unused opportunities which are offered by Article 19 for the prevention of future conflicts.

This article, which opens the door to an examination by the League of all those "international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world" — to use the terms of the Covenant — has often been viewed with fear and mistrust, because it has been regarded more especially as a starting-point for radical revision. I think, on the contrary, that it should be regarded as a very useful safety device, and even revision itself is, after all, not so much a thing to be feared. During the last few days, in fact, a start has been made upon the peaceful revision of the treaties concerning the demilitarisation of the Straits. Moreover, if readiness had been shown to act in good time, in accordance with the recommendation contained in this article, it might have proved possible to avoid the deplorable violations of treaties by Germany.

None can doubt that in several areas of the world at present there are international situations pregnant with the danger of disputes, and even of war, which call for examination on impartial and conciliatory lines for the sake of universal peace.

I do not wish to suggest that we should here and now go into these very delicate questions, but I venture to recall the important statements presented at this Assembly last autumn by the then first delegate of the United Kingdom, Sir Samuel Hoare.[3] He brought forward the idea of resuming consideration of colonial questions in their full scope, and more especially from the economic point of view. That is an idea that should not be overlooked when we come to consider the preventive measures to be taken against future wars.

I have stressed all these possibilities which are afforded by the Covenant for the prevention of disputes, and consequently for the safeguarding of peace, in order to point out how many duties are imposed upon us in this connection by reason of our membership of the League of Nations. A recent communication from seven nations represented here stated, with reference to Article 16 and sanctions, that, so long as the Covenant as a whole is applied incompletely and without consistency, we are obliged to take account of this fact in the enforcement of that article. That does not mean that we desire to see Article 16 struck out of the Covenant: on the contrary, it means that we desire to strengthen the operation of all the articles of the Covenant which are directed to the establishment of a real international society based upon law, so that coercive sanctions may be put into operation with the certainty that they will be effective, or — what would be infinitely preferable — that they may become superfluous. That, in my opinion, is the true programme of the League.

The President:

Translation: M. Yvon Delbos, Minister for Foreign Affairs, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. Yvon Delbos (France):

Translation: The first delegate of France has defined the position of his Government in respect of the problems that are being considered here. Many delegations have, in their turn, stated the views of their Governments. I now venture to indicate the conclusions of an immediately practical character that may, in our opinion, be drawn from this discussion.

As the outcome of the setback which the League has just sustained, a serious doubt has entered men's minds as to its possibilities of action, and that is one of the causes — perhaps the principal cause — of the general feeling of disquiet.

Is it surprising, however, that an edifice so complex as collective security cannot be built in a day, that the world cannot pass by a sudden mutation, from the reign of force to the reign of justice?

A more exact realisation of the difficulties should both preserve us from excessive disappointment and also help us to overcome that disappointment.

If, in the painful drama of the past few months, the League has sustained a setback, it is because the weapons of the Covenant have not been used with their full effectiveness by a community which still lacks the skill to wield them. It is not the fault of the Covenant; the Covenant deserves our full confidence in its principles and in its virtues.

France rejects in advance any proposal that would impair the structure or the spirit of the Covenant. There can be no question of transforming its bases, but only of strengthening it by improving its application.

It would in particular be a serious mistake to compromise the principle of universality. Though the interests and aspirations peculiar to each continent must be taken into account, nothing could be more unwise than to separate them. Each of them may, moreover, consider its own particular task through organs such as the Commission for European Union or the Pan-American Union, but without breaking the ties that should unite the community of peoples.

But the surest way of destroying universality would be to claim to ensure it better by whittling down the character and the scope of the obligations imposed by the Covenant. The League of Nations would become a mere vain name if, on the pretext of better upholding it or of extending it, the essential principles of responsibility and collective action which are embodied in the Covenant were sacrificed. To reduce the League's rôle to a purely consultative one would be to deal it the severest of blows. It is for that reason, above all, that we regard with mistrust plans of reform which would modify the text, because here the letter is the guardian of the spirit.

The French delegation will therefore not propose any fundamental amendment to the Covenant; indeed, it will not propose any amendment at all, because it does not want to call into question any of its principles and thereby weaken both its influence and its action.

But our efforts should be directed towards evolving a practical method of strengthening the effectiveness of the Covenant. We must take realities as our starting-point; realities of politics

[1] See page 44.
[2] See page 41.
[3] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, page 45.

and of national psychology, realities of geography and of national interest.

One important result would be achieved if the Assembly in September were able to adopt resolutions enabling every State to know more exactly on what support it might count from the collectivity of nations.

Our immediate action must therefore bear upon the conditions governing preventive action and those governing punitive action by the League. Article 11, Article 16, those are the provisions of the Covenant for the application of which the next ordinary session of the Assembly should, in our opinion, adopt decisive interpretations.

Let us first take Article 11. The Covenant places upon the Council, in the event of a threat of war, the duty of taking any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. But the legal practice in virtue of which any decision taken must — apart from specified exceptions — be unanimous has led in this connection to the most singular consequences. For any State threatening peace can by its vote hold up all pacific action. That is a paradox, an absurdity that has long ago been denounced and to which more than a year ago a Committee of the Council vainly sought to put an end.

The French Government, however, does not attack the unanimity rule in general; it does not forget that the League of Nations respects the sovereignty of States. Moreover, the assent of those concerned is essential when there is a proposal to take measures which have to be applied upon their own territory or which, in any case, call for their collaboration. But, if efforts at conciliation should fail, the pacific action of the Council must not be paralysed by the attitude of the one already contemplating aggression. It is important that the Council should be able to place every obstacle in the way of the approaching war, and its action should not be made subject to the vote of the State that wishes to provoke war.

The French Government refuses to believe that an over-formalism should have the effect of depriving Article 11 of all real efficacity.

The authors of the Covenant laid down in Article 16 the principles of punitive collective action. Of those principles nothing, in our opinion, should be abolished. The French Government considers that the obligation to establish general solidarity in its economic and financial form, as embodied in paragraph 1, should be maintained; so also the Council's right to make recommendations of a military character, as is provided for in paragraph 2, should also be maintained; and so, finally, should the principles of mutual support embodied in paragraph 3.

But we must profit from the lessons of experience. We know to-day that, to stop a war, it is vain to count upon the exclusive employment of measures of an economic and financial character. We know that graduated sanctions will most frequently prove ineffective, that we cannot make concessions to war, that we cannot hope that the length of a conflict will enable us to overcome it. It is at the very outset of aggression that the community must assume its responsibilities, take its decisions, decide upon their application. It is at the very outset that it must set in motion the whole of the means available, including the means of force that are at its disposal.

Our urgent duty is, therefore, to seek the methods best calculated to bring into closer relationship, within the application of the Covenant, those measures which are intended for the exertion of economic and financial pressure and those which are devoted to the use of military means. In our view, it is in the organisation of new regional understandings or in the tightening-up of those which already exist, that a solution may be found. By regional understandings we mean understandings between any group of Powers whose union is based upon geographical situation or upon a community of interests.

With such a system, nations will know exactly on what support they can count in all cases — regional support made definite and strengthened, on which there would be superimposed the obligations of the international community as defined by the Covenant.

Those are the remedies which, in our view, are called for by the present situation.

We must attempt what is most urgent; the most urgent is to restore to the nations confidence in the machinery for security which it was the object of the Covenant to provide.

In order to proceed rapidly, the French delegation therefore proposes that a decision should be taken at once to the effect that the Governments of States Members should be invited to forward to the Secretary-General, by August 15th at latest, any observations or proposals which they think should be submitted with a view to the more effective application of Articles 11 and 16.

We ask that, by whatever method may be deemed appropriate, there should be a first study of these observations and proposals with a view to the preparation of a report for submission to the September session. The forthcoming Assembly would thus be in a position to embark upon an orderly and methodical discussion of the problem, and could, before separating, adopt resolutions defining the conditions for the application of the articles in question. In that way, we should reduce to a minimum a period of uncertainty the protraction of which would only enhance existing dangers.

It is by the clearness of its votes, by the rapidity of its decisions, that at the present moment the League may best give proof of its vitality and of its determination to overcome the crisis in confidence from which it is suffering. That is the task which we invite the Assembly to take in hand.

100. — DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY: DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION.

The President:

Translation: The Ethiopian delegation has just handed in two draft resolutions, which I will now read to the Assembly.

The first resolution is as follows:

"The Assembly recalls the terms of Articles 10 and 16 of the Covenant, to which it declares its faithful adherence. Accordingly, it proclaims that it will recognise no annexation obtained by force."

The second resolution is as follows:

"The Assembly, desirous of affording Ethiopia the assistance to which Article 16 entitles it, in order that it may defend its territorial integrity and political independence, decides to recommend to the Governments of the States Members to give their guarantee to the loan of £10,000,000, which will be issued by Ethiopia under the conditions to be fixed by the Council after an opinion has been given by the Financial Committee of the League of Nations."

In accordance with the usual procedure, these draft resolutions will be printed and distributed to delegations.

At the beginning of the present meeting, the Assembly decided to entrust to its General Committee the work of study and drafting in connection with the question which is at present under discussion. In these circumstances, may I ask the Assembly whether it considers it convenient to adopt the procedure of referring the two draft resolutions submitted by the Ethiopian delegation to the General Committee, to be added to the other texts placed at its disposal.

If there are no observations, I shall consider the proposed method of procedure adopted.

The President's proposal was adopted.

TWENTY-FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

Friday, July 3rd, 1936, at 3.30 p.m.

CONTENTS :

President : M. VAN ZEELAND.

101. — SITUATION ARISING OUT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY : CLOSE OF THE GENERAL DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The agenda consists of the continuation of the discussion of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute.

M. Tudela, first delegate of Peru, will address the Assembly.

M. Tudela (Peru) :

Translation : On the initiative of the delegation of the Argentine Republic, the Assembly has been convened so that the States Members of the League might assume their responsibilities and express their views in respect of the problems which at the present time are confronting the pacific organisation of the world. I desire therefore to explain the attitude of the Government of Peru.

The Argentine delegation referred to the American tradition of adherence to fundamental principles of law. We recall those principles : free determination and the legal *uti possidetis* as rules for the delimitation of frontiers, respect for territorial integrity thus constituted, and the practice of arbitration for the settlement of international conflicts.

The Argentine delegation enumerated the historic stages that have led the American continent towards the consolidation of its international statute, recalling the agreements and continental congresses of 1826, 1847, 1856 and 1864, the initiative for or convocation of which proceeded from the Lima Government.

It will be easy to understand, therefore, the firmness with which my country has maintained and still maintains the doctrines and principles already enunciated, and its set purpose of helping to secure their final establishment, not only in America, but throughout the whole world.

Hence the accession of Peru to the universal organisation of Geneva, to which organisation, together with the co-operation of Brazil, it owes the happy settlement of the dispute which in 1932 affected our relations with Colombia.

The Leticia dispute, like the Chaco dispute, shows that the universality of the League's action is subject to factors that must be taken into account precisely because of those characteristic features which differentiate international American problems from international European problems.

Indeed, just as the former are simplified through the existence of the American juridical tradition, so are the second complicated by political and ethnical backgrounds and also by economic, geographical and colonial interests. It is not surprising, therefore, that, during the negotiations for a settlement of the Leticia and Chaco disputes within the League, the tendency developed for the settlement to be left to, and the rules of the Covenant to be applied through, the mediating action, more or less accentuated, of adjacent or neighbouring States whose interests were affected by the consequences of those conflicts. This tendency became a real doctrine during the Chaco conflict, when declarations were made by the representatives of the great European Powers, those very Powers who to-day are most concerned with the East African conflict.

We consider it desirable to recall this past history in order to explain the attitude which we think should be adopted by the American countries at the present time — namely, that we should recognise that the European Governments more directly concerned in the Italo-Ethiopian conflict should be given authority to take the initiative as regards means for finding a settlement of that conflict in the spirit of the Covenant.

The Peruvian delegate spoke as follows in the Chaco Advisory Committee in May 1935 :[1] " With this in mind, I see no objection to the tendency to leave the examination and settlement of problems, even disputes, to the Members of the League of Nations whose interests are most affected thereby. The principle of the universality of the League, which is so fundamental, is maintained by this kind of mandate, specific or tacit, which the League confers on those Members which are most competent to work on its behalf for the cause of concord and peace."

Confirming these ideas, the Peruvian Government reasserts its adherence to the traditional principles of international American policy, which is its own policy. It can only appreciate everything that may be done to settle the difficulties of the present moment in order to avoid the grave perils which now threaten humanity.

My Government has made certain fundamental declarations with regard to the problem now before the Assembly, and has given its opinion in favour of raising the sanctions that were imposed on Italy, as it considers that, according to Article 16 of the Covenant, those sanctions are henceforth without any object.

Being animated by a spirit which is at once doctrinaire and realist, Peru maintains her adherence to the League, and will collaborate in any efforts for its improvement, taking due account of the universality of its action and of regional interests which impose limitations on undertakings and responsibilities devolving from the Covenant.

The President :

Translation : M. Parra Pérez, first delegate of Venezuela, will address the Assembly.

M. Parra Pérez (Venezuela) :

Translation : I do not intend to deliver a long speech or to prolong this discussion, which is one of the most important that has ever taken place in the Assembly. It is an acknowledged fact that, among the problems now under consideration by the League, there are some which cannot be hastily settled during the present session, since they

[1] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 133, page 33.

involve the consideration, not only of purely theoretical factors, but also of the present political situation of the world, and also consideration of what have been described here as the grave perils that threaten the peace of Europe, and even the future of civilisation itself.

The Venezuelan Government is prepared to collaborate, when the time comes, in seeking solutions which will make it possible to realise the essential aims of the League of Nations, which is not an end in itself, but a means for preserving peace between nations.

There is, however, one question on which most of the delegations have already spoken — the question of the sanctions that have been adopted with regard to Italy. I have to say that my Government also notes that the application of sanctions has become useless and they should be discontinued.

The President:

Translation: M. Costa du Rels, delegate of Bolivia, will address the Assembly.

M. Costa du Rels (Bolivia):

Translation: When more than twenty speakers have discussed the same subject from the same platform, those who then venture to come to that platform encounter one difficulty and at the same time find one advantage. The advantage is that they have nothing to say; the difficulty is that they have to draw conclusions.

I will turn the advantage to account by being brief, and will overcome the difficulty by being frank.

Before I proceed with my statement — which, as I say, will be brief — I want to put the classic question: What is it all about? After recent events in Africa, the consequences of which will influence world politics for a long time to come, the question is whether the League of Nations can still freely play its conciliatory and salutary part, whether the League is a reality or simply an unsubstantial bulwark, and whether what remains is worth more than what has been destroyed. Yet, in the political conception of the Covenant there lies an idea, and there is also a means of execution. The means has undeniably failed; but all the views that have been voiced from this platform show that, in spite of everything, the idea still lives and remains intact.

The League does not, therefore, rest upon a theory; it is a genuine necessity. The transient errors of some, the unenlightened self-interest of others, cannot plunge the world again into a new phase of moral and material confusion which would be incompatible with the very existence of civilisation.

The American States, several of whose representatives have voiced their ideals from this platform on acceding to the League, sought in it, not only the key to their own present problems, but the very foundation of their future existence. Hence their misgivings when they are confronted with facts, which, if recognised, might exercise a dangerous influence on the very standards of international relations.

The moral and juridical reasons which were so eloquently laid before you by M. Cantilo, delegate of the Argentine Republic, and which led his Government to ask for the convening of this Assembly at the very time when the stage of the final settlement of the Chaco dispute is about to be entered upon, are also shared by the Bolivian Government. I need hardly explain to you, therefore, the spirit of understanding which prompts me to bring the support of my country to this action, which has had the good effect of giving the world conscience a further opportunity of adequately reviewing the situation.

In order that I may be the better understood, may I venture to remind you that Bolivia, in the course of a sanguinary war, had the privilege of laying its dispute before an extraordinary Assembly of the League? Loyal to its undertakings under the Covenant, it accepted all the recommendations adopted unanimously by the Assembly of November 1934. Thereafter, it decided to be guided by the decisions of the Assembly of May 20th, 1935,[1] by agreeing to proceed to Buenos Aires to negotiate the terms of a Protocol that, very happily, put an end to hostilities.

The Chaco dispute still remains, however. Time, instead of attenuating it, may suddenly accentuate it again. Accordingly, we cannot emphasise too strongly the guiding principles which govern any solution. These are the very principles that the Argentine Government has enumerated as being the pillars on which the whole of American policy rests — that is to say, the principle of the legal *uti possidetis*, arbitration and non-recognition of the acquisition of territories by force.

Reference has been made here to the possibility of a mass withdrawal of the American nations from Geneva. The world has shrunk too considerably in recent times to be weakened still further by the isolation of continents on the ground that faith has been disappointed. I know there are certain dissolving forces at work engaged in the work of disintegration, sowing panic, arousing pessimism, deepening discouragement. But that is a kind of defeatism of peace which may prove more harmful to those who propagate it than to those who have to bear it. To destroy is easy; but what are we being offered in exchange?

We must not be too easily influenced or led away by the old idea of natural goodness, of which Geneva itself was the cradle more than a hundred years ago. In order that we may judge matters aright, we should remember that the principles to which we, the American peoples, are pledged have cost us more than a century of bitter strife and painful sacrifice, failure following upon success and hope following upon failure.

Relations between State and State are only relations of interest. Juridical relations are, in their essence, the relations between constituent members of a society. To establish a legal order, an order of law, amounts in practice to the static establishment of a particular social system. The social relationship is, therefore, not a relationship between State and State, but between a State and a purpose, and, through that purpose, between State and State. This purpose, this idea, which has been welded into a reality in the crucible of the League Covenant, represents one of the finest achievements of the world conscience. That is why, whatever may be thought and whatever may be said, notwithstanding the difficulties of the hour, Geneva will continue essentially to act as a catalytic force upon the ideals of humanity.

In asking here for the reaffirmation of these principles, so that we may have no doubt as to the future, the American nations are thus engaged in constructive work. These principles, moreover, lie at the very foundation of the Covenant.

The Declaration of August 3rd, 1932, regarding the non-recognition of the acquisition of territories by force, was unanimously adopted by the Assembly of November 1934, and rightly, therefore, it has been affirmed that Article 10 of the Covenant contains, potentially, a general pact of non-aggression. From this we may deduce that there is no such thing as a separate European, Asiatic or American ethic; that there is no such thing as a separate European, Asiatic or American

[1] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 135, page 22.

conscience; there is only a conscience of mankind, the perfecting of which is being carried out, like all great endeavours, slowly and through suffering.

Just as in the case of the Chaco conflict, which is not yet ended and the final settlement of which is still a cause of anxiety, both in America and at Geneva, so the conflict now submitted to our jurisdiction lays a distressing problem before this conscience of mankind.

We fully realise the grave difficulties which are entailed in bringing into harmony principles and realities. Realities to-day, it is true, have great importance in relation to our future decisions; but it must not be forgotten that principles will to-morrow be the magic starting-point for a great movement of recovery and further advance.

If it is true that the world does not live upon words but upon acts, then we must remember that peace, and lasting peace, is based, not only upon written principles, but upon applied principles.

The President:

Translation: Mlle. Hesselgren, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

Mlle. Hesselgren (Sweden). — As an expression of the feeling of women in many parts of the world, I want to say a few words.

The Covenant gives to women the right to take part in the work of the League, and I wonder what vital question would not touch women as well as men. Certainly this one does which we have now discussed for days.

I have been listening with the greatest interest to these fine and eloquent speeches, but I have found no ray of hope in them. Fifty nations give in to one aggressor. Fifty nations let a small Power, one of the Members of the League, fall to the ground. However can we, after this, expect that any small nation can have any hope for the future?

A few years ago the League of Nations asked for the collaboration of women. We answered by pleading, by millions all over the world, for disarmament. What was the result? Not disarmament, but rearmament all over the world.

Last autumn, fifty nations rose to help one of the small Members of the League against deadly aggression. We took hope. The League was, after all, a real protector. It had not shown itself so before, but now had come the time when it would show its strength, when we should learn that our homes and our children could be safe under its wings. And the result? Worse than nothing. The small nation which the League went out to help is wiped out, and belief in the League of Nations is shaken to its foundations.

In many countries the authorities are afraid of the low birth rate. How could it be otherwise? How could women wish to bear children into a world that is so hopeless, so insecure? I have heard numbers of women say this. You may well say that conflict and war have always existed, and that children have been born into the world all the same. That is true; but war has never taken such horrible forms as now. You may also say, as has been said here, that everything must be done so as not to let loose war on Europe, that for this aim it is meet that one country should die for all the others. Yes; but are you sure that you are not letting it loose just by giving in to the aggressor now? Every small country must, after this, ask itself when its time will come, and ask this with no hope in the strength of the League.

