

League of Nations.

Seventh Session of
the Assembly.

Sept. 1926

Verbatim Record.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIRST PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6th, 1926, AT 11 A.M.

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1. — OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY.

M. Benes, delegate of Czechoslovakia, Acting President of the Council, took the Chair.

The Chairman :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — It is to the delegate of Czechoslovakia that falls the great honour of opening the meetings of the Seventh Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations and of inaugurating its work. I am proud of this honour, and it will remain for me an unforgettable memory, particularly as the present Assembly will without doubt be of special importance both in the history of the League and in that of European politics in general.

In opening this first meeting, I do not wish to dwell too much on the difficulties of the moment. You are as familiar with them as I am, and we shall have to deal with them during our discussions. But I shall also refrain from sounding a note of triumph, or of "official optimism", regardless of existing obstacles, which we can hardly hope to surmount without difficulty.

I do not wish to indulge to excess the optimism which must inspire all those who work for the advancement of the League and who desire through it to contribute to the maintenance of world peace; neither will I attempt, on the other hand, to ignore the obstacles which daily beset our path; but at the same time I will not give way to the misplaced pessimism or accept the unjustifiable criticisms of the sceptics, who are rarely

capable of any solid achievement in our distracted society or of bringing humanity a step forward in the path which leads to a better future. I merely desire, in accordance with our young tradition, to give a brief outline of what the League has done directly or indirectly during the last twelve months. We shall all realise that, while it has not brought about a radical change in the present difficult conditions of political, social and economic life, the work it has accomplished in the past year has nevertheless been very considerable; it constitutes a step forward in the evolution of Europe and it furnishes a proof that the path we have chosen is leading, despite all, to a progressive and comparatively rapid improvement of the world of to-day.

The struggle we are waging is a hard and difficult one; but it holds out promise of success and of final victory, and we all realise that this victory can only come slowly and at the cost of great sacrifice.

You have before you the report on the work of the Council and of the measures taken to execute your decisions of last year. Who can peruse it without being struck by the growing amplitude of the League's work, by the fresh responsibilities it is constantly assuming, and by the ever greater services it is rendering to the cause of peace? May I therefore be allowed to recall in a few words the League's activities during the year 1925-26?

Broadly speaking, these activities may be divided into three categories. The first comprises the work of the technical and advisory organisations of the League and of the Council, particularly in economic and financial matters and social and humanitarian undertakings. In this connection it may be pointed out that, since the last Assembly, Committees have sat at Geneva every month to consider problems of the most varied kinds.

On two occasions the League has held general Conferences, technical conferences in connection with the Transit Organisation, for the purpose of reducing the numerous formalities which,

particularly since the war, have hampered commercial relations. One of these Conferences, which dealt with certain technical points concerning inland navigation, was a European conference, while the other was world-wide. The latter dealt with one of the most irritating of the minor problems of the post-war period — that of passports. In order to remove the most vexatious formalities, forty States sent representatives, who agreed upon a number of conclusions.

In this connection, I should like to draw the attention of all delegations to the fact that it is their duty, once they have returned to their own countries, to see that effect is given to the decisions taken at Geneva. I am fully aware that our Parliaments, which are often overburdened with work, are obliged to take questions in their order and to postpone, sometimes for too long, the ratification of the international instruments signed at the seat of the League. We must not forget, however, that in the sphere of international conventions the reserve and caution displayed by the League have sometimes been judged excessive, that the draft conventions it has drawn up refer to technical questions which it is in the interest of all to have finally settled, and that it has always made every effort to simplify the mechanism of international exchange without detriment to individual interests.

I think I am bound to say that, from the point of view of the conventions drafted by the technical committees, by the Economic, Transit, Health and Opium Committees and by our Disarmament Committees, the situation is not very satisfactory. Indeed, the further progress of our technical work would be a matter of some difficulty if this situation did not improve. The action of our experts and even of our Governments would run the risk of being thwarted if, owing to the non-ratification of these instruments, it were deprived of the groundwork provided by established conventions; and, knowing your desire to have these conventions put into force, I am convinced that you will convey my appeal to the proper quarter and that it will be heard in all your capitals.

In the past year the League of Nations has continued its efforts to improve international relations in the various technical spheres with the assistance of the most qualified representatives which our administrations possess. To realise this, it is sufficient to peruse the list of tasks undertaken by the Economic and Financial Organisation: the draft Agreement on the abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions; investigations on economic crises and unemployment; on false Customs declarations; on unfair competition; on double taxation and tax evasion; on the measures to be taken to prevent the issue and circulation of counterfeit currency. This enumeration outlines the work of to-morrow of the economic rapprochement which is essential if peace and international co-operation are to be established on solid foundations.

In this connection we have, as you know, undertaken an ambitious task, the preparation of an International Economic Conference. A Committee has met the composition of which ensures that every type of interest will be represented and defended. It comprises a list of experts, chosen from among the most competent. It has already drawn up a rough programme of the investigations which must be made before the Conference itself is convened. The organisations of the League of Nations, the International Labour Office and other international organisations immediately set to work on this task. The Committee has sketched the main outlines of the

enquiry which they must pursue. Once in possession of these data, the Committee will be in a position, at its next session, to single out the chief points of the industrial, agricultural and commercial problems to be submitted to the Conference. The latter will therefore only meet to consider these vital and complex problems after it has been given a clear, precise and limited agenda. It will, therefore, be able to reach its conclusions with a full knowledge of the facts.

Meanwhile we must not omit to lay stress on the progress achieved by the League of Nations in the work of European reconstruction, which has now been pursued for some years with the success that you know. The thorough enquiry conducted last year in Austria by two eminent economic experts appointed by the Council, Mr. Layton and Professor Rist, showed that the economic difficulties suffered by Austria in common with so many other countries do not threaten to compromise the work of financial monetary reconstruction. The financial stability of the country is now established on a solid basis. The League experts at the same time indicated the best methods to be adopted to enable the results of financial reconstruction to develop and to become the source of an economic prosperity which will enable Austria, in cordial co-operation with all her neighbours, to play in full freedom that part in the European community which is hers by right. Our Commissioner-General, M. Zimmerman, having concluded his task, has been able to take up other work, and I am sure I shall be voicing the feeling of the Assembly in expressing to him our deep gratitude.