You are all thinking of this possibility. It has run like a red thread through every speech. Everyone has seen the looming shadow of such an event. What are you going to do? How are you going to prevent its coming? Surely it must be by going to the very root of the evil. Try to find the very sources of unrest. Try to take every dispute in hand at once and effectively, and do not let month after month go by in futile discussions.

Prevention is now the only way, and the education of nations as well as of individuals to understand the latent power of goodwill. You want the collaboration of women. You can get it wholeheartedly if you work for peace by such means.

I can give no advice. I can only voice the intense anguish of women all over the world, and urge you to use every wit and every power to find a solution.

The President:

Translation: I call upon M. Bassols, first delegate of Mexico, to address the Assembly.

M. Bassols (United States of Mexico) (speaking in Spanish):

Translation: From its inception, the conflict provoked by the Italian aggression against Ethiopia awakened a great deal of interest in the mass of the Mexican people, and compelled my Government to adopt, within the League of Nations, a firm line of policy which has been characterised by an unfaltering spirit of faithful co-operation with the conjoined effort of fifty countries which were desirous of preventing the perpetration, through violence and without the least plausible justification, of a war of territorial conquest. As against our own legitimate commercial interests, and especially as against the genuine and deeply grounded sympathy which has traditionally bound the people of Mexico to the people of Italy, prevailed nevertheless our clear obligation to lend our aid to a State Member of the League of Nations in its rightful struggle for autonomy, irrespective of whether such State Member was surrounded by conditions of backwardness and poverty.

This obligation, however, did not merely imply or spring out of a formal adherence to the abstract principles of the articles embodied in the Covenant of the League of Nations. The Mexican people is racially constituted by a strong proportion of aborigines who, in the course of centuries, were kept in a colonial condition of servitude by a regime of exploitation. After the War of Independence, Mexican annals bear witness to the harsh meaning of the conquering invasions of imperialism. Only seventy years ago, the Mexican people expelled the armies of Napoleon III from their soil, while a few years previously over one-half of its own territory was taken away from it by force. Respect for political independence and for the territorial integrity of a country, therefore, clearly constitutes an organic element in our hearts and minds as well as a fundamental demand of the Mexican nation in its entirety.

We decided to offer a full and immediate application of the economic measures, including, in particular, the oil sanctions, aimed at preventing the conquest of Ethiopia. During the month of March, when it became obvious that the efficiency of sanctions was being compromised, in view of certain postponements arising out of the intricate web of the European political situation, Mexico as a member of the Committee of Eighteen issued a declaration in which it expressly declined to share the burden of the historical responsibilities resulting from a course which was fatally destined to lead to the position in which the League of Nations now finds itself.

We are not unmindful of the fact that the serious setback suffered by the system of collective security — although, in this case, it consists in the failure of economic and financial sanctions — is not merely due to an isolated political phenomenon the total causes of which may simply be arrived

at through an analysis — historical at best, at this stage — of the errors and imperfections, of the lack of enthusiasm and sincerity which, as a whole, have existed in the course of this first attempt to wield the weapon of collective international action. How much we wish that it might have been so! In that case, it would now simply be necessary to strengthen or improve certain details in the working of the machinery of sanctions with a view to consolidating once for all the system of collective security, of guaranteeing the peace of the world and of assuring to each man, woman and child that urgent and indispensable tranquillity to which reference has already been made here by the Prime Minister of France. But, unfortunately, the real causes of the desperate and profoundly disturbing situation in which the world now finds itself are much deeper and more complex. We cannot, after all, really believe that a visible step forward has been taken on the road to peaceful security in international life simply by suggesting or even adopting this or the other procedural amendment to the Covenant.

In the American countries, which are younger than those of Europe, which are isolated by an ocean and which live in relative ease considering the huge size of their respective territories, one views with a real sense of foreboding the maelstrom of military preparations, insoluble rivalries and forces of destruction in which other countries have become engulfed. We are not, I think, at all animated by feelings of arrogance if only because our own impotence is at least equal to, if not greater than, that of the leading European Powers, and because our economic and cultural resources are still of a modest order. Yet, the peoples of Latin America are now becoming aware that the whole problem of international relations does not merely involve, or is predicated upon, the personal failings of statesmen, mere deficiencies in national and international legislation or the existence of certain countries belligerent by nature as opposed to others peaceful by nature; but that there are elements, deeply rooted in contemporary society, which impel countries to war and divert scientific progress as well as economic development from their essential character of creative forces into what are merely tremendous weapons of technical barbarism.

For this fundamental reason, upon being convoked to this Assembly with a view to sharing each his own responsibilities as well as defining his attitude with respect to the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, to sanctions and, in general, to the future of collective security, we cannot help but give expression to the fears which we entertain, laden with painful apprehension, as to the future of the rudimentary peace machinery which now functions at Geneva. I do not at all say this to intimate, in a veiled and cautious manner, that Mexico is contemplating the possibility of withdrawing from the League of Nations, a course already taken by certain other Latin-American countries. My Government has already clearly defined its policy in this respect. Aware of the fact that peace is a universal and indivisible problem, it has resolved that Mexico shall remain in the League of Nations as long as the main principles which inspire it may endure, and as long as there are still countries which make a sincere effort to abide by them — in other words, as long as the meaning and ultimate results of our international co-operation are not distorted.

Precisely because we are desirous of remaining here, animated by good faith, we are vitally interested in preventing the collapse of collective security and the ruin of the League of Nations. In this connection, we have carefully analysed the views expressed in the course of this Assembly; among which we find one that is worthy of the greatest attention. Around it, despite certain variations which are unessential, may be grouped the desires of those seeking to consolidate the structure of collective security and of guaranteeing, at least in the future, the maintenance of peace and respect for the fundamental rights recognised to its Members by the Covenant.

It is argued that special circumstances in the case of the Italian aggression against the Ethiopians have led to that failure of the League which we are all now witnessing; and, further, that the inexperience and general lack of adequate preparation of all countries as regards an efficient application of sanctions, as well as vaster and more threatening dangers than have ever yet menaced the peace of the world, stand out as reasons which compel one to acknowledge the necessity — for the last time, we would add — of withholding, in an endeavour to reaffirm the independence of the Ethiopian people, such material and political forces as are now possessed by the States Members of the League of Nations. This conclusion is reached, it is still argued, when a realistic mind is focused on the immediate and inescapable panorama of the day-to-day flux and reflux of international politics in Europe. In face of the *fait accompli*, an attempt is made to capitalise the experience of defeat — of still another defeat — by reorganising the forces and international institutions of all countries which are imbued with peaceful and truly civilising intentions, in order to prevent fresh disasters in a future pregnant with uncertainty and menace.

In the face of this solution, two voices have made themselves heard. On the one hand, the concrete and dramatic voice of the Ethiopians, who will suffer, with the stoic resignation of an age-long exploited race, one more affront in the course of history, and who whether present or no at this Assembly, shall endure as Banquo's ghost called to disturb the tranquillity of Geneva's conscience.

But, on the other hand, there is the equally respectable voice, which likewise deserves our attention, of those who not only are considering the specific facts which have called forth this Assembly, but who, more generally, view with suspicion and uncertainty the well-meaning attempt to reconstruct a system of international legal action upon the smoking remains of failure. They believe that the immediate present must necessarily exert its influence as a destructive germ upon all future efforts, and will constitute an internal, insoluble contradiction which, sooner or later, will destroy the vitality of the entire system.

In view of such radical differences of opinon, it is not Mexico's rôle, to be sure, nor perhaps the rôle of any other specified country, to indicate to other countries the road which each of the States Members of the League of Nations should follow. Considering not only its geographical position, its population, which barely reaches twenty million inhabitants, its slow industrial and economic development, and its fortunately very small military force, my country is perhaps even less than others destined to play this rôle. And unless it were to give offence to other countries and to lose sight of the most elementary sense of reality and of proportion, it could not suggest the road to be followed. Hence, its rôle in international life is merely that of discreet and measured prudence. Its own attributes, internally, as well as its practices of good faith and compliance with obligations freely and normally entered into, however, remain both unrestricted and decisive.

Therefore, in each concrete step to be taken by Mexico within the League of Nations, whether the Italo-Ethiopian or any other question be involved, my Government will scrupulously endeavour not to depart from the obligations arising out of a straightforward interpretation of binding agreements.

With respect to possible reforms in the Covenant of the League of Nations, Mexico has been and will always be ready to examine and discuss the

motions and suggestions which may through any channel be offered for its consideration. Only after having conscientiously measured the direct bearing, implications and consequences of the said draft amendments will it give its consent, and with it the warrant that it will carry out its obligations in the future unhesitatingly. My Government is convinced that one of the greatest wrongs which can be inflicted upon international life consists in the perpetuation, in our contemporary society, of a nomad-like attitude, of a lack of adjustment of international community life to binding rules and agreements which are clearly removed from the plane of mere discussion.

TWENTY-FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

Saturday, July 4th, 1936, at 12 Noon.

CONTENTS :

President : M. VAN ZEELAND.

102. — SITUATION ARISING OUT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY : TEXT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS PROPOSED BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President :

Translation : In its desire to discharge as rapidly as possible the task with which you entrusted it, your General Committee has worked without any loss of time. It has drawn up a text which I propose to read to you. At the close of its proceedings, it thought it desirable to call together a plenary meeting of the Assembly for midday. In the meantime, however, several delegations have informed me that they consider it essential that they should be allowed some time to examine at their leisure the General Committee's text. Such being the case, I propose to do no more, at the present meeting, than read the document in question. That done, we could, if you agree, adjourn until 6 p.m.

The President's proposals were adopted.

The President :

Translation : The following is the text prepared by the General Committee : [1]

" 1. The General Committee of the Assembly has held two meetings with a view to carrying out the study and drafting work that was entrusted to it by the Assembly.

" The delegation of Mexico refrained from attending the General Committee's work for the reasons set forth in a letter to the President. (Annex 4, page 104.)

" The task of the General Committee was to extract from the discussion that has taken place in the Assembly concerning the Italo-Ethiopian dispute the points that might be included in a draft to be submitted to the Assembly. At the same time, the General Committee had been instructed by the Assembly to examine two draft resolutions presented by the Ethiopian delegation.

" 2. The General Committee proceeded to an exchange of views on the principal observations and suggestions made in the course of the discussion as well as on the draft resolutions presented by the Ethiopian delegation.

" As a result of this examination, the General Committee unanimously recommends to the Assembly the text annexed hereto.

" In one of its parts, this text relates — taking into account the views expressed in the debate — to the question which forms the subject of the first draft resolution of the Ethiopian delegation.

" As regards the second of these draft resolutions, the General Committee observes that a similar request had been made by the Ethiopian delegation to the Council and refers, in this connection, to the report by the Committee of Thirteen of January 23rd, 1936, [1] which was approved by the Council.

* * *

" I.

" The Assembly,

" (1) Having met again on the initiative of the Government of the Argentine Republic, and in pursuance of the decision to adjourn its session taken on October 11th, 1935, in order to examine the situation arising out of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute ;

" (2) Taking note of the communications and declarations which have been made to it on this subject ;

" (3) Noting that various circumstances have prevented the full application of the Covenant of the League of Nations ;

" (4) Remaining firmly attached to the principles of the Covenant, which are also expressed in other diplomatic instruments such as the declaration of the American States, dated August 3rd, 1932, excluding the settlement of territorial questions by force ;

" (5) Being desirous of strengthening the authority of the League of Nations by adapting the application of these principles to the lessons of experience ;

" (6) Being convinced that it is necessary to strengthen the real effectiveness of the guarantees of security which the League affords to its Members :

[1] Document A.84.1935/36.

[1] See *Official Journal*, February 1936, page 106.

"Recommends that the Council:

"*(a)* Should invite the Governments of the Members of the League to send to the Secretary-General, so far as possible before September 1st, 1936, any proposals they may wish to make in order to improve, in the spirit or within the limits laid down above, the application of the principles of the Covenant;

"*(b)* Should instruct the Secretary-General to make a first examination and classification of these proposals;

"*(c)* Should report to the Assembly at its next meeting on the state of the question.

"II.

"The Assembly,

"Taking note of the communications and declarations which have been made to it on the subject of the situation arising out of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute;

"Recalling the previous findings and decisions in connection with this dispute:

"Recommends that the Co-ordination Committee should make all necessary proposals to the Governments in order to bring to an end the measures taken by them in execution of Article 16 of the Covenant."

The President:

Translation: The consideration of this document will therefore be placed on the agenda of our meeting this afternoon.

TWENTY-SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

Saturday, July 4th, 1936, at 6 p.m.

CONTENTS:

President: M. VAN ZEELAND.

103. — SITUATION ARISING OUT OF THE DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY: ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS PROPOSED BY THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President:

Translation: The agenda calls for consideration of the report of the General Committee and the draft text accompanying that report, which I had the honour to read to you at this morning's meeting.

The Ethiopian delegation has expressed a desire to speak at once in order to make a declaration to the Assembly.

I therefore propose to call upon His Excellency Dedjazmatch Nassibu to address the Assembly.

Dedjazmatch Nassibu (Ethiopia) read the following declaration:[1]

Translation:

I. On June 30th last,[2] Ethiopia asked the fifty-two nations which had solemnly promised to help her in her resistance to aggression what they were willing to do for the Ethiopian people. Of the great Powers that had guaranteed collective security to small States which may one day suffer the fate of Ethiopia, H.M. the Emperor asked what action they intended to take.

Filled with anxiety as to the fate of Ethiopia, a Member of the League of Nations, H.M. the Emperor asked you what answer he should take back to his people.

II. Many delegates have expressed their views on the Italian aggression in this Assembly.

The Ethiopian delegation has been deeply moved by the firm pronouncements of certain States, which have proclaimed, not merely their fidelity to the principles of the Covenant, but, what is more important, their unshakable resolve to enforce those principles. In this hour of distress, the Ethiopian delegation expresses its infinite gratitude to them.

The Ethiopian delegation has listened with bitter disappointment to the declarations of other Governments, which thought that they could fulfil all their obligations by recording the failure of the action taken, recommending resignation to the *fait accompli* and proposing to enquire into the best means of putting a stop to future aggressions. Does that mean that, in the case of the present aggression, the advice of those Powers is that it should be looked upon as regrettable, but irreparable?

III. The Ethiopian Government has frequently denounced to the League of Nations the bargain proposed by the aggressor — that he would not consent to collaborate in the settlement of European affairs unless his victim were abandoned. The terms of that bargain are now being vigorously urged by the Italian Government in unofficial statements which leave no room for misconstruction.

Such is the true situation, which no subtlety, no manœuvring, can conceal from the Assembly.

IV. On July 3rd last,[1] the Ethiopian Government laid before the President of the Assembly two draft resolutions, the definite object of which was to allow each of the Members of the Assembly to assume responsibility, by means of a formal vote, frankly, loyally, without ambiguity or tricks of language, for its attitude before the world and before history.

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[1] Document A.55.1935.36.

[2] See page 25.

[1] See page 60.

The draft text prepared by the Bureau and unanimously recommended by it to the Assembly does not appear to the Ethiopian delegation to provide such an opportunity. A draft text consisting of a brief statement of reasons, recalling in vague and indefinite terms the events which have occurred and the principles of the Covenant, concludes, for reasons which the Ethiopian delegation fails to understand, not with draft resolutions, but with proposals for a recommendation.

The Ethiopian delegation cannot believe that this form has been chosen to evade, by subtleties of procedure, the categorical decisions which it has asked the Assembly to take.

The Ethiopian delegation energetically maintains the two draft resolutions it has submitted. It ignores the subtleties of procedure the effect of which would be to obtain a vague and ambiguous vote.

What Ethiopia claims as her right, at this tragic hour of her destiny, is a categorical verdict and not a sentence of death by an implied recommendation, cleverly drafted in terms which, while abandoning the victim to its aggressor, seems to apologise to that aggressor and only affirms respect for the principles of the Covenant in order to save the League's face.

Are the principles of the Covenant bending reeds on which certain " sacred egoisms " can lean until these principles give way ?

V. What Ethiopia asks the Assembly is to express its opinion by an unambiguous vote.

Does the Assembly confirm, yes or no, its unanimous vote of October 1935 declaring that the Italian Government had committed an unjustified aggression against Ethiopia ?

Does the Assembly confirm, yes or no, its determination not to recognise the annexation of a territory obtained by force, in violation of the treaties and of the Covenant, at a time when, not only has Ethiopian resistance not been broken, but more than half Ethiopian territory remains outside Italian domination ?

Does the Assembly confirm, yes or no, its determination, in default of the economic and financial measures whose ineffectiveness is now affirmed, after recording and estimating their considerable results a few weeks ago, to grant Ethiopia, the victim of aggression, another form of assistance ?

This is what the Ethiopian delegation asks while maintaining its draft resolutions. It expressly demands that they should be discussed, in order that an explicit vote on each of these resolutions may provide the Ethiopian people with the honest reply to which it is entitled.

The President :

Translation : Certain members have asked to make a short statement on the vote which you have to give.

I call first on M. Solís, delegate of Panama.

M. Solís (Panama) : [1]

Translation : Towards the end of this morning's meeting of the Assembly, I was made acquainted with two draft resolutions which the General Committee of the Assembly had submitted for the latter's consideration. Not only have I not had time to transmit the text of these drafts to my Government, but I even believe that they do not deserve to be so transmitted.

The two resolutions proposed do not meet either the Italian point of view, the Ethiopian point of view, the point of view of the principles of international law, of the prestige of the League of Nations, or the anxieties absorbing the attention of the world ; they do not even represent a real, deep desire to furnish a constructive solution of the dispute. It would seem that we are afraid of dealing courageously with a situation which, whatever its tendency, is clearly defined.

The delegation of Panama, of which I have the honour to be the head, will vote in the Co-ordination Committee for the raising of sanctions, but this delegation wishes to make it absolutely clear that it will refrain from voting on the two resolutions above mentioned, which will give the world the impression that the mountain has once again brought forth a mouse.

When one is faced with extremely difficult and complicated situations, where it is absolutely impossible to adopt, for the time being, final and categorical solutions, it is very often better to keep quiet and leave it to the levelling action of time to supply better opportunities, rather than adopt anodyne resolutions which offer no advantage, lead to no practical or constructive result, and give the world the false impression that the League of Nations has already found the only possible final solution — an impression which would be greatly to be deprecated since it would mean the certain discouragement and weakening of the forces that can still be put into motion to ensure better and more effective results in the future.

I should like to hear the opinions of all the delegations here present on these resolutions, in order to be able to learn their views in case they thought that the League of Nations should take action, and whether it is desired that, whenever the League of Nations decides to act, it should do so with all the high moral authority which such an institution can exercise. Unfortunately, the passive attitude taken by delegations, the lack of bold initiative and the tendency to avoid frank discussion have always characterised the proceedings of the Assembly of the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : Mr. Massey, delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

Mr. Massey (Canada). — I beg leave to make a brief statement. In accepting the two resolutions placed before the Assembly by the General Committee, the Canadian delegation understands that the provisions of the first resolution in no way prejudice the views which may be submitted by Governments concerning the constitution of the League nor the decisions which may be taken at the September Assembly.

The President :

Translation : I call upon Mr. te Water, delegate of South Africa, to address the Assembly.

Mr. te Water (Union of South Africa). — In view of the considerations which I had the honour to advance to the Assembly on July 1st, [1] on behalf of my Government, I wish to say that I cannot associate myself in any way with this resolution, and propose therefore, if it is the intention to put it to the vote, to abstain from voting.

The President :

Translation : I call upon M. Turbay, first delegate of Colombia, to address the Assembly.

M. Turbay (Colombia) :

Translation : The Colombian delegation accepts the first proposal submitted for the approval of the Assembly as a fresh affirmation of the principles embodied in the conclusions to its initial declaration

[1] See also Annex 5, page 105.

[1] See page 31.

made from this platform by the President of the delegation on July 1st, 1936.[1]

As regards the second proposal, the delegation reserves the right to state in the Co-ordination Committee[2] the reasons why it has no objections to the recommendation submitted for the Assembly's approval.

The President:

Translation: The list of speakers who wished to make declarations during the discussion of the text now before you is exhausted.

I think that we should now proceed to the vote. This vote raises a certain number of questions of procedure which I feel are rather difficult to solve. I should like first to reiterate that your President is here solely in order to interpret, and to give expression to, the wishes and desires of the Assembly.

I propose to submit first to the vote of the Assembly the text laid before you by the General Committee, since the latter is an organ of the Assembly instructed by it to discharge for it a certain task. I will then ask you whether you wish, and in what manner you wish, to express an opinion on the other resolutions which have been tabled by one of your members.

As regards the text submitted by the General Committee, I would like to know what procedure we should adopt and whether you think it advisable to take a roll-call.

As several delegations ask for a vote by nominal roll-call, I would suggest that we follow this method.

The Ethiopian delegation has just asked me to give priority to the vote on its resolutions. I suggested a moment ago, and I believe that it is the ordinary rule of deliberative assemblies, that priority should be given to the text prepared by the body appointed by you for the purpose.

Does anyone wish to speak on this point of procedure ?

I interpret your silence as meaning that you desire to give priority to the text drafted by the General Committee. We shall therefore take a vote by *appel nominal* on this text, which I read to you at the morning meeting.

As a vote has been requested, it will be taken in accordance with the provisions of the Rules of Procedure. Under Rule 20, sub-paragraph *(a)*, " 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 ".

(A vote was taken by appel nominal.)

The President:

Translation: The results of the voting are as follows:

Number of votes cast	49
Valid votes	49
Votes in favour	44
Votes against	1
Abstentions	4

As forty-four delegations have voted in favour of adopting the text recommended by the General Committee, which is worded as a recommendation, I shall regard it as adopted by the majority of the Assembly.

A member of the Assembly asks me to remind you that Article 19, paragraph 1, of your Rules of Procedure reads as follows:

> " Except where otherwise expressly provided in the Covenant or by the terms of a treaty, decisions of the Assembly shall be taken by a unanimous vote of the Members of the League represented at the meeting."

[1] *See page 26.*

[2] *See Official Journal,* Special Supplement No. 149.

I thought it my duty to acquaint you with this request and to read to you this text. I must, however, point out that this is not a decision taken by the Assembly, but a recommendation, and that, in accordance with the custom which has, since the outset, been followed by the Assembly, recommendations may be adopted by a majority vote.

104. — DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY: DRAFT RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY THE ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION (continuation).

The President:

Translation: We must now consider the question raised by a member of the Assembly who asks that an explicit vote be taken on the two resolutions[1] which have been regularly tabled.

As regards the first resolution, I think I should remind you of the passage in the report of your General Committee reading as follows:

> " In one of its parts, this text relates, taking into account the views expressed in the debate, to the question which forms the subject of the first draft resolution of the Ethiopian delegation."

I would therefore ask the Assembly once more what its wishes are, and I shall endeavour to interpret them to the best of my ability.

Does anyone wish to speak on this point of procedure ?

Can I take your silence as meaning that on this point of procedure you agree with the view expressed by the General Committee in its report ?

In those circumstances, I must interpret your attitude as meaning that your vote has covered the point raised in the first draft resolution submitted by the Ethiopian delegation.

As regards the second draft resolution, the report of the General Committee merely describes the situation as it exists.

A draft resolution has been regularly tabled by one of the members of the Assembly.

Does any member of the Assembly wish to make any suggestion on this point of procedure ?

As no one wishes to speak, I think it my duty, in order to be wholly impartial and to comply with precedents, to say that I think the Assembly should vote on the second draft resolution submitted by Ethiopia.

If there is no objection, I shall take your silence as signifying approval of the suggestion which I have just made.

I shall put to the vote the second resolution which has been circulated to the Assembly in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

I would now ask you how you wish to vote.

A new situation has just arisen. I am informed that the delegation which tabled this second resolution does not wish a vote to be taken otherwise than by *appel nominal.*

I shall then ask the Assembly if it desires to take a vote by *appel nominal* on this resolution or to reject the proposal as a whole — that is to say, dispense with the vote if a vote by *appel nominal* is not accepted.

As no one has asked to speak on this subject, I once more think it my duty to make a suggestion. In these circumstances, I consider that, as a delegation has regularly asked for a vote by *appel nominal* to be taken on a resolution regularly tabled, we should vote accordingly.

[1] See page 60.

Can I interpret your silence as meaning that you agree with my proposal ?

In these circumstances, we shall take a vote by *appel nominal* on the second draft resolution submitted by the Ethiopian delegation.

The vote by *appel nominal* will be taken in the same manner as previously.

(A vote was taken by appel nominal.)

The President:

Translation: The results of the ballot are as follows:

Number of votes cast	49
Votes valid	49
Votes in favour	1
Votes against	23
Abstentions	25

Consequently, the resolution is not adopted by the Assembly.

105. — POSTPONEMENT OF THE OPENING DATE OF THE SEVENTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY: COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President:

Translation: The General Committee proposes that the Assembly should postpone the date of opening of its seventeenth ordinary session from September 7th, 1936, to Monday, September 21st, 1936, in accordance with the desire expressed by several delegations.

I interpret the silence of the Assembly as meaning that it agrees to this proposal of the General Committee.

The proposal of the General Committee was adopted.

106. — CLOSING SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President:

Translation: In formulating and adopting the recommendations which have just been voted almost unanimously, your Assembly has brought the League of Nations through one of the darkest and narrowest defiles which it has encountered on its path since its creation.

Tradition would have your President congratulate you on the issue of such a debate and emphasise the spirit of goodwill and civic courage you have had to display in performing your task. But I think that such words would be out of place in the atmosphere in which this meeting has taken place.

You have had the most difficult and ungrateful task to perform.

When I learnt at Brussels that certain delegations were doing me the honour of speaking of me as a possible candidate for the Presidency, I had a moment of hesitation and almost of discouragement. I was aware of the difficulty of the work which had to be done; I foresaw its bitterness. The task which I was accomplishing at that time in my country gave me a reason which would have enabled me to decline in advance the honour which was to be offered to me, and I will not disguise the fact that I was strongly tempted to do so. But I pulled myself together. For a long time past I have placed great confidence in the League of Nations. My country has always understood the significance — for the present, indeed, but even more for the future — of the gradual development of the ideas of justice, organisation and law, the germ of which is contained in the League of Nations, and which it will one day undoubtedly, in spite of everything, achieve. I realised that I should be evading a duty if I did not accept, and I came here to share your responsibilities and difficulties, and eventually, I hope, the final success of your efforts.

But I hope I may be allowed to say — and I am sure I am speaking for a great many of you — that, in the course of these debates, we have sometimes envied those who, having no responsibilities to shoulder, were at liberty to follow, in expressing their ideas regarding the League of Nations and the problems of the day, not the hard exigencies of the facts, but the rigid logic of their minds, and could give free rein to their sentiments.

However that may be, you have succeeded in avoiding the two perils which threatened the League. The first of these dangers was to give way to discouragement under the burden of failure and to abandon the struggle. In acting in this way, you would have sacrificed your goal, for the sole reason that one of the means by which it was endeavoured to obtain it had not immediately given the result hoped for. You have done well resolutely to ward off this danger.

The other danger would have been to gloss over the setback and its consequences, and to go on as if nothing had happened. I have no doubt that this would have meant the irrevocable condemnation, in the near future, of the work already done and of the work now in progress.

You have thus had the difficult courage to look realities in the face, and you have decided to draw the logical conclusions therefrom for tomorrow and for the more distant future.

In order to clear the atmosphere in which the preparatory work for the adjustments recognised as necessary will be carried on, I ask your permission to emphasise, in my personal capacity, certain of the preoccupations which have come up in the course of this debate.

No attempt has been made to conceal the fact that the League of Nations has suffered a setback, and a serious one. The word has, I think, occurred several times in each of the speeches made, and it is well that this should be so.

But, without wishing to minimise its importance, it should not be too much exaggerated. A setback is not a mistake and still less a defeat; what we must prevent at all costs is that the setback should become a defeat.

While it is justifiable and true to speak of the failure of the League's action in regard to one of its Members, it is perhaps necessary to take up a more qualified attitude in speaking of economic and financial sanctions. It is true that sanctions have not saved Ethiopia. But this does not mean that they did not help her in her struggle. They did not constitute a decisive factor, sufficient in itself to permit the League to achieve the aims it was pursuing. But I fail to understand the surprise which this has caused in certain quarters.

When you decided last October that the collective action of the League should be confined to economic and financial measures, was it not evident that you also limited the possibilities of gaining control of the situation ? You acted in this way, moreover, for imperative and unavoidable reasons, and, in fact, because it would have been impossible to do more; but that meant that the League accepted the idea of affording one of its Members who was threatened an important degree of assistance, calculated to help it to a great extent, but not necessarily decisive in any case and likely to guarantee it against all perils in all eventualities.

It is only too obvious that measures of a negative character in the economic and financial sphere cannot take the place of guns, tanks or aeroplanes on one side, or do away with them on the other. And yet, who among you — if by the malice of fate he was to find himself one day in a situation like that of Ethiopia — would not be glad, in default of something better, to see economic and financial sanctions applied to his aggressor by fifty countries ?

It is, alas! from this realistic and pragmatical aspect that we must consider the situation. Viewed from this angle, sanctions have worked to the extent to which it was possible for them to do so, and they have given the results which could have been expected of them.

I do not say that the decisions might not have been taken more speedily or have had a wider scope; but it is easy to find fault afterwards. To judge those who have acted at a given moment, care must always be taken to visualise the difficulties of the moment when the decision was taken, and not to make use of knowledge which was only obtained subsequently.

Be that as it may, it is certain — and this is an item on the credit side — that the decisions taken were applied loyally and simultaneously and that on this occasion a new spirit manifested itself in the sphere of international relations. If future opponents found themselves in less unequal conditions, none can say that the important element represented by the imposition of economic and financial sanctions might not, unlike what has happened this time, become a decisive factor and change the outcome of the war.

Such considerations, are not without value for the future. That is why I have thought it my duty to refer to them. But we understand that they are not enough to comfort or satisfy the Member of our League whom we have failed to protect.

Nevertheless, I do not consider that all the criticisms — however understandable — which have been by implication brought against us are deserved. I have, in so far as I myself and my country are concerned, once more searched my own conscience. I believe that many of you, were you to do the same, would reach the same conclusions as ourselves. We have, indeed, faithfully applied the rules of collective security; we have unhesitatingly borne our share, to the full extent of our undertakings, in all the collective measures which the League has proposed. In so doing, my country has been obliged to make very heavy sacrifices and to put forth a very great effort. It has been obliged to run the grave risk of compromising the close and valuable relations, both of a sentimental and cultural nature, which it has long maintained with a great and friendly country. In this way it has been obliged to run the risk, in the strangely troubled Europe of to-day, of weakening an international political situation in which it is often the first to be threatened.

In the economic sphere, at the very time when it was itself straining every nerve to throw off the effects of the depression, it voluntarily severed its relations with a valuable market. And all that it has done without hesitation and with the utmost scrupulousness. It is conscious of having assisted to the full extent of its ability, in a matter in which it had itself no direct interest, a Member of the League who was in difficulties.

I may be permitted to add that the responsible leaders, who took upon themselves to urge their countries to comply strictly with the collective measures enacted by the League, have borne their personal share of the difficulties of the situation. In many cases they have been obliged to put aside their own deepest feelings and have frequently laid themselves open, as regards important sections of their public opinion, to criticisms which, however undeserved, were frequently difficult to bear.

Such being the case, I believe that those amongst us who have acted in this way can, even after what has taken place, claim that their conscience is clear; they have contributed to the work which we are here attempting to promote, everything which it was in their power to give.

In these circumstances, we can turn to the future with less misgiving and with a firmer resolution. Had the action of the League achieved its purpose, an enormous step forward would have been taken along the road to international organisation. It nevertheless remains true that the effort has been made, and the spirit in which this was done must continue.

In dealing with this highly difficult and novel problem in which the League of Nations is still acting as a pioneer, the decisions have been taken, to all intents and purposes, unanimously.

That can give us confidence in the work of the next Assembly; that enables us to hope that the adjustments which have become necessary in order that in future the League's action may be at once more effective and more elastic will also be devised and adopted by the Members in a spirit of unanimity.

To-day as yesterday, and to-morrow as to-day, our duty, our chief concern, must be the protection of peace. We are all within the shadow of the terrifying fact that the possibilities, the probabilities, of war are nevertheless increasing as years go by. We must find a way to reverse this tendency.

Allow me to draw your attention once more to the dangers, in this connection, of relying entirely upon political methods and neglecting economic considerations. That is a truism, but one which must be periodically repeated. Though it is a fact that the political position exerts a direct and far-reaching influence on the course of business and economic activity in general, the reverse is no less true; and we all know only too well how far political difficulties and conflicts are influenced by economic disturbances.

At the present moment, economic affairs are, indeed, passing through a curious phase. We feel that the worst of the depression is over. In a great many countries the revival is evident; but it is almost entirely confined to the home markets. The improvement in international economic relations is not nearly as great as it might be, as it ought to be, and as it undoubtedly would be if certain relatively easy adjustments were made which would impose no real sacrifice on anyone.

At the same time, there are certain countries whose internal economic position remains difficult and even disturbing — for reasons, moreover, which are, in the main, governed by considerations of foreign policy. This position contains within itself an increased danger of international difficulties. Such being the case, does not wisdom demand that the next Assembly should extend the scope of its deliberations, and that, without neglecting in any way that which must be done in the political sphere, it should again make a comprehensive and strenuous effort to set in motion an economic revival — the revival which is here close at hand and which appears to be awaiting nothing more than that men should make a gesture of goodwill?

You all realise what a feeling of appeasement and relief would spread through the world if the nations again knew comfort and prosperity; if the peoples were content with their lot; if their minds no longer dwelt upon the danger points by which they are at present, and have been all too long, unfortunately obsessed.

In conclusion, let me assert that the League of Nations must recover from this setback. It must continue its forward march. That is a matter, not of sentiment, but of absolute necessity. Just imagine for one moment what would happen if this hope were not fulfilled, if the League of Nations were to succumb to the blows which have been dealt it. Try to picture what then would be the position in the world. You cannot escape the conclusion that the League of Nations is irreplaceable and that, such being the case, everything must be done, not merely to secure its continued existence, but to revive its authority and to ensure that the principles for which it stands resume their forward progress.

How often have we seen an organism, severely shaken by a grave setback, recover its strength in the hour of gravest danger and emerge from the crisis even stronger than before! It may be that, in spite of the trials and difficulties with which we have met in the course of the present session, the words of hope with which I have nevertheless deemed proper to close your discussions will not be thought out of place.

It is my hope that you all who, during the past few days, have lived through moments of gloom, moments fraught with uncertainty, will again be at your places in this Assembly on the day when the League of Nations will have recovered confidence in itself and will have received from outside the help of living and defendable forces; when that day comes, it will again see enthusiastic Assemblies, once more animated by the breath of idealism and borne up by the happy conviction that, in the interests of world peace, the ideal and reality have been successfully reconciled.

107. — CLOSE OF THE SIXTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The President:

Translation: I call on M. Cantilo, first delegate of the Argentine Republic, to speak.

M. Cantilo (Argentine Republic):

Translation: After the speech to which we have just listened, I should be reluctant to make another. I think, however, that I shall be voicing your own sentiments in suggesting that we pay a tribute to the President of the Assembly. We can all testify to the devotion which he has shown in carrying out his duties, to the elevation of the views he has expressed and to the tact which he has constantly shown. I am sure that you will be unanimous in fully and sincerely associating yourself with this tribute.

The President:

Translation: Before adjourning, I would venture on your behalf also to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and the members of the Secretariat who have co-operated with us.

I declare the sixteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the League of Nations closed.

ANNEX 1.

Official No.: A.81.1935/36.VII.

Geneva, June 29th, 1936.

DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY

Extract from the Report on the Work of the League to the Seventeenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly.

A. DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISPUTE AND ACTION BY THE COUNCIL.

The Assembly adjourned on October 11th, 1935, after fifty Members of the League had acquiesced in the conclusion of a report approved by fourteen Members of the Council on October 7th. In the eyes of these fifty Members, Italy had " resorted to war in disregard of its covenants under Article 12 of the Covenant of the League of Nations ".

Having regard to the obligations of Member States under Article 16, and to the desirability of co-ordinating the action which they might severally contemplate, the Assembly recommended that a Committee be set up consisting of one delegate for each Member of the League (other than the parties) to consider and facilitate such co-ordination.

The work of the Co-ordination Committee and its subsidiary bodies, which was essentially of a technical character, is described elsewhere,[1] the present chapter being devoted to the development of the dispute and the Council's action.

Under the terms of Article 11 of the Covenant, the League must, in case of war, take " any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations ".

At the meeting of the Council held on October 7th,[2] M. Ruiz Guiñazú, representative of the Argentine Republic, who was then President, made it clear that the Council remained at the disposal of the parties with a view to helping them to establish conditions in which hostilities could be stopped. The representative of Ethiopia, M. Teclé-Hawariate, then stated that his Government was at the disposal of the Council to establish those conditions. At the meeting of the Assembly held on October 10th, he repeated that declaration: "The Ethiopian Government", he said, " is at the disposal of any organ that might be set up by the Council or the Assembly with a view to the immediate cessation of hostilities." On October 11th, H.E. M. Beneš, President of the Assembly, in adjourning the proceedings, expressed the hope that the statement made by the President of the Council on October 7th would be accepted by the two parties in the same spirit of collaboration as had actuated the Council.[3]

Efforts of France and the United Kingdom to bring about an Amicable Settlement.

At the same time, the Governments of France and the United Kingdom, which had been particularly active in seeking to bring about an amicable settlement of the dispute before hostilities broke out, resumed their efforts in that direction.

At the Co-ordination Committee's meeting on November 2nd,[4] after it had been decided that Proposals III and IV (prohibition of the importation of Italian goods; embargo on certain exports to Italy) should come into force on November 18th, M. Laval, the representative of France, announced that he had initiated certain conversations, though he had never had the slightest intention of putting the results into final shape outside the League. " It is only within the framework of the League ", he said, " that proposals can be examined and decisions reached."

Sir Samuel Hoare, the representative of the United Kingdom, said that it was common talk that, during the past few days, conversations had been taking place between Rome and Paris and London on the possibilities of a speedy and honourable settlement of the controversy. " There is nothing mysterious or sinister about these discussions ", he went on; " . . . we shall constantly act within the framework of the Covenant and take the earliest practicable opportunity of reporting the results of our endeavours to the Council. It is essential to act in the spirit of impartial justice towards the three parties in the controversy—the League, Italy, and Ethiopia."

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[1] See page 83.
[2] See *Official Journal*, November 1935, pages 1217 *et seq.*
[3] See Proceedings of the Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly, *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, page 115.
[4] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 146, pages 7 *et seq.*

M. van Zeeland, the representative of Belgium, then made the following suggestion: " Does it not seem right that efforts towards solution should from this moment be placed under the auspices and within the framework of the League itself ? Since the responsible leaders of two great countries have already devoted a large part of their time and their talents to this task, why should the League not entrust to them the mission of seeking, under its auspices and control and in the spirit of the Covenant, the elements of a solution which the three parties at issue—the League, Italy, and Ethiopia—might find it possible to accept ? "

It was then pointed out by, among others, the Spanish and Polish representatives, M. de Madariaga and M. Komarnicki, that the Co-ordination Committee had no power to confer a mandate upon France and the United Kingdom, and that all it could do was to express a hope; whereupon M. de Vasconcellos, the Chairman of the Committee, observed that the Belgian representative's suggestion was approved by all the Members of the League there represented.

In the meantime, the Committee of Eighteen, one of the Co-ordination Committee's subsidiary bodies, decided, on November 6th, to submit to the Governments a proposal that the embargo on exports to Italy should, if necessary, be extended to three additional commodities—oil, iron, and coal. If, from the replies received by the Committee and the information at its disposal, such a course seemed advisable, it was to propose a date for putting this new measure into force.

When the Committee reassembled on December 12th, [1] M. Laval, the French representative, announced that, in the course of conversations in Paris, France and the United Kingdom had continued their attempts to devise the basis of an amicable settlement, and that suggestions had been laid before the Italian and Ethiopian Governments on the previous day. " We propose ", he said, " to communicate them shortly to the Council of the League. Our part will then have been played, and it will be for the League of Nations to settle what is to be done."

Mr. Eden, the United Kingdom representative, also described what the representatives of the two Governments (M. Laval and Sir Samuel Hoare) had been seeking to do in Paris. They had, he said, been endeavouring " to work out proposals that might be submitted to both sides, and upon which both sides might be willing to come together to open discussions here in Geneva. . . . The policy of His Majesty's Government remains to-day what it has been since the dispute began. Any final settlement must be acceptable to the League as well as to the two parties in conflict. In the circumstances, it seems to me that the best procedure to follow at the present time is to call together the Council at the earliest practicable moment, in order that a full statement of the proposals should be made to it."