The thanks of the Assembly are also due to Mr. Smith, who has devoted himself with such conspicuous success to the work of financial control in Hungary and whose exceptional qualities of tact and thoroughness have won for him the affection and esteem of all with whom he has come in contact. Before his departure Mr. Smith had the satisfaction of learning that the Financial Committee had recognised the excellent results of the budgetary supervision which he had called upon to exercise, and that the Council had undertaken itself to deal with the question of the utilisation of the balance of the reconstruction loan.

Since the last Assembly, other examples have demonstrated the value of international action in financial matters and the assistance which can be rendered by your Council in this connection, among them being those of the Danzig Municipal Loan, the enquiry into the position of the Free City undertaken by the Financial Committee, the continuation of the work of the Greek Refugees Settlement Commission with the help of the loan, and the preparation of a loan for the settlement of the Bulgarian refugees. Such have been the principal contributions made by the League in the course of the year to the great work of European reconstruction; the cause of peace cannot fail thereby to be greatly promoted.

Thus the economic, financial and humanitarian activities of the League of Nations have continued unchecked. While adding to this list the work undertaken for the benefit of the Armenian refugees and for the protection of children, I should also mention that the first institution of the League of Nations in the Far East — our Epidemiological Bureau at Singapore — has begun operations. In this field also the League is pursuing its task with conspicuous success.

Finally, when reading the report of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, you will certainly be struck by the increasing interest which its work arouses. It was only right that the work of peace

undertaken by the League should extend to intellectual matters. Fortunately, thanks to the initiative of the French Government, means were found to enable the eminent scholars on our Committee to translate their decisions into realities. To-morrow, through the generosity of the Italian Government, they will be endowed with a new instrument of work. The results of these welcome acts of generosity are already becoming apparent. Assistance is arriving from all sides. Of their own accord, scholars all over the world, taught by a long experience of disinterested work, have come forward with suggestions to save their colleagues loss of time, to complete the process of international co-operation in the sphere of letters and science and to secure in that field the final triumph of the great principle of division of labour. National Committees have been established in almost all countries. They are working with redoubled energy: a kind of intellectual League of Nations is spreading its organisation into all countries.

As you see, gentlemen, one of your main preoccupations of last year, namely, to ensure continuity in this slow, steady, fruitful and constructive work, which it lies with the League of Nations to perform, has been given all possible consideration by your Council and by the advisory and technical Committees which you placed at its disposal.

As regards the second class of questions on which the League of Nations is permanently engaged — I refer to the regular work done by the League and the Council in the sphere of daily political relations between States, the settlement of any disputes which may suddenly arise between Members of the League and, lastly, special questions like minorities and disarmament — substantial results have again been attained this year.

In this connection I would remind you, in the first place, of the final settlement of the very delicate question of Mosul. It was included in the agenda for 1925, when we were all gathered in this same hall. Several months of work were needed before the Council could arrive at a solution. That solution was adopted after lengthy reflection, after the pros and cons had been weighed and after the report by the Commission of Enquiry which was sent to the disputed territory had been carefully studied. A valuable opinion by the Permanent Court of International Justice, the new tribunal of the nations, enlightened the Council on the legal aspect of the question. The Council finally gave a unanimous award, which seemed to it fair and which it surrounded with all possible precautions in the interests of the populations concerned.

It was certainly not without a deep sense of its responsibilities that the Council took its final decision. Its satisfaction was therefore great when it learned that the two parties in the case, animated by a spirit of conciliation which cannot be too highly prized, had concluded an agreement between themselves to apply the award given. At its last session the Council took note, with what pleasure you may imagine, of the arrangement concluded between Turkey and Great Britain. All that is now wanting is the logical conclusion, which I hope Turkey will shortly enable us to supply. We shall all be delighted if the opportunity is given to us to welcome her among us as a member of the League.

Another case, of a different kind but perhaps no less serious, came before the Council quite recently. That was the dispute which arose on the frontiers of two Members of the League, Greece and Bulgaria. I am quite convinced that unavoidable circumstances forced both Governments into that difficult situation, which found its solution in Paris before the Council of the League. This is proved

by the readiness with which they acceded to the suggestions we made to them.

Those, gentlemen, are powerful assurances for the future, firm pledges of agreement and understanding. These hopes receive strong confirmation, if you read through the report of the Council now before you and if you examine the work of the League on minority questions. Formerly oppressed, the sport of international ambitions, these minorities are to-day assured of free development within the States to which they belong. Further, you will find in that report positive and remarkable results concerning the administration of certain territories, the exchange of populations, the delimitation of frontiers, conciliatory action of all kinds, the work of the Mandates Commission on behalf of native populations, etc.

It is with the same intention of political pacification that the League of Nations is pursuing its work on disarmament. Last year you suggested the idea of two great Conferences of world importance — the Economic Conference, of which I spoke just now, and the Disarmament Conference.

No one can be surprised that the preparations for such vast enterprises are not yet complete.

Ever since its creation, the League of Nations has, in virtue of its Covenant, been concerned with the problem of disarmament. Pessimists may find that these six years of effort have yielded very meagre results. That would be a harsh and an unjust judgment. Naturally, we should all like to be much further advanced than we are, but, if we glance back at the road we have traveled, we see that in spite of everything we are appreciably nearer our goal. The problem of armaments is nothing less than the expression of the political, social and, above all, psychological state of the world. The progress made towards pacification during the last six, and particularly during the last two, years will, I am sure, bring the first positive results within our reach at an early date.

There is no doubt that even now the disarmament problem cannot be solved in its entirety. What we propose is to accomplish a first stage and to arrive at an initial international agreement on the limitation of the preparations for war, however restricted this limitation may be, though we all hope that it will be as little restricted as possible. No one can fail to realise its importance, or to grasp the fact that nothing since the agreements concluded last year at Locarno would be more likely to improve international relations.