The Polish delegate, M. Komarnicki, reminded the Committee that the Polish Government had never departed from its original line of conduct. " It was ", he said, " the right and duty of the competent organs of the League to determine the significance of recent events and to examine the situation as a whole." He considered that the adoption of any new measure by the Committee of Eighteen might prejudice the action that the Council of the League, in virtue of its powers, would shortly have to take.

The following day, the Committee of Eighteen adjourned, in the words of M. de Vasconcellos, its Chairman, " so as not to run the risk of causing prejudice to the progress of negotiations or decisions which were represented as likely to lead to a rapid cessation of hostilities ". [2]

M. Westman, the Swedish representative, said that he had no objection to giving the Council the necessary time in which to meet. " I wish to say ", he added, " that I am authorised to collaborate in the work which is the purpose of the present session of the Committee of Eighteen —namely, to co-ordinate the efforts of the Members of the League to restore peace by ensuring respect for the Covenant, thus increasing the general security."

M. Gomez, the Mexican representative, said that November 18th, 1935, had marked the beginning of one of the most important international experiments that the modern world had ventured to undertake in favour of peace. " In the present instance ", he said, " the Mexican Government is prepared to vote for the inclusion of oil, iron, and coal in the list of products the export of which to Italy is forbidden." At the same time, he was prepared to conform to the views of the other members of the Committee, should they desire to accord the respite necessary to enable the Council to take a decision. Mexico had no information as to the draft peace proposals adopted as a basis of discussion by France and the United Kingdom, but it was certain, in the light of the statements made by M. Laval and Mr. Eden, that the versions published by the Press went far beyond the reality.

That same day, December 13th, the text of the Franco-British suggestions was communicated to the members of the Council, [3] who were summoned to meet on December 18th.

Council Meeting of December 18th, 1935. [4]

When communicating the text of their suggestions to the Council, the United Kingdom and French Governments stated that, on December 10th, they had instructed their representatives at Rome and Addis Ababa to lay them before the Italian and Ethiopian Governments, and that they would send on the replies as soon as they were received.

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[1] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 147, pages 7 *et seq.*
[2] See *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 147, pages 10 *et seq.*
[3] For the text of these suggestions, see *Official Journal*, January 1936, pages 40 *et seq.*
[4] See *Official Journal*, January 1936, pages 6 *et seq.*

On December 12th, the Ethiopian Government had stated that, before replying to the proposals which it had received from two Members of the League of Nations, it asked that the Assembly be convened immediately, so that " every Member State should be enabled to express its opinion on the true practical significance of the proposals ". As the Council had been summoned for December 18th, and as, under the Covenant, it remained the body to which the dispute had been duly submitted, the President of the Assembly thought it proper to await the result of the Council's deliberations before taking a decision in regard to the Ethiopian request.

Before the Council met on December 18th, the Ethiopian Government, while announcing that it would in due course reply to the Franco-British suggestions, had transmitted to the Council a further note, containing the following passages:

> " The Paris suggestions, under the fallacious name of exchange of territory, seek to impose on, or recommend in an imperative manner to, Ethiopia a cession of territory. This constitutes a violation of Article 10. . . .
>
> " The Paris suggestions seek to impose upon Ethiopia or to advise her in an imperative manner to agree to the concession to Italy of economic privileges, with police rights. It is an infringement of Ethiopia's political independence, a violation of Article 10 of the Covenant.
>
> " The Paris suggestions seek to impose upon Ethiopia predominant control by Italy, with the certain aim of entrusting to Italy the administration of the capital and of a large part of the territory. The League of Nations, in consenting to lend itself to such dissimulation, would violate Article 10 of the Covenant."

The Ethiopian Government " was confident that the League would refuse to say that the Paris suggestions were in conformity with the principles of the Covenant ".

At the Council meeting on December 18th, Mr. Eden, the United Kingdom representative, said:

> " It must be emphasised that the Paris proposals which were put forward last week were not advanced as proposals to be insisted on in any event. They were advanced in order to ascertain what the views of the two parties and of the League might be upon them, and His Majesty's Government recommended them only for this purpose. If, therefore, it transpires that these proposals which are now before you do not satisfy the essential condition of agreement by the two parties and by the League, His Majesty's Government could not continue to recommend or support them. In its view, this particular attempt at conciliation could not then be regarded as having achieved its object, and His Majesty's Government, for its part, would not wish to pursue it further."

The next speaker was M. Laval, the French representative, who said:

> " We do not yet know how the parties will welcome our suggestions, and I suppose that, in the meantime, the Council itself will wish to avoid expressing an opinion. In any case, I think it my duty to state forthwith that, if this effort does not secure the consent of all the interested parties, the Council will not be relieved of its duty to explore every avenue and to allow no opportunity to escape with a view to bringing about an honourable and just solution of the present conflict, such as is required both by the interests of peace and by the spirit of the League of Nations."

M. Wolde Maryam, the Ethiopian representative, said that, before replying to the " Paris suggestions ", his Government was anxious to give the League an opportunity of hearing its observations on the impression made upon it by those suggestions and the remarks accompanying them. He added that his Government and people did not ask any people in the world to come to Africa and shed their blood in defence of Ethiopia. What Ethiopia asked was that, in mere justice, she should be given facilities to acquire more complete and more up-to-date defensive material than she now possessed.

In a previous note, dated November 1st, the Ethiopian Government had asked the Members of the League of Nations to consider whether financial assistance might not be granted to Ethiopia, in the manner approved by the Assembly at its eleventh session, in 1930.

Council Resolution of December 19th, 1935.

After the meeting on December 18th, at which the Council had heard the representatives of the United Kingdom, France, and Ethiopia (Italy not being represented), the members of the Council other than the representatives of the parties—Committee of Thirteen—drew up the following resolution, which was passed on December 19th:

> " 1. The Council thanks the representatives of France and of the United Kingdom for the communication which they have made to it concerning the suggestions which they have put before the two parties with a view to conciliation.
>
> " 2. In view of the preliminary character of these suggestions, as emphasised by the two Powers which took the initiative of putting them forward, the Council does not consider that it is called upon to express an opinion in regard to them at present.

" 3. The Council instructs the Committee of Thirteen, bearing in mind the provisions of the Covenant, to examine the situation as a whole, as it may appear in the light of the information which the Committee may procure."

The Committee of Eighteen, to which this resolution was communicated, considered that the situation had not changed since its meeting on December 13th. It therefore adjourned, after instructing its Committee of Experts to keep itself informed of the application of the sanctions already in force.

Allegations regarding the Conduct of the War.[1]

The bombing of Dessie by Italian aircraft on December 6th, which, according to the testimony of several foreign doctors, transmitted by the Ethiopian Government,[2] began with the dropping of bombs on the enclosures of the Red Cross ambulances outside the town, led to a protest from the Ethiopian Government, which also reported the bombing of open towns and villages on previous occasions.

On December 13th, the Italian Government denied that open towns had been bombarded and protested against the improper use of the Red Cross emblem, as observed at Dessie by Italian aeroplanes which had flown over the town the day after the bombardment. On December 17th, it denounced the Ethiopians for using dum-dum bullets, an allegation which was supported by the accredited foreign journalists in Italian Somaliland and by various photographs.

On December 30th, the Ethiopian Government accused the Italian army of having used asphyxiating and poison gases in the Takazze area on the northern front, on December 23rd. On January 1st, a further telegram from Addis Ababa reported that, on December 30th, the Italian army had used poison gas on the southern front and had bombed the Swedish Red Cross ambulance at Melka Dida.[3] In a note dated January 3rd, the Ethiopian Government asked that the appropriate League body should carry out an impartial enquiry into the manner in which hostilities were being conducted by the two belligerent armies in Ethiopian territory. It expressed the view that the proper authority to set on foot such an enquiry would be the Committee of Thirteen.

On January 16th, the Italian Government repeated its allegations regarding the improper use of the Red Cross emblem by the Ethiopians and supplied a collection of documentary evidence regarding the use of dum-dum bullets[4] and " other atrocities (mutilation of corpses, etc.) committed by the Abyssinian troops ". " Since ", it concluded, " these barbarous acts violate every principle of humanity and law and, in particular, the Rules established in the Geneva Conventions, which require that the wounded, the dead, and prisoners shall be respected, and that no improper use shall be made of the emblem of the Red Cross, they are being reported to the International Committee of the Red Cross for necessary action."

In a further note, dated January 20th, the Ethiopian Government returned to the question of an enquiry, which, it considered, " would now be of less value ". " It has been made by the Swedish Government, and its results have been set out in the note of protest sent by that Government to the Italian Government. It now remains for the League of Nations to consider, on the basis of the Swedish enquiry, whether collective intervention is not desirable and whether energetic steps should not be taken to prevent any repetition of such atrocities. The Ethiopian Government denounces the impropriety of any attempt to convert the demand for an enquiry into the atrocities committed by the Italian authorities into a political enquiry in preparation for a violation of Ethiopia's independence and integrity."

Report of the Committee of Thirteen, January 23rd, 1936.[5]

After considering these various documents, the Committee of Thirteen concluded that the Ethiopian Government did not press its request for an enquiry by the appropriate League authority, with which, in the circumstances, it did not therefore feel called upon to comply.

With regard to the Ethiopian Government's repeated request for financial assistance, the Committee pointed out that the Convention for Financial Assistance had not come into force, and expressed the view that " there appeared to be no possibility of providing for the organisation of financial assistance at that moment ".

Giving its view of the situation existing at that date, the Committee of Thirteen went on:

" When, on December 19th, 1935, the Council instructed the Committee to examine the situation as a whole, it had primarily in view the necessity for putting an end to the war,

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[1] See *Official Journal*, January 1936, pages 29 *et seq.*; February 1936, pages 241 *et seq.*

[2] The character of one of these witnesses, a so-called Polish doctor, has been impugned by the Italian Government on the basis of information received from Warsaw (document C.156.M.94.1936.VII (*Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 475)). According to a letter from the Latvian representative (see *Official Journal*, June 1936, page 655), this witness had falsely posed as a doctor of medicine of the University of Riga. The Committee of Jurists instructed by the Committee of Thirteen to carry out an enquiry on the basis of the documentary material received (see below) has noted that the character of the other witnesses has not been impugned.

[3] This incident was the subject of an exchange of notes between the Swedish and Italian Governments. (See documents C.207.M.129.1936.VII (*Official Journal*, June 1936, page 644) and C.224.M.136.1936.VII. (*Official Journal*, June 1936, page 652).)

[4] The Italian communications regarding the use of dum-dum bullets indicated that certain of these were of English manufacture. (See documents C.7.M.6.1936.VII (*Official Journal*, January 1936, page 37) and C.63.M.22.1936.VII (*Official Journal*, February 1936, page 244).) In a communication dated February 6th, the United Kingdom Government reported the results of its enquiries on this subject. The bullets in question had been supplied long before the war for hunting in Africa (document C.86.M.31.1936.VII (*Official Journal*, February 1936, page 254)).

[5] See *Official Journal*, February 1936, page 106.

a question which has been the constant preoccupation of the Members of the League of Nations since last October. In accordance with their international undertakings, they have concerted economic and financial measures, being animated by an earnest desire to re-establish a just peace as speedily as possible. They have always been resolved to neglect no opportunities of facilitating and hastening a settlement of the dispute through an agreement between the parties within the framework of the Covenant. The Committee of Thirteen, for its part, declares that, if such an opportunity had existed to-day, it would have at once submitted suggestions to the Council. It will not fail to do so, should more favourable circumstances arise. At present, it can only decide to watch the situation carefully, in accordance with the mandate which it received from the Council on December 19th."

This report of the Committee of Thirteen was approved by the Council; the Italian representative abstained from voting.

Reconsideration of the Question of the Extension of the Embargo to Oil.

The Franco-British suggestions of December having failed of their purpose, the Council came to the conclusion that nothing could be done to hasten the settlement of the dispute by agreement between the parties within the framework of the Covenant. The Committee of Eighteen therefore resumed its sittings and examined the question of extending the embargo to oil, which had been left pending since the previous November. On January 22nd, a Committee of Experts was set up to report on the probable efficacy of such a measure, and completed its enquiries by February 12th. The Committee of Eighteen was summoned for March 2nd.

Appeal by the Committee of Thirteen to the Two Parties, March 3rd, 1936.

The report of the experts was not examined by the Committee of Eighteen. The French representative, M. Flandin, pointed out, on March 2nd, that the Committee of Eighteen had always worked in close connection with the Committee of Thirteen, and that the latter, in its report of January 23rd, had once more affirmed its determination not to neglect any opportunity of facilitating and hastening the settlement of the dispute by agreement between the parties within the framework of the Covenant. More than a month had passed since that meeting. The French delegation thought it would be desirable for the Committee of Thirteen to meet again to consider the possibility of making another urgent appeal to the belligerents to put an end to the war.

The United Kingdom representative, Mr. Eden, while agreeing to a meeting of the Committee of Thirteen for the following day, said: " His Majesty's Government are prepared to accept any decision to which this Committee may come; but I must make it clear that, having considered the findings of the experts' report, His Majesty's Government are in favour of the imposition of an oil embargo by the Members of the League and are prepared to join in the early application of such a sanction if the other principal supplying and transporting States which are Members of the League of Nations are prepared to do likewise."

The Committee of Thirteen, which met on March 3rd, sent to the Ethiopian and Italian Governments the following appeal:

" The Committee of Thirteen,

" Acting in virtue of the mandate given to it by the Council in its resolution of December 19th:

" Addresses to both belligerents an urgent appeal for the immediate opening of negotiations in the framework of the League of Nations and in the spirit of the Covenant, with a view to the prompt cessation of hostilities and the definite restoration of peace;

" The Committee of Thirteen will meet on March 10th to take cognisance of the replies of the two Governments." [1]

On the following day, March 4th, the Committee of Eighteen decided, in its turn, to adjourn for a week.

Replies of the Two Parties to the Appeal of the Committee of Thirteen.

The Ethiopian Government replied on March 5th to the Committee's appeal. It " agreed to the opening of negotiations, subject to the provisions of the Covenant being respected ". It noted that the Committee of Thirteen's proposal was made, and that the negotiations would be conducted, in the spirit of the Covenant and within the framework of the League of Nations.

On March 8th, the Italian Government, " in response to the appeal which had been addressed to it, agreed, in principle, to the opening of negotiations concerning the settlement of the conflict ".[1]

Meeting of the Committee of Thirteen in London on March 23rd, 1936.

Meanwhile, the Council had been summoned to a special session in London. The Committee of Thirteen met at the end of that session. It noted the replies of the Ethiopian and Italian

[1] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 395.

Governments and requested its Chairman, assisted by the Secretary-General, " to get into touch with the two parties and to take such steps as may be called for in order that the Committee may be able, as soon as possible, to bring the two parties together, and, within the framework of the League of Nations and in the spirit of the Covenant, to bring about the prompt cessation of hostilities and the final restoration of peace ".

The Committee of Thirteen also noted that, whereas no new allegation had been received from either party between the last days of January and the end of February concerning breaches by the other side of the Conventions on the conduct of war, mutual accusations were now again being made.

On February 28th, the Italian Government submitted evidence in confirmation of its previous reports on the torturing and slaughtering of Italian prisoners, the outrages committed on the wounded and the dead, and cases of the abuse of the Red Cross emblem. It also reported that an army chaplain had been killed and that army stretcher-bearers had been put to death. These accusations were followed by three telegrams from the Ethiopian Government reporting successive bombardments of the British Red Cross ambulance near Quoram. [1] An Italian note of March 9th then reported an attack made on a roadbuilders' camp on February 13th, when the workmen were wounded by dum-dum bullets, murdered and mutilated. On March 21st, the Ethiopian Government repeated its accusation regarding the use of asphyxiating and poisonous gases. " Italy ", it said, " is raining down mustard gas on inhabited centres." [2]

Although, as regards the other accusations, the Italian Government, like the Ethiopian Government, had sent denials or observations concerning its adversary's charges, it did not reply, in its various notes on the conduct of the war, to the allegations made by Ethiopia since the end of December as to the use of asphyxiating or poisonous gases by the Italian army. The use of these gases was prohibited by the Protocol of June 17th, 1925, and among the Powers that signed it were Italy and Ethiopia. In a letter dated March 23rd, M. de Madariaga, Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen, drew the Italian Government's attention to the Ethiopian Government's allegations concerning the use of asphyxiating gases, adding that the Committee would be happy to receive any observations which the Italian Government might wish to make in this connection.

Efforts of the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen and of the Secretary-General to obtain Information from the Parties.

The Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen and the Secretary-General took steps as soon as possible to obtain information from the two parties, as requested in the resolution adopted by the Committee on March 23rd. The Ethiopian delegation was at their disposal. Recalling that its Government had accepted the Committee's appeal in the very terms in which it had been issued, it asked that the Italian Government, which had accepted this appeal " in principle ", should give the assurance that it intended to negotiate " within the framework of the League of Nations and in the spirit of the Covenant ".

It further appeared from informal conversations with the Italian Ambassador in London, who was representing his Government at the special session of the Council, that the proper procedure for the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen was to communicate direct with the Italian Government and to ask it to appoint a delegate. In a letter dated March 27th, the Chairman of the Committee informed the Italian Government of his desire to meet a delegate appointed by it at Geneva as soon as possible. M. de Madariaga received a reply at Madrid on April 2nd, stating that the Italian Government was prepared to send a representative to Geneva immediately after Easter (April 12th) for the purpose of a first exchange of ideas as to the procedure to be followed with regard to the conversations desired by the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen. As, moreover, the method of initiating contacts for the purposes of these conversations was an important and delicate question, it was thought convenient and desirable that the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen should have a first exchange of ideas of a general character with the Head of the Government at Rome.[3]

Meeting of the Committee of Thirteen, April 8th, 1936.

M. de Madariaga summoned a meeting of the Committee of Thirteen for April 8th. The Committee expressed the wish that the conversations between the Chairman, assisted by the Secretary-General, and the delegates of the two parties should take place immediately after Easter. The Ethiopian delegation was already at Geneva at the Chairman's disposal. The Italian Government was informed that the Committee regarded it as of the highest importance that contact should be made immediately after Easter with the delegate whom that Government was prepared to send, since the Committee had decided to meet again on April 16th. As to the invitation that M. de Madariaga had received to go to Rome, the Committee agreed with its Chairman that it was undesirable to come to any decision on the point until after the conversations that were to take place at Geneva.

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[1] According to the British Government's communication of April 15th (see *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 480), the ambulance was bombarded by Italian aircraft on March 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th. The British and Italian Governments exchanged notes on this subject (see *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 480, and June 1936, page 651).

[2] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 456.

[3] Document C.133.M.72.1936.VII, Annex III. (See *Official Journal*, April 1936, (Part II), page 487.)

Conversations of the Chairman and the Secretary-General with the Ethiopian and Italian Delegations.

Pending the arrival of the representative of Italy, the Chairman, assisted by the Secretary-General, had a further interview with the Ethiopian delegation.

Recalling the terms of the invitation which the Committee of Thirteen addressed to the two parties on March 3rd with a view to negotiations " within the framework of the League of Nations and in the spirit of the Covenant ",[1] that delegation stated that Ethiopia did not agree to negotiate direct with Italy. " The essential point ", it said, " is to put an end immediately to the Italian manœuvre by compelling the Government at Rome to state forthwith, clearly and openly, what are its warlike aims. . . . The Ethiopian delegation affirms that it is indifferent to the procedure to be followed. It is concerned only with the substance. It refuses energetically, on behalf of its Government, to lend itself to any dilatory procedure. It earnestly requests that the Committee of Thirteen should take note of the refusal or silence of the Italian Government, and that the Committee of Eighteen should be called upon to decide."

The representative of Italy arrived at Geneva on April 15th. He proposed that direct negotiations should be opened between the two delegations for the signature of preliminaries of peace. He suggested that these negotiations, which " could only be based on the situation existing after six months of military operations ", should take place at Ouchy. When asked for his views as to the manner in which the Committee of Thirteen might be informed of the conversations which he had suggested, the Italian representative said that the Committee might take cognisance of the results as and when they were obtained and might remain at the disposal of the two delegations to afford any co-operation they might think desirable.

On being informed of the Italian proposals, the Ethiopian representative maintained his point of view.[2] " The Ethiopian delegation ", he said, " earnestly requests the Committee of Thirteen to find that the Rome Government has not agreed to negotiate within the framework of the League of Nations and in the spirit of the Covenant, in order that the application of all the provisions of Article 16 of the Covenant may be no longer delayed ".

The effort made since March 3rd had therefore failed. The Committee, recalling the terms of the report approved by the Council on January 23rd, noted once more, in its report of April 18th, that no opportunity existed " of facilitating and hastening the settlement of the dispute through an agreement between the parties within the framework of the Covenant ".

New Examination of the Question of Breaches of the International Rules on the Conduct of War.

The Committee of Thirteen, resuming on April 9th the examination of the accusations concerning breaches of the international rules on the conduct of war, noted the Italian Government's reply to M. de Madariaga's letter of March 23rd, which had suggested that that Government should submit observations on the allegations made by Ethiopia concerning the use of asphyxiating, poisonous, and similar gases.

The Italian Government said in its reply of April 3rd [3] that, " while it is anxious to establish the truth regarding the facts of which a tendentious version is put forward in the Ethiopian statements, it feels bound, first of all, to make every reservation regarding the competence of the Committee of Thirteen to deal with the questions referred to in the communication from the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen ". It further asked whether the "Ethiopian Government's attention had been drawn to the Italian Government's charges relating to the use by Ethiopia of methods of warfare forbidden by international rules and to the atrocities practised on prisoners and non-combatant Italian civilians, and whether that Government had been requested to put forward such observations as it might desire to make on the subject ".

While noting that the transmission to both Governments of the charges made by the other Government had in each case furnished them with an opportunity of submitting observations, the Committee of Thirteen addressed an appeal on April 9th to the two parties in the following terms: [4]

> " The Committee of Thirteen, having taken note of the communications sent by the Ethiopian and Italian Governments to the Secretary-General in regard to various cases of failure to observe the international agreements relating to the conduct of warfare, and voicing the emotion felt in this matter by public opinion, addresses an urgent appeal to both belligerents to take all measures necessary to prevent any failure to observe the said Conventions or the principles of international law.
>
> " The Committee hopes to receive from the Powers to which it is making this appeal assurances calculated to allay the public feeling it has thus voiced."

On April 11th, the Italian Government replied as follows:

> " The Royal Government notes that the denunciation of the Abyssinian atrocities which it sent, together with confirmatory documents, as early as December 17th, 1935, and later

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[1] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 395.
[2] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 362.
[3] Document C.133.M.72.1936.VII, Annex IV. (See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 487.)
[4] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 363.

by its notes dated December 21st, 1935, and January 18th, February 28th and March 9th, 1936, will be fully investigated by competent bodies. The observance of the laws of war has been and is the constant rule of the Italian army, and the Royal Government desires by the present communication to give a full assurance on that point. The observance of these laws must be bilateral. The Italian military authorities cannot do otherwise than punish every inhuman atrocity committed by its adversary in contempt of every principle of law and morality."

The Ethiopian Government's reply, which was also dated April 11th, reads as follows:

"In her struggle against the aggressor, Ethiopia has strictly conformed to the international agreements regulating the conduct of warfare, despite flagrant and systematic acts of violation on the part of Italy. Ethiopia has even refrained from all measures of reprisal against these violations. It is possible, however, that in isolated cases individuals have reacted against the inhuman methods employed by the Italians. The Ethiopian Government has taken all steps to impose severe punishment for any such lapses."

Question of the Enquiry into Breaches of International Conventions regarding the Conduct of War and the Principles of International Law.

On January 3rd,[1] the Ethiopian Government, as has already been stated, had asked that an enquiry might be carried out by the competent organs of the League, and had expressed the opinion that the Committee of Thirteen was the competent authority. The Ethiopian Government quoted the terms of the resolution of December 19th, 1935, under which the Council "instructed the Committee, bearing in mind the provisions of the Covenant, to examine the situation as a whole as it may appear in the light of the information which the Committee may procure". Moreover, the Italian Government, in denouncing on January 16th a number of "atrocities", stated that they were being reported to the International Red Cross Committee for necessary action, because these "barbarous acts" violated in particular "the rules established in the Geneva Conventions".[2]

In his letter to the Italian Government of March 23rd, the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen recalled this communication of January 16th. "In connection", he said, "with violations of the Geneva Conventions concluded under the auspices of the Red Cross, the Committee noted that, when, on January 16th, your Government alleged abuses of the Red Cross emblem and various atrocities, it intimated that they were being 'reported to the International Red Cross Committee for necessary action'. The provisions of the aforesaid Geneva Conventions would seem to apply likewise to the bombing of Red Cross ambulances which the Ethiopian Government has reported."[3]

In its reply of April 3rd,[4] in which it made "every reservation regarding the competence of the Committee of Thirteen to deal with the questions contained" in M. de Madariaga's letter of March 23rd, the Italian Government also stated its views on the competence of the International Red Cross Committee as regards an enquiry. "There seems no justification for the view", it said, "that charges made by the Italian Government to the League of Nations—for example, those relating to the use by the Ethiopians of dum-dum bullets and to the atrocities practised on prisoners and non-combatant Italian civilians—could be considered as requiring no further action on the ground that they were brought at the same time to the attention of the International Red Cross Committee. As a matter of fact, since the procedure contemplated in Article 30 of the Geneva Convention of July 27th, 1929,[5] relates only to violations of rules laid down in that Convention itself, the charges of the Italian Government to which I have just referred and which relate to violations of other Conventions and rules of a humanitarian character could not normally be examined in any enquiry which the International Red Cross Committee might set on foot and, in fact, are not at the present time the object of any study on the part of that Committee."

The Committee of Thirteen decided on April 8th to ask the International Red Cross Committee whether it could furnish the Committee of Thirteen with any information in its possession as to infringements of international Conventions.

The International Red Cross Committee refused to communicate this documentary material.[6]

The Committee of Thirteen, having taken the advice of a Committee of Jurists, considered that in the present case the Council, being seized of the dispute in all its aspects, possessed, in virtue of its general competence, the power to undertake enquiries, on the basis of the documentary

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[1] See *Official Journal*, February 1936, page 240.
[2] See *Official Journal*, February 1936, page 243.
[3] Document C.133.M.72.1936.VII, Annex I. (See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 486.)
[4] Document C.133.M.72.1936.VII, Annex IV. (See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 487.)
[5] Article 30 of the Geneva Convention for the Amelioration of the Conditions of the Wounded and Sick in Armies in the Field: "On the request of a belligerent, an enquiry shall be instituted in a manner to be decided between the interested parties concerning any alleged violation of the Convention; when such violation has been established, the belligerent shall put an end to and repress it as promptly as possible."
[6] The correspondence between the Committee of Thirteen and the International Red Cross Committee was published in documents C.150.M.88.1936.VII, C.176.M.112.1936.VII (Annex 1), C.184.M.118.1936.VII and C.248.M.144.1936.VII. (See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), pages 461 and 364; June 1936, pages 578 and 657.) The International Red Cross Committee has not been able to undertake the enquiry requested by the Ethiopian and Italian Governments in regard to the allegations made on either side concerning violations of the Geneva Convention. The details of this enquiry should be fixed in agreement between the parties concerned: the Italian Government only had stated the possible conditions under which it thought an enquiry could be opened.

material, into the application of Conventions concerning the conduct of war.[1] The competence of the Committee of Thirteen is determined, as has already been observed, by the Council's decision of December 19th, 1935. In virtue of the instructions it received on that date, the Committee of Thirteen could undertake enquiries on the basis of the documentary material, taking account of the fact that " when, on December 19th, the Council instructed the Committee to examine the situation as a whole, it had primarily in view the necessity for putting an end to the war " (report of the Committee of Thirteen, dated January 23rd, 1936). By an enquiry on the basis of the documentary material was to be understood an enquiry in which information and explanations are collected and examined and the resultant conclusions are stated, but which did not include deciding questions of fact which continued to be contested or on which the documents did not throw sufficient light.

The Committee of Jurists appointed by the Committee of Thirteen was therefore asked to analyse the documents concerning the conduct of the war that had been submitted to the Secretary-General of the League up to April 16th, 1936.

These documents contained principally charges brought by one or other belligerent, and refutations of some of those charges by its adversary. The United Kingdom Government also submitted a note on the allegations concerning the use of poison gas by the Italian army.

The jurists' analysis was communicated to the Ethiopian and Italian Governments on April 18th.

The Committee of Thirteen noted, moreover, that the Italian Government's reply to the appeal of April 9th to the two parties (this reply has been reproduced *in extenso* above) [2] concluded with the following statement: " The Italian military authorities cannot do otherwise than punish every inhuman atrocity committed by its adversary in contempt of every principle of law and of morality ". With reference to this passage, the Committee expressed the opinion that such an observation could not justify the use of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, which is prohibited by the Protocol of June 17th, 1925. It decided, further, to remind the Italian Government, which had supplied details regarding, among other matters, the bombing of ambulances, of the desirability of also supplying particulars on the allegations concerning the use of asphyxiating gases.

Council Meeting of April 20th, 1936.[3]

The Council met on April 20th to acquaint itself with the results of the Committee of Thirteen's work.

The representative of Italy, Baron Aloisi, said that the responsibility for any failure of the procedure of conciliation could in no way be placed to his Government's charge. The latter had proposed, for the establishment of the preliminaries of peace, direct negotiations outside Geneva between the two parties, who would undertake to supply information to the League of Nations at every decisive stage. Such a procedure did not mean, as the Ethiopian delegate affirmed, the rejection of the " framework of the League of Nations and the spirit of the Covenant".[4] It was, he added, the Ethiopian delegation which, " on its own admission, is responsible for having come to Geneva with a predetermined decision not to negotiate ". On April 13th, before the Italian delegation's arrival, it had said to the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen, among other things: " The Ethiopian delegation earnestly requests that the Committee of Thirteen should take note of the refusal or silence of the Italian Government, and that the Committee of Eighteen should be called upon to decide." The Ethiopian delegation's one and only intention was therefore to have the failure of the negotiations placed on record.

Going on to the question of the conduct of the war, the Italian representative, while reserving his Government's full freedom as regards its reply to the Committee's letter of April 18th, made certain observations as a member of the Council. In his opinion, the Council's resolution of December 19th, 1935,[5] only authorised the Committee to study the situation with a view to seeking a settlement of the dispute by means of conciliation. " It would be extremely dangerous ", he said, " for the Committee of Thirteen to take other tasks upon itself."

Moreover, in the letter it had just sent to the Italian Government, the Committee of Thirteen had expressed the opinion that the use of the chemical weapon could not be justified " even for the punishment of inhuman acts of atrocity committed by an adversary in contempt of law and of morality ".[6] By that statement, the Committee of Thirteen had bestowed upon itself the power of settling, outside any rule of procedure, an extremely serious question of law. It had set itself up as a judge " giving an interpretation of perhaps the most delicate and complex point covered by the Protocol of June 17th, 1925, which contained no provision prohibiting, in derogation of the general principles, the exercise of the right of reprisal for atrocities such as those of which the Italian soldiers had been the victims".[7]

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[1] Document C.176.M.112.1936.VII. (See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 363.)
[2] See page 79.
[3] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), pages 358 et *seq.*
[4] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 374.
[5] See *Official Journal*, January 1936, page 14.
[6] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 373.
[7] In its note of April 30th, 1936 (see *Official Journal*, June 1936, page 580), the Italian Government confirmed the view taken by its representative on the Council. In its opinion, the question of violations of the different Conventions and rules on the conduct of war must be considered as a whole, and the truth should be investigated in a uniform manner through a body competent to carry out tasks of this kind, which might be the International Red Cross.

The Ethiopian representative confirmed the message sent by his sovereign to the Secretary-General on April 17th.[1] "The Italian Government", said the Emperor of Ethiopia, "has so little intention of negotiating within the framework of the League of Nations and in the spirit of the Covenant that it refuses all competence to the League and to the Committee of Thirteen, first by insisting upon direct negotiations, secondly by refusing to negotiate at Geneva, and thirdly by refusing to communicate its peace proposals until it is satisfied that the principles of the Covenant will not be respected. . . . Despite the good-will of the States Members of the League, the sanctions that have been applied have proved ineffectual, and the time that has been allowed to elapse without the imposition of additional sanctions has enabled the enemy to pursue with impunity his aggression and his flagrant violations of the laws of war. . . . Relying upon the Covenant, Ethiopia firmly and formally invokes the rights that the Covenant confers upon her, and appeals to all the States Members for immediate measures to be taken to stop this invasion, which is contrary to the Covenant and is unanimously condemned."

Speaking again at the afternoon meeting, the representative of Italy said:[2] "It is clear that, if this conciliation procedure fails, it is not because of a discussion which might have brought out divergencies of opinion, but because of the previous determination of one of the parties. Italian co-operation in the work of European pacification, which will have to follow the settlement of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute—a dispute that should have been kept within strictly colonial limits—will also be retarded by the failure of conciliation."

The Members of the Council other than the parties then stated their views on the situation.

At the end of the debate, the President of the Council, Mr. Bruce (Australia), and the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen submitted a draft resolution for consideration by the Council, including the representatives of the parties, in private.

This draft was afterwards submitted in public session in the following amended form:[3]

"The Council:

"Takes note of the report of the Committee of Thirteen;

"Approves and renews the appeal addressed by the Committee to the two parties for the prompt cessation of hostilities and the restoration of peace in the framework of the League of Nations and in the spirit of the Covenant;

"Notes that, on March 5th, the Ethiopian Government, in reply to this appeal, 'agreed to the opening of negotiations subject to the provisions of the Covenant being respected. It noted that the Committee of Thirteen's proposal was made, and that the negotiations would be conducted, in the spirit of the Covenant and in the framework of the League of Nations';

"Likewise notes that, on March 8th, the Italian Government, in reply to this appeal, 'agreed in principle to the opening of negotiations concerning the settlement of the conflict';

"Regrets that the information obtained by the Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen and the Secretary-General shows that the effort at conciliation made by the Committee of Thirteen in accordance with its appeal to the two parties has not succeeded;

"Regrets that, in these circumstances, it has not been possible to bring about the cessation of hostilities, and that the war is continuing under conditions which have been declared to be contrary to the Covenant, and which involve the execution of the obligations laid upon the Members of the League in such a case by the Covenant;

"Addresses to Italy a supreme appeal that, in view of present circumstances, which call for the co-operation of all the nations, she should bring to the settlement of her dispute with Ethiopia that spirit which the League of Nations is entitled to expect from one of its original Members and a permanent Member of the Council;

"Recalls that Italy and Ethiopia are bound by the Protocol of June 17th, 1925, on the use of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and by the Conventions regarding the conduct of war to which these two States are parties, and emphasises the importance which has been attached to these instruments by all the contracting States."

The Italian representative declared that he voted against the draft resolution.

The representative of Ecuador (M. Zaldumbide), while approving the resolution as a whole, said, with regard to the sixth paragraph, that his Government maintained the decisions it had taken in respect of sanctions. The Government of Ecuador had decided on April 4th "to raise the sanctions which it had enacted against Italy, on the ground that Italy had accepted the appeal made to her by the Conciliation Committee and had declared herself prepared to enter into negotiations for bringing the dispute to an end".

The representative of Ethiopia put this question: "Will the Council be content to address to the Italian Government, which has challenged the League of Nations and the whole world in the name of might against right, another supreme but academic appeal for its co-operation in the maintenance of peace? Is that the effective assistance which States Members have bound themselves to afford by signing Article 16 of the Covenant?"

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[1] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 403.
[2] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 377.
[3] See *Official Journal*, April 1936 (Part II), page 392.

Departure of the Emperor of Ethiopia. Signature of the Decree-Law of May 9th at Rome.

The Italian Northern Army entered Dessie on April 15th; no Ethiopian army remained between it and Addis Ababa. The entrenched camp of Sasabane fell on the 30th, and the Italian Southern Army was able to march rapidly on Harrar and Diredawa (on the railway from Addis Ababa to Jibuti). On May 2nd, the Emperor Haile Selassie left his capital for Jibuti; on the 5th, Addis Ababa was occupied by the Italian Northern Army.

On May 9th, the King of Italy signed a decree-law, Article 1 of which said: "The territories and peoples which belonged to the Empire of Ethiopia are placed under the full and entire sovereignty of the Kingdom of Italy. The title of Emperor of Ethiopia is assumed by the King of Italy for himself and his successors."

On May 10th, the Emperor Haile Selassie telegraphed from Jerusalem to the Secretary-General:[1] "We have decided to put an end to the most sweeping, the most unjust, and the most inhuman war of modern times by leaving the country in order to avoid the extermination of the Ethiopian people, and to be able to devote ourselves freely and peacefully to the preservation of the age-old independence of Ethiopia and the principles of collective security and the sanctity of international obligations, all of which are threatened by Italy. From the outset, we have made every effort to avoid the disturbance of peace, we have loyally defended our soil until, as a result of Italy's raining of gas, it became obvious that our resistance could not be continued, and that, in any case, that resistance could only lead to the extermination of the Ethiopian people, and we now ask the League of Nations to pursue its efforts to ensure the respect of the Covenant and to decide not to recognise territorial extensions or the exercise of an alleged sovereignty resulting from illegal recourse to armed force and many other violations of international obligations."

Ordinary Session of the Council, May 11th.

On May 11th, the Council met in ordinary session at Geneva.

Baron Aloisi, representative of Italy, having announced that he had a statement to make on the placing of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute on the agenda of that session, the representative of Ethiopia was invited to be present.

The representative of Italy thereupon left the Council room, after stating that the Italian delegation could not agree to the self-styled Ethiopian representative's being present. He added:[2] "Nothing resembling an organised Ethiopian State exists. The only sovereignty in Ethiopia is Italian sovereignty. Any discussion on a dispute between Ethiopia and Italy would accordingly be pointless. I am bound, therefore, not to take part in it."

The question of the Italo-Ethiopian dispute was placed on the agenda of the session. The Italian representative then resumed his seat at the public meeting, at which this question was not to be discussed.

Next morning, the Italian delegation was recalled to Rome, and in its absence, on May 12th, the Council considered a draft resolution which was the outcome of an exchange of views between various members.

This draft was worded as follows:[3]

> "The Council,
>
> "Having met to consider the dispute between Italy and Ethiopia:
>
> "Recalls the conclusions reached and the decisions taken in this matter in the League of Nations since October 3rd, 1935;
>
> "Is of opinion that further time is necessary to permit its Members to consider the situation created by the grave new steps taken by the Italian Government;
>
> "Decides to resume its deliberations on this subject on June 15th;[4]
>
> "And considers that, in the meantime, there is no cause for modifying the measures previously adopted in collaboration by the Members of the League."

The representative of Ethiopia, M. Wolde Maryam, reminded the Council that, in a written statement submitted on the previous day, he had expressed "the feelings of the Ethiopian Government and its unshakable determination to defend the integrity and independence of the Empire".

"The Ethiopian delegation", he added, "requests the Council vigorously to condemn the new act of violence of the Italian Government and its claim to suppress by force a State Member of the League of Nations. The Ethiopian delegation asks that all the provisions of Article 16 of the Covenant should at last be enforced, so that all States, weak or powerful, which are threatened by the ambition and covetousness of an unscrupulous Government may be reassured. The moment is a tragic one for Ethiopia. It is no less grave for the League of Nations. On the resolution that the Council takes to-day depends the future and the very existence of the League of Nations."

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[1] See *Official Journal*, June 1936, page 660.
[2] See *Official Journal*, June 1936, page 535.
[3] See *Official Journal*, June 1936, page 540.
[4] On June 2nd, the Argentine Government asked that the Assembly might be convened, and expressed the view that the latter should examine "the situation brought about by the annexation of Ethiopia and also the position in regard to the sanctions enacted by the League". The Assembly was convened for June 30th, and the meeting of the Council, originally fixed for June 15th, was postponed until the 26th.

The Argentine representative, M. Ruiz Guiñazú, said that, taking into account the present erious circumstances, and with a view to safeguarding the fundamental principles of the Covenant, he accepted the draft resolution, while making a reservation on behalf of his Government as to the adjournment of the discussion.[1]

The representative of Chile, M. Rivas Vicuña, agreed to the postponement, but said that he would refrain from voting on that part of the resolution which involved the maintenance of sanctions. " I desire to state ", he said, " that, without prejudging the examination of the substance of the problem, my Government is of opinion that, since the war is finished, sanctions should be raised. Sanctions no longer have any object, and they affect, not only the country against which they have been enforced, but also the countries applying them. My Government considers that, at the present time, the adoption of this point of view would constitute an effective contribution towards remedying the economic and political crisis from which the world is suffering." [2]

The representative of Ecuador, M. Zaldumbide, approved the adjournment of the substantive question, but said he could not subscribe to the last part of the resolution, to the effect that " the Members of the Council consider there is no cause for modifying the measures taken, including sanctions, during this conflict ". His Government, which had raised sanctions for the reason it had stated to the Council in April, could not now associate itself with their maintenance. " Sanctions ", he said, " were devised and adopted solely as the most appropriate means to accelerate the end of hostilities ". He also criticised the expression " measures adopted in collaboration ", used in the resolution. " Though it is true ", he said, " that the principle of sanctions and the conditions for the application of that principle were laid down by common agreement, it is no less true that it was left to the free will of States Members to adopt the internal measures. Governments were asked individually to promulgate the necessary decrees; they did so in the full exercise of their liberty. Hence it would seem to follow that, just as the Governments were left free to conform to such action for such time as the circumstances in their opinion necessitated, so they were not bound by the decisions of other Governments or of the Co-ordination Committee to maintain sanctions indefinitely. Convinced of this, my Government did not consider it necessary to submit its decision for the previous consideration of the Sanctions Committee."