More perhaps than in the case of any other Conference, it is important in this case not to approach the final act too heedlessly but to make all the requisite preparations, and, as far as possible, to reconcile in advance the important interests at stake. That is the work of your Committees, which know well that the failure of an ill-prepared Conference would amount to a catastrophe. The chief of these Committees has drawn up a programme of all the technical difficulties to be solved. It has had the co-operation of Germany and of the United States of America. For the study of this programme it established comprehensive bodies of technical experts, which set to work immediately. They will shortly be able to give us the result of their work. It will then rest with the political representatives on the Preparatory Commission to draw the conclusions and to elaborate a draft agreement for submission to a general conference.

When this Conference meets, the League of Nations, thanks to the resolutions which you are going to adopt, will have made further progress towards that universality to which you have always aspired.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SECOND PLENARY MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6th, 1926, AT 4.30 P.M.

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

M. Beneš, delegate of Czechoslovakia, Acting President of the Council, in the Chair.

The Chairman :

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

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

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

Translation : Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen — The Committee appointed by the Assembly to report on the credentials of delegates met to-day at 3.30 p.m. at the Secretariat of the League of Nations. I was elected Chairman and was entrusted with the duty of drawing up the report.

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

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

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

The following States Members have not accredited delegations to this Assembly :

The Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Honduras, Peru and Spain.

Your Committee on Credentials trusts that the Assembly will approve its report.

The Chairman :

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

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

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

4. — ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The Chairman :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the election of the President of the Seventh Session of the Assembly.

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

I call upon M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, and a former President of the Assembly, and His Excellency Prince Arfa, delegate of Persia, a former Vice-President, to act as tellers.

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

The Chairman :

Translation : May I first thank the tellers for their kind assistance ?

The result of the voting is as follows :

Number of States voting	48
Absolute majority	25

M. Nintchitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes) has received 42 votes.

I have therefore the honour, according to the Rules of Procedure, to announce that M. Nintchitch, first delegate of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, is elected President of the Assembly.

I am sure that I am voicing the feelings of all delegates present in congratulating my friend M. Nintchitch on the display of good-will shown to him by this Assembly in electing him President.

All of us here know the great merit and high qualifications of this statesman of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. First as Professor of Finance and Political Economy, then as Minister of Finance and Commerce and, for several years since the war, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, he has proved himself a talented, practical and clear-headed statesman. At home and in dealing with neighbouring States he has pursued a policy of reconstruction and consolidation, always in conformity with the principles of the Covenant of the League. For several years past he has taken part in the work of our Assemblies and Committees, of which latter he has more than once been elected Chairman.

It is unnecessary to say more. You all know our new President and you know that your choice is an admirable one. I am especially glad to be able to add to the general congratulations my personal sentiments of friendship towards a man with whom, since 1920, I have worked in close intimacy and in a spirit of friendship, loyalty and, above all, devotion to the work of European peace.

I call upon M. Nintchitch to take the Chair of the Assembly.

M. Nintchitch took the Presidential Chair.

5. — PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

M. Nintchitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), President of the Assembly :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — I beg to thank you for the great honour you have just done my country, for indeed it is on my country and not on myself that your choice has fallen.

I am sure that to-day's vote will cause profound emotion in my country, which, having experienced all the trials and horrors of war, is all the more resolutely attached to the League of Nations, the guardian of peace and of civilisation.

I am especially proud to be presiding over this Seventh Session of the Assembly. The task it has before it will leave an indelible mark upon our history. Despite the difficulties through which the League has just passed, it will emerge from this Assembly stronger than ever before.

We trust that the clouds which have darkened our horizon during these past few months will clear. The presence of yet another great nation, among us in the near future should give us full confidence. A new guest is about to enter our house. In welcoming that guest, as we shall to-morrow, we all have the conviction that those of our friends who are absent on that great occasion will soon return to us. The solemn act which will take place within this building a few days hence will certainly resound throughout the world.

For those peoples who are watching us and who are still in doubt there could be no more convincing testimony, no more moving appeal to come and join us in our work of peace and universal collaboration.

In the region of Europe from which I come, this robust faith in what I do not hesitate to call the noblest of human institutions is an absolute necessity. For centuries war has ravaged this part of our continent. If we are to believe in peace, if we are to defend its sacred cause, we must feel that all peoples are animated by the same desire. Pessimists who sometimes indulge in the vain intellectual pastime of belittling the League of Nations and announcing its approaching ruin do not realise the painful effects which such thoughtless words may have in certain countries of Europe which, having known war only too well, sometimes find it difficult to believe that it will never break out again.

If we are firmly resolved to maintain peace, we must proclaim aloud our conviction that it will henceforth be inviolable. Many statesmen come here to these annual Assemblies for the renewed encouragement and faith which they require to enable them, on returning home, to pursue the sometimes difficult task of conciliation, moderation and peace.

During the seven years of its existence, the League of Nations has rendered eminent services to mankind, which was so sorely tried by the war. It is preparing to render it fresh services, but, even apart from the beneficent action which it exercises by direct means, its very existence is sufficient in itself to imbue the peoples with a new and hitherto unknown spirit.

I wonder what relations would exist, but for the League of Nations, between the peoples who through the war seemed fated to be for ever pitted one against another. If the work of moral reconciliation has already made such progress, it is to the League of Nations that this is due.

Lastly, is it not highly significant that we should find so many eminent statesmen, bearing the heavy responsibility of power in their own countries, coming quite naturally to meet each other at Geneva every year at this time, moved by a common desire to settle quarrels and bring about the reign of harmony and good-will among the peoples ? How many misunderstandings which might have led to disastrous consequences have been dissipated through such personal contact ; how many serious problems have found their solution at Geneva ? Yet there are superficial and malicious minds which affect to believe that we are wasting time on mere academic discussions.

Such are the auspices under which the work of this Assembly opens. In your committees, and in this hall too, you will deal with the whole work of the League. You will have to define the programme for the coming months and to give to the representatives of all the countries assembled here guiding principles which they will gladly take back with them and defend and carry through to ultimate triumph, for the welfare and glory of that great community of peoples, the League of Nations.

— QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL : LETTER FROM THE ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL COMMUNICATING THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED ON SEPTEMBER 4th, 1926.

The President :

Translation : Before asking you to take a decision regarding the agenda for the session which is before you, I think I should communicate to you the following letter, dated September 6th, which I have just received from the Acting President of the Council :

"I have the honour to communicate to you, and to ask you to be good enough to transmit to the Assembly, the attached resolution, which the Council, after taking note of the report of the Committee on the Composition of the Council, adopted at its meeting held on September 4th.

(Signed) BENEŠ
Acting President of the Council."

The resolution reads as follows :

"The Council, taking note of the resolution proposed by the delegate of France and passed by the special Assembly of March 1926 — which resolution reads as follows :

"The Assembly,

"Regrets that the difficulties encountered have prevented the attainment of the purpose for which it was convened,

"And expresses the hope that between now and the ordinary September session of 1926 these difficulties may be surmounted so as to make it possible for Germany to enter the League of Nations on that occasions ;

"And, acting in pursuance of the wish expressed in that resolution :

"1. Approves the report of the Committee on the Composition of the Council ;

"2. In consequence and in virtue of the powers which it derives from Article 4 of the Covenant decides upon :

"(a) The appointment of Germany as a permanent Member of the Council upon her entry into the League of Nations ;

"(b) The increase in the number of the non-permanent seats to nine ;

"3. Recommends to the Assembly the approval of these decisions ;

"4. Commends to the favourable consideration of the Assembly the proposals made by the Committee as regards the method of election and tenure of the non-permanent seats."

The Assembly will note that this communication concerns Item 12 of the agenda. I would propose, therefore, that the Assembly should decide upon the action to be taken on this communication when I submit to it suggestions relating to that item of the agenda.

If there is no objection, I declare this proposal adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

7. — AGENDA : EXAMINATION AND ADOPTION.

The President :

Translation : In order to save time, and if no delegation asks for a vote, I propose that the Assembly adopt the agenda *en bloc*, that is to say, the questions contained in the document distributed to the Assembly, under Numbers 1 to 22 (Annex 1, document A.3.(1) 1926).

With regard to the supplementary list of items distributed after May 1st, 1926, I propose that the Assembly should take a separate decision in each case.

If there is no objection, I shall consider this proposal as adopted.

The proposal was adopted.

The first item on the Supplementary List is as follows :

Conclusion of an International Convention on Slavery and Conditions analogous thereto.

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

The second question on the Supplementary List is as follows :

Conference on Russian and Armenian Refugee Questions : Measures taken by Governments to give effect to the Terms of the Arrangement concluded at the Conference.

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

The third question on the Supplementary List is as follows :

Staff Provident Fund : Amendment to Article 6 of the Regulations provisionally made by the Council.

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

If there is no objection, I shall consider the agenda of the Seventh Session of the Assembly as adopted in the form proposed.

The agenda was adopted.

8. — CONSTITUTION OF COMMITTEES.

The President :

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

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

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

If there is no objection, I shall consider these proposals adopted. (*Adopted.*)

As the Assembly has accepted these suggestions, the Secretariat will supply the delegations with forms on which to enter the names of their delegates and substitutes to sit on each Committee. As soon as these lists have been collated, each Committee will meet to elect its Chairman and Vice-Chairman. The Assembly can then proceed to elect the six Vice-Presidents, who, with the Chairmen of the Committees, constitute the General Committee of the Assembly.

9. — AGENDA COMMITTEE: APPOINTMENT.

The President:

Translation: As was done at previous Assemblies, I would suggest that a small Committee of seven members should be appointed to examine the question of the inscription of new items on the agenda.

If the Assembly agrees, and if there are no proposals by delegations concerning the names of the members of this Committee, I would venture to put forward the following list:

M. DINO	(Albania),
Viscount CECIL	(British Empire)
M. URRUTIA	(Colombia),
M. NEMOURS	(Haiti),
M. GRANDI	(Italy),
Mr. BECH	(Luxemburg),
Prince CHABOON	(Siam).

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

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

The President:

Translation: I think that the simplest procedure would be for the President, as usual, to submit suggestions concerning the distribution of the items on the agenda among the Committees.

I should first like to submit a proposal concerning Item 11 of the agenda:

Consideration of the Report of the First Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly on the Request of the German Government for Admission to the League of Nations.

And Item 12, which is as follows:

Such report or proposals as the Council may decide to make after considering the Report of the Committee on the Composition of the Council appointed by the Council resolution of March 18th, 1926.

With this last question might be coupled the letter and resolution which the Acting President of the Council forwarded to me and which I have just

read. We noted that this communication concerned Item 12. I think the Assembly will agree with me that it would be well to place the General Committee, as soon as constituted, in a position to submit proposals so that the Assembly may decide upon the procedure to be followed as regard both Items 11 and 12 and the various paragraphs of the resolution communicated by the Council.

If there is no objection, I shall consider that the Assembly has accepted my proposal to submit these various questions to the General Committee for previous examination. The General Committee will meet as soon as constituted, and I will in due course communicate to you the results of its examination.

The proposal was adopted.

I propose that the other items on the agenda should be distributed as follows:

Items 13, 14, 15, 16 and 19 might be dealt with by the Second Committee; Item 20 by the Third Committee; Items 10, 21 and 25 by the Fourth Committee; Items 9, 17, 18 and 24 by the Fifth Committee; and Item 23 by the Sixth Committee.

With regard to Items 7 and 8, I think I shall be interpreting the opinion of the Assembly in proposing the allocation of these questions to the First and Third Committees, which would decide which parts of the questions they should respectively examine.

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

First Committee: Certain aspects of Items 7 and 8.

Second Committee: Items 13, 14, 15, 16 and 19.

Third Committee: Item 20 and certain aspects of Items 7 and 8.

Fourth Committee: Items 10, 21 and 25

Fifth Committee: Items 9, 17, 18 and 24.

Sixth Committee: Item 23.

Do any delegations wish to make observations on the distribution of work which I have proposed?