The Council noted these reservations, and adopted the draft resolution.

B. MEASURES TAKEN UNDER ARTICLE 16 OF THE COVENANT.[3]

The Co-ordination Committee.

The Assembly adopted on October 10th, 1935, the following recommendation in connection with the Italo-Ethiopian conflict:

" The Assembly,

" Having taken cognisance of the opinions expressed by the Members of the Council at the Council's meeting of October 7th, 1935;

" Taking into consideration the obligations which rest upon the Members of the League of Nations in virtue of Article 16 of the Covenant and the desirability of co-ordination of the measures which they may severally contemplate:

" Recommends that Members of the League of Nations, other than the parties, should set up a Committee, composed of one delegate, assisted by experts, for each Member, to consider and facilitate the co-ordination of such measures and, if necessary, to draw the attention of the Council or the Assembly to the situations requiring to be examined by them."

The Co-ordination Committee which was set up in consequence of this recommendation met on the next day, October 11th. It consists of representatives of all the Members of the League, except Ethiopia and Italy. At the first session, fifty-two Governments were represented. The Committee elected as its President Dr. Augusto de Vasconcellos (Portugal).

The Committee of Eighteen.

The Co-ordination Comittee constituted a sub-committee, which was later called the Committee of Eighteen, which was requested to submit proposals to it. Later, on October 19th, the Co-ordination Committee gave to the Committee of Eighteen the following mandate:

" The Co-ordination Committee requests the Committee of Eighteen to continue in session in order to follow the execution of the proposals already submitted to Governments,

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[1] See footnote [4] on preceding page.

[2] In a communication of the same date, the Chilian representative also informed the Secretary-General of his Government's opinion concerning the raising of sanctions. " I should be glad ", he added, " if you would communicate my Government's proposal to the competent organs for necessary action. " The Chairman of the Co-ordination Committee informed the Chilian representative that, owing to the Council's decision to adjourn until the month of June, he also thought it advisable to postpone the meeting of the Committee of Eighteen to that date. The Chilian Government's communication, he said, would be submitted to that Committee.

[3] The records of the proceedings of the Co-ordination Committee and of its Committees and Sub-Committees have been published in the *Official Journal*, Special Supplements Nos. 145, 146, 147, 148 and 149.

and to put such new proposals as it may think advisable to make before the Co-ordination Committee or the Governments represented thereon.

" To this end, the Committee of Eighteen shall appoint such sub-committees, technical or other, as it may deem fit among its own members or from those of the Co-ordination Committee."

The Committee of Eighteen is composed of representatives of the following Governments: Union of South Africa, Argentine, Belgium, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Greece, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Roumania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Yugoslavia. It elected as its Chairman Dr. de Vasconcellos, President of the Co-ordination Committee.

Measures proposed.

The Committee of Eighteen began its work immediately.

Under the first paragraph of Article 16 of the Covenant, should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its Covenants under Articles 12, 13 or 15, the other Members " undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not ".

The second paragraph states that " it shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the covenants of the League ".

Under paragraph 3, " the Members of the League agree, further, that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic measures which are taken under this article, in order to minimise the loss and inconvenience resulting from the above measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of their number by the Covenant-breaking State ".

In 1921, the Assembly, when voting a number of amendments to Article 16, adopted certain resolutions constituting " rules for guidance " which it recommended " as a provisional measure " to the Members of the League in connection with the application of Article 16 so long as the amendments have not been put into force. Resolution 3 declared that " the unilateral action of the defaulting State cannot create a state of war; it merely entitles the other Members of the League to resort to acts of war or to declare themselves in a state of war with the Covenant-breaking State; but it is in accordance with the spirit of the Covenant that the League of Nations should attempt, at least at the outset, to avoid war and to restore peace by economic pressure ".

The exact status of the 1921 resolutions has been a subject of discussion ever since it became clear that the amendments voted at that time would not obtain the necessary ratifications for coming into force. An exchange of views on this question took place at the first meeting of the Committee of Eighteen. Without taking the 1921 resolutions as a legal foundation for their work, the Members of the League agreed to adopt various practical proposals capable of a general application and which might from time to time be revised and extended. Complete severance of financial, commercial or personal intercourse was not proposed at any of the meetings of the Committee. The Committee limited itself to proposing measures of economic and financial pressure.

On October 11th, the Committee of Eighteen submitted to the Co-ordination Committee, which adopted it, a first proposal dealing with arms, ammunition and implements of war, in which it was proposed (*a*) that Governments which were at that time enforcing an arms embargo on Ethiopia should immediately lift such embargo, and (*b*) that Governments should at once impose an embargo on the exportation, re-exportation or transit of arms, ammunition and implements of war to Italy and the Italian Colonies.

For a definition of arms, ammunition and implements of war, the Co-ordination Committee provisionally adopted the list contained in the Proclamation made shortly before by the President of the United States of America. A sub-committee of military experts was created by the Committee of Eighteen for the purpose of revising this list and, as a result of its work, a somewhat more detailed list was adopted by the Co-ordination Committee on October 16th, 1935 (Proposal I A).

Meanwhile, the Co-ordination Committee had adopted on October 14th a declaration concerning mutual support, proposed by the Committee of Eighteen, which reads as follows:

" The Members of the League agree, further, that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic measures which are taken under this article, in order to minimise the loss and inconvenience resulting from the above measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of their number by the Covenant-breaking State."

On the same day, October 14th, the Committee of Eighteen adopted Proposal II, dealing with financial measures.

On October 16th, the Co-ordination Committee adopted the following resolution concerning the obligations which flow from Article 16 of the Covenant:

"The Committee of Co-ordination,

"Considering that it is important to ensure rapid and effective application of the measures which have been and may subsequently be proposed by the Committee;

"Considering that it rests with each country to apply these measures in accordance with its public law and, in particular, the powers of its Government in regard to execution of treaties:

"Calls attention to the fact that the Members of the League, being bound by the obligations which flow from Article 16 of the Covenant, are under a duty to take the necessary steps to enable them to carry out these obligations with all requisite rapidity."

During the following days, the Committee of Eighteen elaborated Proposals III (Prohibition of imports of Italian goods), IV (Embargo on certain exports to Italy) and V (Organisation of mutual support), which were adopted by the Co-ordination Committee on October 19th. All these Proposals and decisions were, immediately after their adoption, communicated to the various Governments, which were asked to inform the Co-ordination Committee of the date on which they could be ready to put the measures into operation.

The Co-ordination Committee met again from October 31st to November 2nd. On the latter date, it decided to request all Governments to give full legal effect to Proposal II by or before November 18th, and decided to fix that same day for the entry into force of Proposals III and IV. It simultaneously adopted certain resolutions completing the various Proposals. For this same purpose, further resolutions and Proposals were adopted by the Committee of Eighteen on November 6th.

Summary of the Proposals adopted.

Proposal I was, as explained above, to the effect that the arms embargo imposed on Ethiopia should be lifted and that an embargo should be imposed on the exportation, re-exportation or transit to Italy and Italian colonies of the arms, ammunition and implements of war defined in Proposal I A.

Proposal II was to the effect that the Governments of the Members of the League of Nations should put an embargo on all loans and credits to the Italian Government or to any public authority, person or corporation in Italian territory, either directly or indirectly.

In order to prevent the accumulation of credit balances under clearing agreements through exports to Italy, the Committee of Eighteen proposed (Proposal II A) on November 6th, 1935, that Governments should take measures to prohibit, as from November 18th, the acceptance of any new deposit of lire into an Italian clearing account in payment for such exports. It was also suggested in this Proposal that the purchase price of imports of Italian products which had not yet been paid for might be lodged in national accounts and be employed for the settlement of claims arising from exports to Italy. In this same connection, a resolution had been adopted by the Co-ordination Committee on November 2nd, by which the States applying measures in application of Article 16 of the Covenant declared that they considered that the debts payable by Italy to them under clearing or other arrangements, the payment of which would become impossible through the prohibition of imports of Italian goods, would remain valid at their then present value, notwithstanding any action that might be taken by Italy.

Proposal III was to the effect that Governments should prohibit the importation into their territories of all goods consigned from, or grown, produced or manufactured in Italy or Italian possessions, from whatever place they arrived, with the following exceptions:

(*a*) Gold or silver bullion and coin;

(*b*) Goods *en route* at the time of the imposition of the prohibition (November 18th);

(*c*) Personal belongings of travellers from Italy or Italian possessions;

(*d*) Italian goods which have been subjected to some process or have been partly manufactured in another country, if 25% or more of the value of the goods at the time when they left the last place from which consigned is attributable to processes undergone since the goods left Italy or Italian possessions;

(*e*) Goods fully paid for by October 19th, 1935 (decision of November 2nd, 1935);

(*f*) Books, newspapers and periodicals, maps and cartographical productions, or printed or engraved music (*Proposal III* A, adopted on November 6th);

(*g*) Goods imported under contracts placed by a State or a wholly State-controlled institution on account of which not less than 20% had been paid before October 19th and especially exempted before November 12th by the Sub-Committee appointed by the Committee of Eighteen for that purpose.

Proposal IV was to the effect that Governments should prohibit the exportation and re-exportation to Italy and Italian possessions of the following articles:

(*a*) Horses, mules, donkeys, camels and all other transport animals;

(*b*) Rubber;

(*c*) Bauxite, aluminium and alumina (aluminium oxide), iron ore and scrap-iron;

Chromium, manganese, nickel, titanium, tungsten, vanadium, their ores and ferro-alloys (and also ferro-molybdenum, ferro-silicon), ferro-silico-manganese and ferro-silicon-manganese-aluminium);

Tin and tin ore.

List (*c*) above included all crude forms of the minerals and metals mentioned and their ores, scrap and alloys.

This proposal contained a clause to the effect that Governments should take steps to ensure that these goods, if exported to other countries, would not be re-exported directly or indirectly to Italy, and further, in this connection, it was proposed on November 6th *(Proposal IV B)* that Governments should take all measures in their power to verify the destination of all exports of goods falling under Proposal IV. The Committee of Eighteen expressed the opinion that those Governments which did not immediately restrict their exports of these articles should keep their volume and direction under constant review and, in the event of an abnormal increase in exports, take steps to prevent supplies reaching Italy or Italian possessions by indirect routes.

Execution of the Proposals.

Governments were requested to inform the Committee of the date on which they would be ready to put the Proposals into operation, and to communicate the text of any laws, decrees, proclamations and other instruments formulating or enforcing the measures proposed.

On November 6th, the Committee of Eighteen requested a number of Governments to nominate experts to study in Geneva the information furnished by Governments concerning the application of the Proposals of the Co-ordination Committee, and in particular to assist the President of the Co-ordination Committee with regard to any question which might be submitted by Governments in this connection.

The Committee of Experts thus constituted met from November 27th to 30th, from December 10th to 12th, from January 29th to February 1st, from March 4th to 9th and on April 21st. At each of these meetings it examined the replies received from Governments concerning the application of the adopted Proposals. In the report it drew up after its second session, the Committee of Experts gave the following summary regarding the acceptance and application of the Proposals as it appeared from the replies received up to the end of January: [1]

"*Proposal I* has been accepted by fifty-two Governments, of which fifty have notified the Co-ordination Committee of its entry into force; legislative texts have been received from forty-four Governments.

"*Proposal II* has been accepted by fifty-two Governments, of which forty-eight have notified the Co-ordination Committee of its entry into force; legislative texts have been received from forty-one Governments.

"*Proposal III* has been accepted by fifty Governments, of which forty-four have notified the Co-ordination Committee of its entry into force; legislative texts have been received from thirty-nine Governments.

"*Proposal IV* has been accepted by fifty-one Governments, of which forty-seven have notified the Co-ordination Committee of its entry into force; legislative texts have been received from forty-one Governments."

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[1] See Co-ordination Committee document 110, pages 3, 4 and 7. Since that date there have been a few isolated changes in the situation. A number of legislative texts which were still outstanding have been received. Besides the four Members of the League (Albania, Austria, Hungary and Paraguay) which have taken no action under Article 16 of the Covenant, Ecuador decided on April 4th to revoke the measures which it had enacted (see above chapter on the Italo-Ethiopian dispute).

Further details are given in the following table:

APPLICATION OF THE PROPOSALS OF THE CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE.

POSITION ACCORDING TO THE COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS UP TO JUNE 10TH, 1936.

Countries	Proposal I	Proposal II	Proposal III	Proposal IV	Proposal V
Afghanistan	In force	In force	In force	In force	Accepted
Union of South Africa	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Albania	—	—	—	—	—
Argentine	In force *	In force *	Before Parliament	In force *	[1]
Australia	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Austria	—	—	—	—	—
Belgium	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Bolivia	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
United Kingdom	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Bulgaria	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Canada	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Chile	In force *	In force	In force [2]	In force	Accepted
China	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Colombia	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Cuba	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Under consideration
Czechoslovakia	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Denmark	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Dominican Republic	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Ecuador	—	—	—	—	—
Estonia	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Finland	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
France	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Greece	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Guatemala	Accepted in principle	Accepted in principle	Accepted in principle	Accepted in principle	Accepted
Haiti	In force	In force	In force	In force	Accepted
Honduras	Accepted in principle	In force *	Accepted in principle	Accepted in principle	Accepted
Hungary	—	—	—	—	—
India	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Iran	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Iraq	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Irish Free State	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Latvia	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Liberia	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Lithuania	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Luxemburg	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Mexico	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Netherlands	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
New Zealand	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Nicaragua	In force *	In force *	Before Parliament	Before Parliament	[1]
Norway	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Panama	In force	Will take necessary measures	Will take necessary measures	Will take necessary measures	Accepted
Paraguay	—	—	—	—	—
Peru	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Under consideration
Poland	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Portugal	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Roumania	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Salvador	Accepted in principle but considered unnecessary to apply	Accepted in principle but considered unnecessary to apply	In force *	Accepted in principle but considered unnecessary to apply	Accepted
Siam	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Spain	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Sweden	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Switzerland	In force *	In force *	—	In force *	[1]
Turkey	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted
Uruguay	In force *	Before Parliament	Before Parliament	In force *	Accepted
Venezuela	In force *	In force *	Under consideration	Under consideration	Accepted
Yugoslavia	In force *	In force *	In force *	In force *	Accepted

NON-MEMBER STATES.

The various Proposals and decisions of the Co-ordination Committee have been communicated by the President of the Committee to States non-members of the League.

The Secretary of State of the United States of America replied on October 26th, informing the President of the Co-ordination Committee that the President of the United States of America, on October 5th, 1935, had issued a proclamation bringing into operation under an Act of Congress

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* Texts have reached Geneva.
[1] Reply not quite explicit.
[2] With exception of imports arising out of clearing operations.

an embargo on the exportation of arms, ammunition and implements of war to both belligerents. The issuance of this proclamation automatically brought into operation another section of the Act of Congress making it unlawful for any American vessel to carry arms, ammunition or implements of war to any port of the belligerent countries or to any neutral port for transhipment to or for the use of either of the belligerents. On the same day, the President issued a further proclamation warning American nationals against travel on belligerent vessels and stating that such travel would be at their own risk. In addition to the three measures just mentioned, the President took a fourth important step by issuing a public statement definitely warning American citizens against transactions of any character with either of the belligerent nations except at their own risk.

The Egyptian Government decided on October 30th to accede to the principle of the financial and economic measures decided upon by the Co-ordination Committee. It communicated later on the texts of decrees applying Proposals I, III and IV.

As a result of the Customs union existing between the Swiss Confederation and the Principality of Liechtenstein, the export prohibitions accepted by the Swiss Confederation (Proposals I and IV) automatically applied to Liechtenstein. Similarly, the steps taken by the Swiss Federal Council to enforce Proposal II have also been taken by the Principality of Liechtenstein.

The Co-ordination Committee has not been informed by any other non-member State that it had adopted any of the proposals or similar measures.

Statistics.

On January 22nd, the Committee of Eighteen requested the Committee of Experts to collect and publish statistics and other information concerning the state of trade between the countries applying the measures proposed by the Co-ordination Committee and Italy and Italian colonies. To this end, the Committee of Experts, during its session at the end of January, drew up a questionnaire to be submitted to all Governments Members of the Co-ordination Committee, with a view to obtaining statistics concerning the development of trade with Italy. Since then the questionnaire has been submitted regularly each month to Governments and the information collected has been communicated to the members of the Co-ordination Committee and published.[1]

The information at present available gives the following picture:

	Number of countries for which statistics are available	Percentage of Italian exports to these countries in 1932/33 as compared with the total Italian exports	Imports from Italy and Italian colonies (in millions of former United States gold dollars)		Percentage of imports from these countries to Italy in 1932/33, as compared with the total Italian imports	Exports to Italy and Italian colonies (in millions of former United States gold dollars)		Net imports of gold from Italy (in millions of former United States gold dollars)
			1934/35	1935/36		1934/35	1935/36	1935/36
November . .	69	96.5	21,884	26,050	95	31,910	32,085	22,044
December . .	68	96.5	21,942	17,482	95	30,479	21,945	8,477
January . . .	67	96	19,470	10,168	94.5	26,793	15,292	27,241
February . . .	62	95.5	19,694	8,657	93.5	27,757	16,799	16,518
March	38	86	17,979	9,315	86	26,326	15,589	12,771
April.	22	60	12,185	5,061	56.5	15,580	8,296	4,129

The situation was commented upon as follows by the President of the Committee of Experts at the end of April: [2]

" Owing to the time required for legislation to be passed and the exceptions allowed under the various Proposals of the Co-ordination Committee, Proposal III did not become effective until about the New Year. In January 1936, Italian exports fell off by nearly half and Italian imports by well over a third, as compared with January 1935. The figures so far available for February show the progressive effect of sanctions.

" These figures include imports into countries which do not apply Proposal III. If these are eliminated, the exports from Italy to those countries which *do* apply that Proposal have become negligible.

" It is essential to remember that the figures are the statistics of the countries from which information is available—*i.e.*, that Italian exports are shown as imports of those countries and Italian imports as exports of those countries. This is particularly important in estimating the Italian trade balance. The value indicated by the other countries as imports from Italy is higher than the price Italy obtains for her exports; for that value includes the costs of transport, insurance, and other costs which fall on those exports—in fact, the difference between f.o.b. and c.i.f. Similarly, Italy has to pay more for her imports than is indicated by the statistics of the exporting countries. Those differences are usually estimated on an average of 10 % of the value of the goods. If this adjustment is made throughout to the figures available, Italy's unfavourable balance is considerably increased. It will be noticed that the Italian

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[1] For further information see Co-ordination Committee documents 116, 120 and 125.
[2] Co-ordination Committee document 119.

gold exports during recent months greatly exceed the apparent unfavourable trade balance. The reason just advanced may in part explain these heavy gold losses. The Governor of the Bank of Italy stated that the gold holdings of the Bank were reduced by 909 million gold lire, corresponding to 47.8 million gold dollars, between October 20th and the end of 1935. The replies to the questionnaire show that, during a somewhat shorter period—namely, during November and December 1935—gold imports from Italy amounting to 579.1 million gold lire (30.5 million gold dollars) were registered by the countries for which we have information. The gold and foreign assets reserve of the Bank of Italy on October 20th, 1935, amounted to 4,316 million gold lire (227.2 million gold dollars). What amount of gold and foreign assets the Government has been able to collect domestically since October is not known."

The replies received from Governments indicated for the first three months of 1936 net imports of gold from Italy amounting to 1,073.5 million gold lire (56.5 million gold dollars). The incomplete data available for April showed net gold imports of 77.9 million gold lire (4.1 million gold dollars).

Mutual Support.

The Co-ordination Committee adopted, on October 19th, Proposal V, which reads as follows:

" The Co-ordination Committee draws the special attention of all Governments to their obligations under paragraph 3 of Article 16 of the Covenant, according to which the Members of the League undertake mutually to support one another in the application of the economic and financial measures taken under this article.