If there is no objection, the arrangement is adopted. (*Assent.*)

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

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

Dr. Nansen, first delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway):

I do not know what the reason is, but I have not been able to hear a word of what has been said. I would ask that we should be supplied as soon as possible with a record of the decisions taken to-day, because we do not know them. Perhaps nothing very important has been decided — I hope not — but important things may have been said which

have escaped our attention, and I do not think that we can be quite bound by them now, as we do not know what has happened. I propose that we receive as soon as possible a record of the decisions taken to-day.

The President: Translation: I will note this remark, which has to do with a notorious defect in this hall, namely, its poor acoustic properties.

There is only one real remedy for this defect, and that is to build a new hall. In the meantime, as my voice does not carry sufficiently, I think that those of my colleagues who understand English — and the delegate of Norway is one of them — might

listen to the interpreter, whose voice is more powerful than mine and who can certainly be heard quite well as a rule.

To return to Dr. Nansen's proposal, we will, as usual, proceed as rapidly as possible with the distribution of the report of this meeting.

I would avail myself of the opportunity provided by the Norwegian delegate's observation to request the members of the Assembly to be good enough to remain silent. This might counteract to some extent the defective acoustics to which he referred.

The Assembly rose at 5.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRD PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, 1926, AT NOON

CONTENTS :

11. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.
12. VICE-PRESIDENTS OF THE ASSEMBLY.
 - Election of six Vice-Presidents.
13. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF COMMITTEES.
 - Communication by the President.

11. — ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES

The President :

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

Committees	Chairmen
No. I.	M. MOTTA (Switzerland),
II.	Mr. FITZGERALD (Irish Free State),
III.	M. VILLEGAS (Chile),
IV.	M. TITULESCO (Roumania),
V.	M. MENSENDORFF-POUILLY- DIETRICHSTEIN (Austria),
VI.	M. DE BROUCKÈRE (Belgium).

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

The President :

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

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

I call upon M. Mensdorff (Austria) and M. Villegas (Chile) to be good enough to act as tellers.

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

The President :

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

Number of States voting	46
Voting papers valid	46
Majority required	24

The analysis of the voting is as follows :

Sir Austen CHAMBERLAIN (British Empire)	44 votes
M. BRIAND (France)	43 »
Viscount ISHII (Japan)	43 »
M. SCIALOJA (Italy)	42 »
M. FIGUEROA (Guatemala)	29 »
Baron LEHMANN (Liberia)	24 »
M. BECH (Luxemburg)	18 »
M. SETÄLÄ (Finland)	11 »

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure, I have the honour to declare the following delegates Vice-Presidents of the Assembly: Sir Austen Chamberlain, M. Briand, Viscount Ishii, M. Scialoja, M. Figueroa and Baron Lehmann.

13. — PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEES : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

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

The First, Second and Sixth Committees at 4.30 p.m.

The Third, Fourth and Fifth Committees at 6 p.m.

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

Finally, I suggest that the General Committee should meet at 3 o'clock this afternoon in the Secretary-General's office.

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

The Assembly rose at 12.35 p.m

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th, 1926, AT 10 A.M.

CONTENTS :

14. REQUEST OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT FOR ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL.
 - Proposals of the General Committee of the Assembly.
15. APPOINTMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE AS A MEMBER OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY.
 - Communication by the President.
16. COMPOSITION OF THE FINNISH DELEGATION.
 - Communication by the President.

14. — REQUEST OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT FOR ADMISSION TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND QUESTION OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : There has been distributed to the delegations a document¹ containing the proposals which the General Committee decided to submit to the Assembly concerning Questions 11 and 12 on the agenda and the Council's resolution of September 4th communicated to the Assembly at its meeting on the afternoon of September 6th.

The proposals of the General Committee are as follows :

"The General Committee of the Assembly proposes that there should be a plenary meeting of the Assembly on Wednesday, September 8th, at 10 o'clock, with the following agenda, which comprises Questions 11 and 12 on the agenda of the Assembly :

- " 1. Consideration of the report of the First Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly on the request of the German Government for admission to the League of Nations.

¹ Document A. 49. 1926.

" 2. Consideration of the resolution adopted by the Council on September 4th, 1926, in regard to :

- (a) The nomination of Germany as a permanent Member of the Council.
- (b) The increase to nine of the number of non-permanent seats on the Council.

" 3. Consideration of the proposals made by the Committee instructed to study the question of the composition of the Council as regards the method of election and tenure of the non-permanent seats.

"The General Committee proposes that the Assembly should determine, in accordance with Rule 14, paragraph 2, of its Rules of Procedure, to decide on Items 1 and 2 on the above agenda without reference to a Committee.

"The General Committee proposes that Question 3 on the above agenda should be referred to the First Committee with the request that a report on the subject be presented to the full Assembly at the earliest possible date.

"The General Committee has asked M. Motta, delegate of Switzerland, to present its proposal to the Assembly."

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

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The General Committee of the Assembly has entrusted me with the task of giving you a verbal report on the proposals which I have the honour to submit to you on its behalf.

My task, though perhaps not difficult, is extremely delicate. I therefore feel that I should at the outset claim your indulgence and your sympathy.

With your permission I will divide my report into two parts. I will first deal with certain questions of procedure and then briefly with the fundamental question involved.

As regards procedure, the General Committee suggests that you should employ the most direct and expeditious means of attaining our object. It asks you to consider the matter yourselves without referring it to one of the Committees. It is true that under the Rules of Procedure all matters coming up for decision by the Assembly should first be considered by one of the Committees. Rule 14, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure, however, lays down that the Assembly, by a majority of two-thirds, may take up and debate any subject directly, that is to say, without referring it previously to one of the Committees. We ask you to make use of this power: We ask this because the usual procedure would seem in this case to be unnecessary. On the contrary, the summary procedure would seem to be called for in the circumstances.

If the employment of the summary procedure were in any way to interfere with the liberty of the Assembly, the General Committee would not have made this proposal. Indeed, we consider that the complete liberty and authority of the Assembly are necessary for the discussion of questions of principles which are raised.

There are three things to be considered. First, the admission of Germany to the League; secondly, the granting to her of a permanent seat on the Council, in ratification of the unanimous decision already adopted by the Council itself; and, thirdly, the simultaneous increase of the number of non-permanent, *i.e.*, elective, seats from six to nine.