" I. With a view to carrying these obligations into effect, the Governments of the Members of the League of Nations will:

" (*a*) Adopt immediately measures to assure that no action taken as a result of Article 16 will deprive any country applying sanctions of such advantages as the commercial agreements concluded by the participating States with Italy afforded it through the operation of the most-favoured-nation clause;

" (*b*) Take appropriate steps with a view to replacing, within the limits of the requirements of their respective countries, imports from Italy by the import of similar products from the participating States;

" (*c*) Be willing, after the application of economic sanctions, to enter into negotiations with any participating country which has sustained a loss, with a view to increasing the sale of goods so as to offset any loss of Italian markets which the application of sanctions may have involved;

" (*d*) In cases in which they have suffered no loss in respect of any given commodity, abstain from demanding the application of any most-favoured-nation clause in the case of any privileges granted under paragraphs (*b*) and (*c*) in respect of that commodity.

" II. With the above objects, the Governments will, if necessary with the assistance of the Committee of Eighteen, study, in particular, the possibility of adopting, within the limits of their existing obligations, and taking into consideration the annexed opinion of the Legal Sub-Committee of the Co-ordination Committee, the following measures:

" (1) The increase by all appropriate measures of their imports in favour of such countries as may have suffered loss of Italian markets on account of the application of sanctions;

" (2) In order to facilitate this increase, the taking into consideration of the obligations of mutual support and of the advantages which the trade of certain States Members of the League of Nations, not participating in the sanctions, would obtain from the application of these sanctions, in order to reduce by every appropriate means and to an equitable degree imports coming from these countries;

" (3) The promotion, by all means in their power, of business relations between firms interested in the sale of goods in Italian markets which have been lost owing to the application of sanctions and firms normally importing such goods;

" (4) Assistance generally in the organisation of the international marketing of goods with a view to offsetting any loss of Italian markets which the application of sanctions may have involved.

" They will also examine, under the same conditions, the possibility of financial or other measures to supplement the commercial measures, in so far as these latter may not ensure sufficient international mutual support.

"III. The Co-ordination Committee requests the Committee of Eighteen to afford, if necessary, to the Governments concerned the assistance contemplated at the beginning of Part II of the present proposal."

In the resolution adopted by the Co-ordination Committee on November 2nd, the Members of the League participating in the measures taken under Article 16 of the Covenant recognised:

"(*a*) That, on the discontinuance of the measures taken in regard to Italy under Article 16 of the Covenant, they should support one another in order to ensure that Italy discharges her obligations to the creditor States as she should have done if she had not incurred the application of Article 16 of the Covenant;

"(*b*) Furthermore, that, if in the meantime particularly serious losses are sustained by certain States owing to the suspension by Italy of the payment of the aforesaid debts, the mutual support provided for by paragraph 3 of Article 16 will be specially given in order to make good such losses by all appropriate measures."

Proposal V was accepted by forty-six Governments, whilst in addition three Governments sent communications which would appear to indicate their acceptance in principle. The Government of the Union of South Africa indicated in detail in its reply the measures which it was prepared to take for the organisation of mutual support and stated that it was prepared to give an assurance that it "will not conclude with States Members of the League of Nations not participating in the application of sanctions trade agreements such as are now provided for in the Union's legislation for the encouragement of trade by tariff concessions or most-favoured-nation treatment".

Extension of Embargo on Exports to Italy (Proposal IV A).

On November 6th, the Committee of Eighteen adopted Proposal IV A, in which it submitted that it was expedient that the measures of embargo provided for in Proposal IV should be extended to petroleum, iron and steel, coal and coke, as soon as the conditions necessary to render this extension effective had been realised.

The question was resumed on January 22nd, when the Committee of Eighteen decided to create a Committee of Experts to conduct a technical examination of the conditions governing the trade in and transport of petroleum and its derivatives, by-products and residues with a view to submitting an early report to the Committee of Eighteen on the effectiveness of the extension of measures of embargo to the above-mentioned commodities.

The Committee of Experts thus created met from February 3rd to February 12th under the Chairmanship of M. Marte Gomez (Mexico). It was composed of experts designated by the Governments of the United Kingdom, France, Iran, Iraq, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Roumania, Sweden and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The Venezuelan Government sent an observer.

The Committee summed up its findings as follows:[1]

"(1) The figures given above with reference to consumption, to stocks and to supplies which might be *en route* at the moment of the imposition of an embargo on the export of petroleum and petroleum products make it possible to estimate roughly the period which would have to elapse before such an embargo, were it to be universally applied, would become fully effective. In the conditions prevailing at the moment of its session, the Committee is of opinion that this period may be taken to be about three and a half months.

"(2) In the event of such an embargo being applied by all States Members of the Co-ordination Committee, it would be effective if the United States of America was to limit its exports to Italy to the normal level of its exports prior to 1935.

"(3) If such an embargo were applied by the States Members of the Co-ordination Committee alone, the only effect which it could have on Italy would be to render the purchase of petroleum more difficult and expensive.

"(4) In view of the possibility of substitutes being used to some extent for petrol (motor spirit), an embargo on the export of petroleum and petroleum products would be strengthened were it extended to cover industrial alcohol and benzol.

"(5) The effectiveness of an embargo imposed by States Members of the Co-ordination Committee on the transport of oil to Italy is subject to the same limitations as an embargo on exports. Were these States alone to prohibit the use of tankers for the transport of oil to Italy, it would be able to satisfy its needs up to about 50% from its own resources, and the rest by means of vessels of other States, but with greater difficulty and at greater expense.

"(6) If an embargo on transport should be decided on, the Committee is of the opinion that the most practicable form of embargo would be one which would prohibit tankers from proceeding to Italy and would also prohibit the sale of tankers to States not applying the embargo.

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[1] Co-ordination Committee document 113.

"(7) Should it be decided to impose an embargo on petroleum, attention should be given to the necessity of taking suitable measures to prevent traffic by indirect routes, including use of free ports, which is of special importance as regards petroleum."

The report of the Committee was laid before the Committee of Eighteen, which met on March 2nd, but was not considered by the latter Committee.[1] On March 4th, the Committee of Experts on Petroleum was asked by the Committee of Eighteen to examine the methods of applying an oil embargo.

The Committee of Experts on Petroleum met for this purpose on March 7th, and drew up a report [2] in which it indicated in detail the measures which should be taken if an oil embargo were decided upon.[1]

Proposed Amendments to Proposal III (Prohibition of Imports from Italy).

The President of the Co-ordination Committee asked the Committee of Experts at its session at the end of January to examine whether, in Proposal III, the proportion of 25% to be added to the value of Italian goods in other countries before they could be accepted as the "nationalised" products of these other countries and thus exempted from the embargo on Italian goods was unduly low.

The Committee stated in its report [3] that it had no hesitation in expressing the view that the application of the laws and decrees giving effect to Proposal III would be rendered easier were the percentage raised from 25% to a far higher figure, for instance 50%.

This report was considered by the Committee of Eighteen on March 2nd. M. Flandin (France) suggested that other criteria might also usefully be taken into account, as it was difficult for Customs authorities to decide on the percentage of added value.

M. Flandin, moreover, made other suggestions designed to make more effective the application of Proposal III.

The Committee of Eighteen decided, on March 4th, to refer these various suggestions to the Committee of Experts. The latter met from March 4th to 9th. On the latter date, its discussions were adjourned and it decided not to submit any report on the points submitted to it until it was reconvoked by the President of the Co-ordination Committee.

Exchanges of Views between the Government of the United Kingdom and Other Governments in connection with Mutual Support.

On January 22nd, the Government of the United Kingdom sent the Chairman of the Co-ordination Committee a memorandum on the "exchanges of views" that had taken place between that Government and the French and certain other Governments in connection with Article 16 of the Covenant. The memorandum stated that on October 14th, 1935, the Co-ordination Committee had recognised that any proposals for action under Article 16 of the Covenant were made on the basis of paragraph 3 of that article, by which the Members of the League agreed *inter alia* that they would mutually support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of their number by the Covenant-breaking State. The application of this principle, universal as it might be, called for the special co-operation of those Members of the League which, by reason of their military situation or their geographical position, are most immediately concerned. It had, therefore, in the particular case, to be ascertained whether the States whose assistance was specially required would be prepared to provide concrete assistance, and, if so, what would be the precise character of that assistance.

The United Kingdom Government decided, in the first instance, to ask the French Government whether they interpreted paragraph 3 of Article 16 as did that Government. This enquiry was put to the French Government on October 14th, and in the course of an oral reply the view of that Government on this point was stated to be that the French Government fully considered Article 16 as implying complete solidarity between each of the Members of the League in respect of that one of them which may have been attacked by the Covenant-breaking State, if this attack has been clearly brought about by the application of the provisions of the said article, the execution of which shall have been decided upon in common. This definition of the general principle was satisfactory to His Majesty's Government, but there were certain points concerning its practical application to the present dispute which required elucidation.

Further discussions took place between the two Governments, and on October 18th the French Government made a statement to His Majesty's Government in writing to the effect

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[1] The reasons for the successive adjournments of the consideration of Proposal IV A are given above in the chapter dealing with the Italo-Ethiopian dispute.

[2] Co-ordination Committee document 115.

[3] Co-ordination Committee document 110

that it certainly interpreted the obligation prescribed for Members of the League of Nations towards any one of them which should, as a result of measures taken in application of Article 16, be exposed to attack by the Covenant-breaking State, as implying unlimited solidarity of action in the matter of military, air and naval assistance. This obligation would be governed by the measures taken in fulfilment of Article 16, within the limits of its application. The French document added that the United Kingdom Government itself seemed to share this view, since it offered the French Government the assurance that it would not take the initiative in any measure against Italy which would not be in conformity with the decisions taken, or to be taken, by the League of Nations in full agreement with France. Strengthened by this assurance, the French Government was in a still better position to confirm, in the clearest and most precise manner, that in a possible attack by Italy upon the United Kingdom, by reason of the latter's collaboration in the international action undertaken by the League of Nations and pursued in concert with France, French support of the United Kingdom was assured fully and in advance within the framework of the interpretation which the Governments of the two countries were in agreement in placing upon the obligation provided for in Article 16 of the Covenant.

Following on this agreement, there were conversations between the naval, military and air staffs of the two countries, relating solely to common action in the event of an outbreak of hostilities in the Mediterranean owing to the application of sanctions. No other contingency, such as the situation on the north-eastern frontier of France, was considered.

His Majesty's Government made similar enquiries, subsequently, from the Governments of Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia. The replies received from these three Governments, after consultation with one another, left no doubt of their readiness faithfully to apply all the obligations devolving upon them under the Covenant, in consequence of measures taken in application of Article 16.

His Majesty's Government also learnt that on December 21st the French Government was informed by the three Governments of the enquiries made by His Majesty's Government, and of the assurances given in reply; and that the Italian Government was also informed by the French Government of the fact that conversations had recently taken place between the French and British staffs, and also of the assurances given to His Majesty's Government by the Turkish, Greek and Yugoslav Governments in reply to enquiries made at Ankara and Athens and Belgrade.

The Turkish Government subsequently asked the United Kingdom Government for the same assurances in exchange. The latter Government acceded to this request and to a similar request made by the Yugoslav and Hellenic Governments.

In a series of communications, the representatives of France, Turkey, Greece, and Yugoslavia confirmed the details given in regard to them in the British memorandum, whilst the Roumanian and Czechoslovak representatives said that the replies furnished to the British Government by Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey had been given in complete agreement with them.

On January 24th, the Spanish delegation announced that, having been informed by the United Kingdom Government of the conversations that it had had with the Governments of France, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia regarding the application of certain provisions of Article 16, paragraph 3, of the Covenant, the Spanish Government could only repeat that Spain would, as always, honour her engagements; and that, as regards the specific case of the Mediterranean, the Government of the Republic considered that, inasmuch as the hypothesis contemplated was linked with the application of the measures taken under Article 16 of the Covenant, if it were thought necessary to study the case, it should be studied in the committees set up for that purpose at Geneva, so as to ensure that the article in question was applied as effectively as possible.

On January 24th, the Italian Government communicated to the Government of the United Kingdom, through their Ambassador, a *note verbale*, embodying their views on the British memorandum of January 22nd.

While confirming the reserves and the protest originally made in regard to the measures decided upon against Italy in connection with the first paragraph of Article 16 of the Covenant, the Italian Government made the most formal reserves and protested against the interpretation and application of Article 16, upon which the British memorandum based the agreements of a military character arrived at between the British and other Governments.

In acknowledging the receipt of this communication, the British Government informed the Italian Ambassador that its position remained as stated in its memorandum and that it did not feel that any useful purpose would be served by prolonging correspondence on the subject.

The correspondence on these exchanges of views has been published,[1] including the Italian Government's protest, a copy of which had been communicated by the Government of the United Kingdom at the same time as its reply.

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[1] See Co-ordination Committee documents 108 to 108 (*h*) inclusive.

For fuller details as to the co-ordination of the measures taken in application of Article 16 of the Covenant in connection with the conflict between Ethiopia and Italy, consult the Minutes of the Co-ordination Committee and of the Committee of Eighteen and its Sub-Committees. These will be found in Special Supplements of the *Official Journal*: No. 145 (1935) and Nos. 146, 147 and 148 (1936).

DOCUMENTATION RELATING TO THE ITALO-ETHIOPIAN CONFLICT PUBLISHED BY THE LEAGUE SINCE OCTOBER 1935.

(1) *Official Journal*, November 1935, consisting of the Minutes of the meetings of the Council on October 5th and 7th, particularly the discussion on the report of the Council in virtue of Article 15, paragraph 4, of the Covenant and the discussion on the report of the Committee of Six on the application of Article 16 of the Covenant (pages 1209 and following).

The following documents, published in October 1935, figure as annexes:

(2) *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 138, consisting of the Minutes of the plenary meetings of the Assembly of October 9th, 10th and 11th, 1935 and the text of the resolution of October 10th, relating to the constitution of a committee of co-ordination (pages 98 and following).

(3) *Official Journal*, January 1936, consisting of the Minutes of the meeting of the Council on December 18th, 1935 (pages 10 and following), the text of the resolution of the Council of December 19th (page 14), as well as of the following documents, published in November and December:

(4) *Official Journal*, February 1936, consisting of the report of the Committee of Thirteen of January 23rd (page 106), and the following documentation, distributed in January and February 1936:

(5) *Official Journal*, April 1936, consisting of the Minutes of the meetings held by the Council on April 20th, including the report of the Committee of Thirteen and the analysis by the Committee of Jurists of the documents concerning the conduct of the war communicated to the Secretary-General down to April 16th.

The following documents are annexed to these Minutes:

(6) *Minutes* of the ninety-second session of the Council, including the Minutes of the meeting held by the Council on May 11th, 1936 (inscription of the question of the dispute on the agenda of the session), and the Minutes of the meeting of May 12th (resolution adopted by the Council).

(7) *Documentation* distributed in April, May and June 1936:

Document No.:

II. Representation of Ethiopia on the Council:

Letter, dated May 8th, 1936, from the Permanent Delegate of Ethiopia to the Secretary-General . . . . . C.217.M.132.1936.

III. Appeal to the League on the Occasion of the Departure from Ethiopia of His Majesty Haile Selassie I:

1. Telegram, dated May 10th, 1936, from His Majesty to the Secretary-General . . . . . C.216.M.131.1936.VII.
2. Letter, dated May 11th, 1936, from the Ethiopian Representative to the Secretary-General . . . . . C.219.M.133.1936.VII.

IV. Communication from the Argentine Government requesting the summoning of the Assembly . . . . . C.256(1).M.150(1).1936.

(8) The *Minutes* of the Committee of Co-ordination and of its Sub-Committees were published in the form of Special Supplements, Nos. 145, 146, 147 and 148, of the *Official Journal*.

ANNEX 2.

Official No.: C.256(1).M.150(1).1936.

REQUEST BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT FOR THE CONVOCATION OF THE SIXTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

LETTER, DATED JUNE 2ND, 1936, FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

Geneva, June 2nd, 1936.

[*Translation.*]

At the Council meeting on May 12th last,[1] I entered a formal reservation on behalf of my Government against the postponement of the discussions regarding the dispute between Italy and Ethiopia. My motive in so doing was to safeguard the basic principles of the Covenant of the League, while at the same time maintaining the spirit of constant co-operation in the high purposes of the League by which my Government is actuated.

As a logical consequence of that attitude, and in consonance also with the ideas expressed at various Assemblies regarding the desirability of democratising the functions with which the Council is invested, I beg to confirm, in accordance with my explicit instructions, the request which I have already made verbally for the summoning of the Assembly on or about the date of the next meeting of the Council, which has been convened for the 16th of this month.

This request is based upon the conviction that it is essential that all the States Members of the League of Nations, which is founded upon the principle of equality, should have an opportunity of considering the problems arising out of the dispute between Italy and Ethiopia, which are of such overwhelming importance in the present international situation, thus assuming their responsibilities and expressing their judgments upon the course to be followed in accordance with the fundamental principles of the Covenant.

My Government is of opinion that for this purpose it will be sufficient to reopen the Assembly which, as was made clear by its President, M. Beneš, at the meeting on

[1] See *Official Journal*, June 1936, page 540.

October 9th, 1935, was not closed but adjourned, out of consideration for the state of public opinion in the various countries; a fact which, in my Government's view, would in itself justify the matter's being submitted to the Assembly's consideration.

This attitude should be considered in the light of Article 10 and other articles of the Covenant, the principles of which are in keeping with the unchanging tradition on which Pan-Americanism has for half-a-century been based in the mutual relations of all the peoples of America — a tradition which has been brought down to the most recent times in international declarations and documents.

It is my Government's view that the purpose of the Assembly, the summoning of which it requests, should be to consider the situation brought about by the annexation of Ethiopia and also the position in regard to the sanctions enacted by the League.

(Signed) E. RUIZ GUIÑAZÚ,
Argentine Minister,
Permanent Delegate accredited to the League of Nations.

ANNEX 3.

APPENDICES TO THE LETTER, DATED JUNE 29TH, 1936,[1] FROM THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SIXTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Appendix I.

STATEMENT MADE BY A MEMBER OF THE BRITISH AMBULANCE SERVICE IN ETHIOPIA.

(Abstract from the *Morning Post* of June 11th, 1936.)

Those six months made me completely change my opinions. I went there to help what I considered the under-dog fight against unfair odds, as many another man did. And, in company with many others, in the end I was glad that the Italians won.

The reasons for the collapse of the Emperor's armies is simple. Each of the many nations out of which the country was made up loathed and distrusted the others, and at the first opportunity flew at each other's throat. In addition there was insufficient food provided for the armies, and consequently they lived on the country, more like hordes of brigands than organised forces.

In addition there was deep suspicion among the Abyssinian soldiers that they were being betrayed by their own Government. This feeling was intensified by the absence of Abyssinian aeroplanes. It was believed that the Government was pocketing the money intended to buy them.

Towards the end, civil war broke out and the country split to pieces; I understand that the Emperor on his way back to Addis Ababa was attacked several times by his own troops.

The Red Cross units in Abyssinia were regarded by the soldiers purely as a luxury, a place where they could get something for nothing. There was no anxiety to use them and no gratitude, since they were completely callous in their attitude towards the wounded.

Appendix II.

[*Translation.*]

MINISTRY FOR THE COLONIES.

No. 144512.

Rome, June 25th, 1936–XIV.

To H.E. the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have the honour to forward to Your Excellency the appended lists of the principal chiefs and notables who have made acts of submission to Italian sovereignty in the various regions of Ethiopia from the beginning of operations (Annexes A and B).

The Minister for Colonies:
(Signed) LESSONA.

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[1] See page 19.

Annex A.

LIST OF THE PRINCIPAL CHIEFS AND NOTABLES WHO MADE ACTS OF SUBMISSION TO ITALIAN SOVEREIGNTY IN THE VARIOUS REGIONS OF ETHIOPIA FROM THE BEGINNING OF OPERATIONS.[1]

Dejjac Hailesellasie Gougsa Araja, Chief of Eastern Tigre.
Dejjac Negusse Kinfie, Chief of the Zana region.
Dejjac Azbaha Abraha, of the Shire.
Fitorari Tesfaiohannes Brahane, of the Eggela.
Fitorari Tedra Sahlu, of the Entisho.
Fitorari Aberra Hagos, of the Nadier.
Fitorari Mangasha Engida, of the Bizzet.
Fitorari Medhin Wondie, of the Ogher.
Fitorari Zeudie Ajaleu Burru, Chief of the Semien.
Cagnasmach Tzahaie Bisserat, of the Adi Abo.
Cagnasmach Belai Mangasha, of the Adi Arbate.
Cagnasmach Teferi Goshu, of the Ogher.
Grasmach Gebremedhin Gebreiuet, of the Daroqua.
Grasmach Tesfazien Amennai, of the Adi Arbate.
Cagnasmach Hailemariam Gebremedhin, of the Ahsaa.
Cagnasmach Mangasha Bezabe, of the Tzembela.
Cagnasmach Hailemariam Tafari, of the Dega Adiet.
Cagnasmach Seyoum Woldeazghi, of the Baruqua.
Cagnasmach Asberon Kassa, of the Biet Ghebez.
Cagnasmach Aberra Marou, of the Seriro.
Cagnasmach Tagebe Kassa, of the Tzellemti.
Fitorari Dade Gebremedhin, Chief of the Sechet.
Dejjac Amare Geresellassie, Chief of the Ambara.
Fitorari Gebrezghier Begussie, of the Megaria Tzemri.
The entire clergy of Axum with the Afe Nebraid.
The entire clergy of Adowa.
The entire clergy of Debre Damo.
Ras Seyoum Mangasha, Chief of the Western Tigre.
Dejjac Ajaleu Burru, Chief of the Northern Amhara.
Dejjac Kassa Sebhat, Chief of the Kelte Awlalo.
Cagnasmach Ajana Lemma, Negadras of Gondar.
Cagnasmach Captimer Hailu, Chief of the Gimjabiet of Gondar.
Cagnasmach Aligaz Imer, Notable of Gondar.
Fitorari Makonnen Confu, Notable of Dembea.
Fitorari Derso Ajaleu, Chief of the Tzeggede.
Dejjac Imer Derso, Chief of the Samara.
Fitorari Abebe Teclehaimanot, Chief of the Celga.

The chiefs of the various sanctuaries and convents in the region of Lake Tana, including the following:

Abba Wolde Tensae, Abbot of the Monastery of Galila.
Aleka Wolde Bakale, Rector of the sanctuary of Debra Sina.
Aleka Makonnen Kerwole, Rector of the sanctuary of St. Michael of Guramba.
Aleka Gabre Gemberie, Rector of the sanctuary of St. Gabriel of Daona.
Ras Kebede Mangasha, Chief of Gedem, Efrata, etc.
Dejjac Mohammed Awa, Sultan of Birou.
Dejjac Mohammed Jahio el Anfari, Sultan of the Aussa.

Annex B.

LIST OF THE MAJOR CHRISTIAN AND MOSLEM NOTABLES WHO HAVE SIGNED ACTS OF SUBMISSION TO ITALIAN SOVEREIGNTY IN THE SOUTHERN REGIONS OF ETHIOPIA FROM THE BEGINNING OF OPERATIONS.

Harar:

Hagi Ahmed Abdi, Chief of the Moslem Community of Harar.
Hagi Yunis, Cadi of Harar.
Sufian Ibn Emir Abdullah, son of the late ex-Emir of Harar.
Aleka Desta, Chief of the Coptic church of Harar.
Fitorari Ali Imamu.
Grasmach Igzau Ketama.
Bigerondi Bagasho.

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[1] The names of the civil and religious personalities who attended the meeting at Addis Ababa on June 9th, 1936, listed in Appendix III are omitted.

Diredawa :

Ugas Hassan, Sultan of the cabila Issa Somali, with all the chieftains of the rer of the same cabila.
Numerous chiefs of the rer of the cabila Gurgura.
Ali Mohallim Ahmed, Chief of the cabila Dabane.
Said Hassan, Chief of the Danakil tribe of the Asaimara.
Balambaras Beiene Mersha, of the Municipality of Diredawa.
Ato Asfau Wossenie, former judge at Diredawa.
Cagnasmach Alinur, Ogaden.
Tesemma Ghebretzadic, former judge.
Ali Bin Saleh, Cadi of Diredawa.

Jijiga :

Garad Ali Dalal, Gheri.
Chieftain Dol Ersi, Bartirre.
Chieftain Ahmed Garad Ibrahim, Bartirre.
Chieftain Abdullahi Hagi Iusuf, Abesgul.
Shek Hassan Shek Ismail, Iavarre.
Chief Askar Hagi, Issa Medove.
Shek Abdulcadir Hagi Ali, Shekal, Chief of the confraternity of the Kadiria.
Said Mohammed Said Omar, Sherif.
Shek Mohammed Ibrahim, Bartirre.
Ato Sellalie, former Chief of the municipality and police of Jijiga.
Cagnasmach Teferra Imamu.
Balambaras Damisie Woldie.
Ato Gabremariam Sef Michael, Chief of the region of Janasene (Jijiga).

Dagabur :

Mohammed Omar, Sherif.
Shek Mussa Ismail, rer Harun.
Shek Ussen Hagi Abdi, Ogaden rer Ali.

Segag :

Ugas Mohammed Ugas Omar, Malingur.
Ahmed Nur, Malingur.
Shek Ali Garrun, Ogaden rer Ugas Coshin.
Admed Nur, Ogaden rer Ugas Coshin.

Buslei :

Olol Dinle, Sultan of the Shaveli.
Hussen Haile, Chief of the Ogaden rer Dahal.
Ugas Leile Sigale, Abdalla Talamoghe.
Hagi Abdi Bucut, Abdalla Talamoghe.
Shek Aliahmed Mohallim Iusuf, Abdalla Talamoghe.
Igrahim Aiub, Abdalla Talamoghe.
Ali Kero, Abdalla Talamoghe.
Abdullahi Sultan Dirie Dinle, Shaveli.
Barre Degole, Shaveli.
Iusuf Cailei, Shaveli.
Osman Warsama, Shaveli.
Omar Calille, Shaveli.
Asman Ahmed, Shaveli.
Omar Tana, Shaveli.
Abdi Abdulla, Shaveli.
Mohammed Arile, Shaveli.
Abdulla Bari, Shaveli.
Ahmed Ienkies, Shaveli.
Mohammed Nur, Shaveli.
Abdi Mumin, Shaveli.
Ahmed Awes, Shaveli.
Nur Fara, Shaveli.
Hassan Siad, Shaveli.
Omar Magam, Shaveli.
Abdi Garan, Shaveli.
Merehan Aden, Shaveli.
Welie Ahmed, Bah Gheri.
Omar Tarei, Bah Gheri.
Nur Abdi, Bah Gheri.
Ali Dire, Bah Gheri.
Elmi Omar, Bah Gheri.
Dair Smantar, Bah Gheri.
Abdullah Au Said, Bah Gheri.
Asmon Magan, Bah Gheri.
Ugas Nur Osman, Bah Gheri.

Neghelli :

Weber Abdi, Chief of the Digodia Somali.
Fitorari Adame Ambessa, former assistant of Ras Desta, Sidamo region.
Balambaras Alake Arero,
Balambaras Boru Arero,
Gino Horu,
Alake Ghilla,
Wario Ghimbe,
Golicia Liban — Chiefs of the Boran Gona, pagans.
Balambaras Denghe Duba Dojo,
Balambaras Dula Balal,
Balambaras Dima Cula,
Balambaras Dube Bule,
Dube Dane,
Kallige Buio,
Bido Abakule,
Damti Sora — Chiefs of the Boran Sabbo, pagans.
Bido Gumi,
Bilu Dambala,
Jarra Gubi,
Bullala Jarra,
Galcia Bila,
Gherdi Bila — Jam-Jams, pagans.
Balambaras Abdurrhamn Mohammed Shek.
Wago Lugu,
Bati Shuli,
Mohammed Buta,
Mane Dammu — Arrusi, Moslems.
Fara Samantar,
Balambaras Gudal Samantar — both Gurre Moslems.
Hassan Gabata, Chief of the Gherra Somali.
Aden Hassan,
Dido Ibrahim,
Aden Mohammed,
Ali Isak,
Mohammed Cula,
Ubrahim Ali,
Dallige Urufle,
Alio Awes — all Gherra Moslems.
Elmi Unso, Agiuran.
Ussen Aden, Caranle.

Appendix III.

[*Translation.*]

MINISTRY FOR COLONIES.
No. 144513.

Rome, June 25th, 1936-XIV.

To H.E. the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that, on June 9th, at the Ghebi of Addis Ababa, H.E. Marshal Graziani received an address of devotion and homage which the Ethiopian notables begged leave to present to him.

On that occasion, Ras Hailu delivered the following address :

" Your Excellency,

" On behalf of the chiefs and notables of Addis Ababa, I have the honour to submit to Your Excellency the document by which, in all spontaneity, they confirm their total submission to H.M. the King of Italy, Emperor of Ethiopia, and declare to recognise in Ethiopia or outside no other authority but that of H.M. the August Sovereign Victor Emmanuel III and of the authorities empowered by Him. We beg Your Excellency to believe in our allegiance and devotion and to convey our wishes to H.M. the King our August Sovereign, to the Royal Family and to H.E. the Head of the Government Benito Mussolini."

On behalf of all the signatories, he also handed to Marshal Graziani the following statement, the original of which is placed on the Government files :

" Statement handed to the Viceroy Marshal Graziani on June 9th, 1936-XIV :

" The undersigned declare herewith to accept, by their own free will, the sovereignty of H.M. the King of Italy and Emperor of Ethiopia, Victor Emmanuel III, and to submit loyally and completely to the laws and ordinances which the August Sovereign will see fit to establish for his Empire. They solemnly declare to recognise no other authority, within Ethiopia or outside, save that appointed and established for his subjects by their lawful reigning Sovereign Victor Emmanuel III, King of Italy and Emperor of Ethiopia."

The signatures are the following :

Abuna Kerillos, Coptic Metropolitan chief of Ethiopia.
Lichecahenat Lichie Gabrecristos, Chief of the Ethiopian clergy.
The Great Abbots of the Convents of Bahata, St. George, Teclehaimanot, Sidan Michael, Abo, Rafael.
The chiefs of the principal churches of Addis Ababa.
The following Aleka (Church administrators) : Aleka Woldetense, Aleka Mersha, Aleka Sergu, Aleka Ghebragaent, Aleka Lessane, Wurche, Aleka Memher Teclehai Meleche, Aleka Hailesellasie Meleche.

The most important chiefs and officials of the former regime :

Ras Hailu Teclehaimanot, former Chief of the Gojjam.
Ras Gabrehiot, of the Wollo Galla.
Dejjac Haptemichael, former Chief of the Limu.
Dejjac Mangasha Ubie, former Chief of the Wollega.
Woldemaskal Tariku, former Keeper of the Seals.
Dejjac Abba Ukau, former Chief of the Imperial Guard of the Ghebi of Queen Taitu.
Neggadras Afework Ghebreiesus, former Ethiopian Minister to Rome.
Blattenghieta Sahle Tzadalu, former Minister for Public Instruction.
Azage Wossen, former Superintendent of the Imperial Ghebi.
Fitorari Amedie, notable of the Wollo.
Ato Tesfai Tegagne, former Director-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.
Ato Wodagio Ali, former Municipal Chief of Addis Ababa.
Afanegus Tela Hun, former President of the Supreme Court and Chief of the magistrates.

Officials and sub-chiefs :

Dejjac Chebbedè Arzeggau.
Dejjac Liben Iazeu.
Dejjac Debbebé Andargacciou.
Dejjac Belai Ali.
Grasmac Tesamma Debalichié.
Fitorari Asammennou Woldemascal.
Grasmac Ghezau Serauitù.
Balambaras Mahatemé Sellassié.
Blatta Hailé Ghebré.
Blatta Ascenié.
Cagnasmac Hailé Micael.
Grasmac Abebé Uaché.
Basciai Woldechiros.
Grasmac Iescioalul.
Grasmac Seium Woldesciared.
Neggadras Baharù Nicolas.
Neggadras Iscetié.
Balambaras Hailé.

Moslem notables :

The Cadi of Addis Ababa.
Abdallah, former Cadi.
Hachim Ahmed, notable of the Wollo.
Scek Abd-el-Nasih.
Scek Mohammed el Fechi Mohammed, inspector of the Koranic schools.
El Haggi Ibrahim Abu Nur.

And numerous other chiefs of mosques and Koranic schools.

The Minister for the Colonies :
(Signed) LESSONA.

Appendix IV.

[*Translation.*]

ABSTRACT FROM THE LAW (ROYAL DECREE) OF JUNE 1ST, 1936 - XIV, No. 1019, CONCERNING THE ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF ITALIAN EAST AFRICA.

(*Gazzetta Ufficiale* of the Kingdom of Italy, June 13th, 1936-XIV, No. 136.)

Article 24.

A Council is instituted for Italian East Africa.

The Council is presided over by the Viceroy Governor-General and consists of the following members :

The Members of the General Council ;
The Secretaries-General of the Governments of Italian East Africa ;
The Commanders of the troops of the Governments of Italian East Africa ;
The Federal Secretaries of the National Fascist Party in Italian East Africa ;
Six Italian citizens appointed for two years by decree of the Viceroy Governor-General and chosen from persons belonging to the classes of producers and workers in Italian East Africa ;
Six chiefs or notables appointed for two years by decree of the Viceroy Governor-General and chosen from subjects of Italian East Africa.

The Viceroy Governor-General submits to the examination of the Council such programmes of an economic and cultural character as particularly concern the subjects in Italian East Africa, such measures as are in any way pertinent to the social and ethnical structure of the populations of Italian East Africa and to their traditions, and all other provisions on which the advice of the Council seems necessary. The Council shall hold an ordinary session at least once a year.

Article 31.

Absolute respect for all religions is guaranteed in Italian East Africa.

The religious institutions of Monophysite Christians shall be governed by special laws and by agreement with the ecclesiastical hierarchies.

Moslems are empowered to restore their places of worship, their ancient religious institutions and their religious schools throughout the territory of Italian East Africa. Disputes between Moslem subjects shall be settled by the Cadi according to the laws of Islam and to the local customs of the Moslem populations.

Respect for local traditions is guaranteed throughout, provided they do not run counter to public order and to the general principles of civilisation.

Article 32.

Official deeds which by law require to be drawn up or published in the written languages of the subjects of Italian East Africa shall be written in the following :

For the Government of Eritrea : in Tigrin and Arabic ;
For the Government of Amhara : in Amharic ;
For the District Government of Addis Ababa : in Amharic ;
For the Government of Harar : in Arabic ;
For the Government of Galla and Sidamo : in Arabic ;
For the Government of Italian Somaliland : in Arabic.

The teaching of local languages is divided as follows :

In the territory of the Government of Eritrea : in Tigrin ;
In the territory of the Government of Amhara : in Amharic ;
In the territory of the District Government of Addis Ababa: in Amharic and Galla ;
In the territory of the Government of Harar : in Harari and Galla ;
In the territory of the Government of the Galla and Sidamo : in Galla and Kaffin ;
In the territory of the Government of Italian Somaliland : in Somali.

The teaching of the Arabic language is compulsory in schools for subjects of Italian East Africa throughout the Moslem territories of the country.

The Viceroy Governor-General, by his own decree, may decide that the teaching in certain regions be given in a language not included in the foregoing list.

Article 46.

Justice is administered by the following :

(a) Ordinary Courts and Military Courts ;
(b) Officials of the political and administrative Government ;
(c) Cadi and local chiefs.

Magistrates and officials may be assisted by assessors selected from among citizens and subjects.

Article 50.

Subjects are judged according to the laws of their religion, country and race, in compliance with rules established by juridical ordinances.

If an offender is a subject, when applying measures established by the Code and other laws and regulations, the judges may reduce the punishment to less than the minimum contemplated by the said laws.

Appendix V.

[*Translation.*]

COMMUNICATION, DATED APRIL 14TH, 1936-XIV, FROM THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

By a letter dated March 2nd last, the Royal Government has already had occasion to bring to the notice of the League of Nations the Decree of the High Commissioner for East Africa, dated October 14th, 1935 (No. 7373), by which slavery was solemnly abolished in the territories of the Tigre which, on account of circumstances that are well known, Italy found herself obliged to occupy. By the same letter the proclamation to the same effect, issued by H.E. the Governor of Somaliland for the Ethiopian territories adjacent to Italian Somaliland and occupied by Italy in the same circumstances, was likewise notified.

In relation to, and following upon, the aforementioned statement, I have the honour to inform you that H.E. Marshal Badoglio, on April 12th last, issued from Makale a proclamation in the following terms :

" People of the Tigre, of the Amhara, of the Gojjam, listen : Slavery is a survival of ancient barbarism, and where the Italian flag is raised slavery may not exist. Therefore, in the Tigre, the Amhara, the Gojjam, wherever the Italian flag flies, slavery is abolished. I have forbidden the buying and selling of slaves. The slaves in your countries are liberated. Those who need assistance may come before the Italian authorities ; they will receive protection and help. Whosoever violates the provisions of this proclamation shall be punished according to the law."

I beg Your Excellency to make known the contents of this telegram to all the Members of the League of Nations, to the Members of the Committee of Thirteen and to the Members of the Commission on Slavery.

(Signed) SUVICH.

ANNEX 4.

ATTITUDE OF THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT WITH REGARD TO THE ITALO-ETHIOPIAN DISPUTE

LETTER, DATED JULY 3RD, 1936, FROM THE MEXICAN DELEGATION TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SIXTEENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

[*Translation.*]

As a Member of the General Committee of the Assembly, I would ask you to be good enough to communicate to the General Committee and the Assembly the following :

" The Mexican delegation, in conformity with the general attitude taken by its country in the dispute between Ethiopia and Italy ;

" Realising at the same time the intentions and determination of the great majority of the countries attending the present session of the Assembly and the limitations which those intentions and determination inevitably impose on Mexico's participation in this concrete instance as regards the adoption of resolutions and recommendations in connection with the conflict between Ethiopia and Italy :

" And whereas it would be inconsistent both with its international rôle and with its spirit of co-operation to adopt in such circumstances an attitude of systematic obstruction, since the vote of Mexico would prevent unanimity in the Assembly on the measures which it is about to adopt :

" Declares that it will not participate in the proceedings and votes of the League of Nations in regard to the Italo-Ethiopian dispute for such period as it considers advisable."

(Signed) N. BASSOLS.

ANNEX 5.

Official No.: C.314.M.195.1936.VII.

ATTITUDE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF PANAMA WITH REGARD TO THE ITALO-ETHIOPIAN DISPUTE

LETTER, DATED JULY 6TH, 1936, FROM THE DELEGATION OF PANAMA TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL.

[*Translation from the Spanish.*] Geneva, July 6th, 1936.

In view of the part taken by me as Head of the delegation of Panama in the discussion which took place at the Assembly meeting on the afternoon of Saturday, the 4th instant,[1] I consider it expedient to send you this communication for the purpose of avoiding any misunderstanding.

The attitude adopted by the delegation of Panama at the meeting in question should not be regarded as an anti-Italian or pro-Ethiopian attitude; it was directed simply and solely against the so-called " Geneva methods ", which in every case consist in seeking and finding some means of diverting attention from the issue, so as to evade the direct consideration of a serious conflict for which no solution is ever found.

The Assembly was convened for the purpose of enquiring into a conflict between two Members of the League and between a *de facto* situation and a *de jure* situation arising out of the text of the Covenant. In the opinion of this delegation, that situation should have been dealt with in a frank and sincere spirit.

If the Assembly considered that the *de facto* situation was reprehensible and ought to be readjusted, it should have adopted the measures and set up the organs required for that purpose ; if, in its opinion, the *de facto* situation was irremediable and permanent, it should then have had the courage to recognise this fact and to acknowledge the existence of this situation as a reality. The League of Nations was not set up to perform impossibilities, but at the same time it should have taken such steps as would have ensured the future progress of law and peace based on justice.

If, however, the Assembly had reached the conclusion that it was not yet possible to arrive at any satisfactory solution, it should then have said so frankly, admitting the existence of the conflict and requesting the co-operation and collaboration of all Member States, with a view to reaching the best possible solution at its September session.

Hence, the reason why the delegation of Panama abstained from voting on the resolutions proposed by the Bureau was that it did not approve of the procedure adopted, and was convinced that the proposed resolutions would help to diminish the prestige of the League still further, since they leave untouched and unsettled all the problems for the solution of which the Assembly was convened, but which it decided to evade instead of attacking them.

I should be glad if you would be so good as to transmit this communication to all the other delegations.

(Signed) Galileo SOLÍS,
Head of the Delegation of Panama.

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[1] See page 67.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Art.	= Article	Kgd.	= Kingdom
Ass.	= Assembly	Recomm.	= Recommendation
Cl.	= Council	Repres.	= Representative
Cttee.	= Committee	Resol.	= Resolution
Del.	= Delegation	Sec.-Gen.	= Secretary-General
Govt.	= Government	U.S.S.R.	= Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Int.	= International		

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