The first of these questions is more than ripe; it is much over ripe. The First Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly held in March presented, on March 11th, a unanimous report proposing the admission of Germany to the League. The Rapporteur was the first delegate of the British Empire, our distinguished colleague, Sir Austen Chamberlain. You all know how the March Assembly was prevented from completing the task for which it was convened.

The allocation of a permanent seat on the Council is one of the conditions laid down by Germany in submitting her request for admission to the League. It is obvious that these two questions — admission to the League and the allocation of a permanent seat — must be considered *pari passu*.

The third point in the proposals submitted to you is, as I have said, the increase in the number of non-permanent seats on the Council.

The President of the Council, who gave the General Committee all necessary explanations at its meeting yesterday, stated that in the intentions of the Council the allocation of a permanent seat to Germany and the increase from six to nine in the number of non-permanent seats constituted two inter-locking actions. The resolution therefore forms a single whole.

If the two questions had had to be separated, it was by no means certain that the necessary unanimity would be obtained in the Council. It is not, therefore, possible, speaking politically, to refer to a Committee the question of the non-permanent seats without referring to it the other two questions at the same time.

I would point out that these two questions, which are quite distinct, should not be confused; I refer to the question of the increase from six to nine in the number of the non-permanent Members of the Council and that of the rules to be applied by the Assembly in the election of these non-permanent Members.

This last question is referred to the First Committee, which will give it most careful consideration and will shortly present its report with its proposals.

To sum up: the immediate procedure is indicated, but this will not interfere with the Assembly's

liberty of discussion. I hope you will accept the General Committee's views.

I have still a few remarks to make on the fundamental question involved. This forms the second part of my report. I will be as brief as possible.

The admission of Germany to the League has, in my opinion, always been a vital necessity. This feeling has been strengthened year by year. It is no longer questioned by anyone. That is one of the most striking proofs of the great impulse which the establishment of the League of Nations gave to ideals of peace, conciliation and arbitration.

The admission of Germany to the League will realise one of the dearest wishes of the Swiss people, which I have the great honour to represent here among you. I venture to add that I humbly rejoice no less on this account.

The allocation of a permanent seat to Germany is one of those ideas which have in public opinion the force of elementary truth. Whether it is right or not that the Covenant should *de jure* grant permanent seats to great Powers is an open question.

The discussion of this subject, although closed to-day, may perhaps be resumed at some more or less distant date. The pros and cons of the question are very evenly balanced.

I am not so devoid of all sense of political reality as to ignore the full weight of the reasons that militate in favour of permanent seats, but it is none the less true that the theory of permanent seats is not altogether in conformity with democratic doctrines as we conceive them or with the theory of equality among nations.

However, I do not propose to discuss that question to-day. This is neither the hour nor the place for such a discussion. It is obvious that if the great Powers are given permanent seats, Germany, being beyond all doubt a great Power, could not, cannot, enter the League except upon the condition that she also obtains a permanent seat on the Council.

The question of the increase in the number of non-permanent seats, however, is another matter. I am prompted to make this observation by my sense of justice and equity in debate. This question may be, indeed has been, the subject of much controversy. I realise only too well the reasons which militate both against an increase in the number of the non-permanent seats and against an excessive increase in that number.

The great honour of presiding over the Committee on the Composition of the Council fell to me. I considered it my duty, since that Committee was in a position to examine all the aspects, all the facets, of the problem, to indicate what, in my view, were the reasons against an increase.

There are two reasons which I do not propose to dwell upon or to develop particularly, but which I wish to indicate in order to show you that the problem before us has been considered in the necessary atmosphere of calm and tranquillity.

One of the reasons against increasing the number of the non-permanent seats is the danger lest the Council, were it to become too large, should be tempted to assume too great a measure of power, with the result that the Assembly would suffer — though quite unintentionally on the part of the Council — a loss of prestige and authority.

If — as I trust will be the case, and as I urge you to decide — the number of permanent seats is increased, we shall have to see that the Assembly's sovereignty remains inviolate, for we must never forget that it is in the Assembly, especially when unanimous, that the pulse of the world beats.

The second reason is that an unduly large Council might, in view of the rule demanding unanimity, be hampered or handicapped in its working and actions.

These are, I think, the two principal reasons which may honestly be adduced against an increase in the number of the non-permanent seats and, in general, against too large a Council.

But there are also weighty, and at the present time, in my opinion, conclusive, reasons in favour of an increase.

When I say that these reasons are conclusive, I must admit that I too have had to make an effort of mind and conscience as I trust every delegate will do — to weigh and decide, with a full knowledge of the facts, the reasons which conscience and mind show to be conclusive.

The chief reason in favour of the increase is that we must in future strike a more equitable balance between the interests of the different continents. Latin America has no permanent seat, and you know that it has not been possible to satisfy the desire expressed by one of the Latin-American States. Since this continent has no permanent seat, it seems only fair that we should be generous towards it in the allocation of non-permanent seats and this is the reason why first the Committee, and then the Council, proposed, and are now proposing to you, to give three non-permanent seats to Latin America.

The experience of past years, moreover, has shown us how painful it was for the Assembly to vote each year a recommendation addressed to itself, inviting itself to take into account the big geographical divisions of the world, and each year to find it morally impossible to fulfil the obligation it had thus imposed upon itself. Thus, one of the largest Asiatic States was unable to gain election to the Council though we all thought at the time that she ought in fairness to be represented there.

The second reason for increasing the number of non-permanent seats is the necessity for reconciling the principle of rotation, by which all, or almost all, the States of the Assembly will one day be able to take their seat on the Council, with the need which may exist, which does exist, and which has existed, as we all realise, to take into account the political exigencies, the meritorious services and the aspirations of certain States in particular circumstances.

That is why the Committee and the Council, while proposing to increase the number of non-permanent seats, have also recommended greater flexibility in the system of rotation by providing, subject to a two-thirds majority of the Assembly, for exceptions to the rule by which a State whose period of re-election to the Council has come to an end is no longer re-eligible.

Finally, the third reason which, apart from all purely academic theories, militates in favour of increasing the number of the non-permanent seats, the reason which statesmen regard as conclusive, is that it was imperative to put an end to the crisis. If for this purpose it was necessary to sacrifice some preferences, some opinions, some views, it was impossible, if we were to find a solution, to refuse to make the necessary sacrifice on the altar of the common weal.

There is a proverb which may be aptly quoted here: *primum vivere deinde philosophare*. The question of the best constitution for the Council could be discussed to the end of time, but the best solution will always be that which obtains the unanimous suffrages of the Assembly.

The good-will and the spirit of conciliation which prevailed in the Committee and later in the Council will, I hope, I trust, I beg of you, prevail in the Assembly also. This will be an historic day. Discussion of internal organisation will cease for a time, and the League will be able to devote its energies to the concrete tasks that await it — international collaboration in every field, the

codification of law, the development of pacific methods for the solution of disputes, disarmament. To-day will be a day of reconciliation and justice. The work of Locarno that prospered in the sunlit little city to which I am so deeply attached — since it is one of the jewels of my homeland, the little Canton of Ticino — will at length be fully and effectively safeguarded for all time.

From my student days I call to mind some lines of the poet Lucretius. They occur in his great poem *De Rerum Natura*. At the opening of the poem Lucretius invokes the Goddess of Love and Life:

“Terrible the sufferings of Rome from war, but the sky at length has cleared.”

“*Placatumque nitet effuso lumine coelum.*”

For many years past the sky of Europe has been overcast with grief and darkened with the lowering clouds of anxiety. May God in His goodness at length restore to us, through the medium of the League of Nations, the quickening sun of peace and justice!

The President:

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

M Loudon (Netherlands):

Translation: Mr President, ladies and gentlemen — The General Committee of the Assembly, adopting the resolution of the Council, proposes that, in conformity with the second paragraph of Article 14 of the Rules of Procedure, we should now agree to take a decision on Items 1 and 2 of the agenda of the present meeting without first referring them to a Committee of the Assembly.

As regards the first question, namely, the admission of Germany to the League, there can be no objection, since her admission was unanimously voted by the Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly appointed to examine the matter in March of this year.

Nor shall I, in the present circumstances oppose the adoption of the second item. I should, however, be lacking in frankness if I did not declare that, in my opinion, despite what has just been said by the Rapporteur, M. Motta, it is a mistake to link the question of a permanent seat on the Council for Germany — which no one, as we all know, has any desire to refuse — with the question of an increase in the number of non-permanent seats, a matter on which opinions are divided.

I consider that such a procedure amounts to forcing the Assembly's hand, and that even if we agree to it as an exceptional measure, with the sole object of avoiding fresh complications, the Assembly has a right, and indeed is morally bound, to express its profound disappointment.

I did not come to this platform to raise objections: I realise too well the difficulties with which we are faced. At the same time, those of you who were present at the meeting of the Third Session of the Assembly on September 25th, 1922, will not be surprised to hear the delegate of the Netherlands declare himself opposed to the principle of an increase in the number of Members of the Council. On the occasion to which I refer, we alone voted against the proposal for an additional two seats. My late colleague, Professor Struycken, explained the reasons for our vote in the following terms:

“The solidarity and collective responsibility of the Council will diminish.”

And his concluding words were :

"If this year we admit a radical transformation of the principal organ of the League . . . by reason of the aspirations of political groups . . . what guarantee have we that . . . every year the composition of the Council will not be determined in accordance with the ephemeral state of affairs at the moment?"

The Assembly ignored his arguments, and by 44 votes to 1 (the Netherlands delegation) increased the Members of the Council by two. The suggestion now before us is that it should be increased by no less than four!

In the space of four years, therefore, we shall have increased the number of seats from eight to fourteen. Consider what danger this involves for the League, if the proper balance is to be maintained between the Assembly and the Council and if the necessary unanimity is to be obtained in the Council! Consider what difficulties may arise whenever it becomes necessary to convene the Council suddenly, if some political question calls for immediate decision!

These objections were clearly set forth in the Committee of Fifteen; the Minutes of its proceedings show how forcibly M. Scialoja, M. Sjöborg and M. Le Breton opposed any further extension of the Council. M. Scialoja's concluding words were: "The smaller the increase the better; best of all would be no increase at all."

Nevertheless, the opponents of the scheme, acting in a spirit of conciliation and desirous of ameliorating the rather painful situation which arose out of what has too often been called the "crisis in the League", have finally agreed on the proposed compromise, by which the number of non-permanent seats is raised to nine.

The Netherlands delegation will adopt the same course, and for the same reasons. We desire to state, however, that we still maintain all our previous objections to the extension of the Council; if it were feasible, we would even urge that the number of non-permanent seats should again be reduced to four, the number existing up to 1922, even if our country itself were never to have a seat on the Council, for as I declared with the most profound conviction at the Assembly in March of this year the spirit which should, in my opinion, animate the League — but which, as we have seen to our regret, does not always do so — should place the interests of the community above the *amour-propre* of individual Members.

The Netherlands delegation, constrained by circumstances, is thus prepared, to support this further proposal to increase the number of non-permanent seats. We accept it as a temporary expedient, with the sole object of surmounting the difficulties which have arisen.

Having said so much, we now proclaim our satisfaction — a feeling which is, I know, shared by the whole Assembly — that this day should witness a further step in the application of that principle of universality so essential to the evolution of the League by the admission of another great Power — Germany — and that this proposal should be passed not merely by a majority, but by the unanimous vote of the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Nansen, first delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Norwegian Government is very happy that we have at last come so far, that there is a very near prospect of Germany entering the League and taking her proper place amongst its Members,

That the prospect of this happy result is so very much better now than it was even in March, is due to the work of the special Committee on the Composition of the Council. Our Government recognises that immense difficulties have been overcome by that Committee and that it has deeply changed the situation for the better by its well-ordered debates and by the methods of publicity which it has brought to bear on all the aspects of the question.

We are also convinced that the proposal of the General Committee of the Assembly, which is now before us, is inspired by the desire to settle this question as soon as possible, to end this unhappy period and to open the way for the League to proceed with its proper work of reconstruction. No one can be more anxious than the Norwegian Government and the Norwegian delegation that this should be achieved at the earliest possible moment.

Having said this, I am, however, bound to say that my Government has the gravest misgivings about some parts of the proposal. These misgivings arise from the fact that during all the past difficult period there have been serious departures from the proper constitutional methods of the League. Of the lamentable events in March, I need say nothing. Everybody in this hall regrets them as much as we do and if we have learnt nothing from them our bitter disappointment will have been in vain. Yet even now part of what has been done and certain of the proposals made do not seem to us to be quite constitutional.

For instance, on Saturday last the Council decided to grant a permanent seat among its Members to a State which was not a Member of the League. We rejoice in that decision on every ground except one. We believe that it was not consistent with the strict terms of Article 4 of the Covenant and on the grounds of constitutional principles alone, therefore, we regret that it could not have been done otherwise.

Similarly, we deeply regret the proposal of the General Committee of the Assembly that the questions of the permanent seat and the increase in the number of the non-permanent seats are linked together and that they should both have been dealt with without the usual reference to a Committee. For our part, we have to admit that the explanation given in this connection does not appear conclusive. The explanation given just now by the Rapporteur, that the permanent seat on the Council might not be given to Germany unless this Assembly raised the number of non-permanent Members to nine, surprised us, and we sincerely hope that it may be based upon some misunderstanding. We deeply deplore that these two questions, being linked thus together, prevented us from voting freely on them separately as we desired.

We entirely agree with every word of the views which have just been expressed by our honourable colleague, the delegate for the Netherlands on this subject. Ever since the beginning of the League, the granting of a permanent seat to Germany has always seemed to practically every Member of the League as right and inevitable.

The increase in the number of the non-permanent Members is an entirely different matter. It is a new proposal which no one ever heard of until a few months ago and of which most of the Members of the Assembly have only had formal notification this morning. It is a proposal which we consider to be of vital importance for the future of the League. A similar proposal for an increase from four to six was discussed for weeks in the First Committee and in Sub-Committee before it was adopted by the full Assembly.

This new proposal, which is infinitely more serious, because it increases the size of the Council to the unwieldy number of fourteen, we are now asked to accept without any similar discussion, and without any chance of debating the matter on its merits. I wish to emphasise that only fifteen Members out of fifty-five have had any opportunity of expressing an opinion on this particular proposal, whether in the special Committee, which the Council set up, or in the Council itself, or by written communication. Forty Members of the League have had no opportunity until this morning, of expressing their views, and yet we are asked to accept this very serious increase without any time for consideration and practically at sight. We understand the reasons of those who urge this procedure, but we nevertheless feel that it involves an infringement of the full liberty of the Members of the Assembly and that, if it were accepted as a precedent, it might constitute a very serious menace to the future working of the League.

I will not develop other points on which I might dwell. We do not propose to move any counter proposal; we do not propose to take any action which will prevent a rapid solution of the problem or which will disturb the full harmony which ought to mark the entry of Germany into the League.

We want to make this declaration, and we want it to be considered as the most solemn protest we can make against any form of unconstitutional procedure; we desire to close it with a fervent appeal to the Members of the Council, and to other leaders of the League, to uphold with scrupulous care the sound and constitutional methods which have proved satisfactory in the past and to help in every way to safeguard the rights of the Assembly which is and must be the supreme organ of the League, and thus to build up its authority and discretion. We make this appeal because we are absolutely convinced that only these methods can create the true League spirit of co-operation and confidence which is vital to its future success.

The President :

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

M. Löfgren (Sweden) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — After what has been said by the Rapporteur and by the previous speaker, I have only to make a declaration in order to express the views of my Government and of the Swedish delegation on the question now before us.

It has been proposed by the President that the admission of Germany to the League, the granting to Germany of a permanent seat on the Council, and the question of increasing the number of the non-permanent Members from six to nine — all these questions should be treated as one question and should not be referred to a Committee. I feel bound, on principle, to join in certain reservations already made to this procedure, although I do not wish under the present circumstances to ask for a division on the question.

I also respectfully submit that the granting to Germany of a permanent seat on the Council has, as a matter of procedure, no material connection with the creation of new non-permanent seats. The admission of Germany as a permanent Member of the Council has, from the outset, been made an integral condition of her membership and has thus been known to all the Members of the Assembly and has in fact, if not in form, been already agreed to by all of us here present.

On the other hand, the creation of three new non-permanent seats has hitherto not been considered in any way. This question, moreover, is in its turn intimately connected with the regulations proposed by the Committee, regulations which are entirely within the sole competence of the Assembly.

It is true that countries like my own had the privilege of studying the whole of this problem in the Committee appointed by the Council. While loyally collaborating for the purpose of reaching an agreement, we have thus had the opportunity of expressing our serious doubts as to the wisdom of the proposed increase in the Council and of formulating the conditions which we for our part felt bound to attach to the acceptance of a scheme which we considered fraught with certain dangers for the future development of the League. While now agreeing to the proposed extension of the Council, we do this for the purpose of saving the League from what is, perhaps, the gravest crisis that has occurred in its short existence.

In my view, however, all the other Members of the League who have not been members of the Committee should not, in my view, have been deprived of their right and freedom to deliberate on this vital problem in accordance with the ordinary procedure of the League. I feel, therefore, that, whereas the question of Germany's permanent seat on the Council, which is universally accepted, could be decided at once, the question of the increase in the number of the non-permanent seats should have been referred separately to a Committee together with the proposed regulations.

I venture very respectfully to think it a mistake, when dealing with a problem of this magnitude, not to have had sufficient confidence in the political judgment of the Assembly as to enable it to treat the question laid before it by the Council in accordance with its ordinary procedure.

In conclusion, I express the fervent hope that the present exception which has been made in the ordinary procedure of the Assembly will not be considered as a precedent for the future.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has before it the proposals submitted by M. Motta on behalf of the General Committee of the Assembly. Before asking you to take a decision on the procedure to be followed in regard to these proposals, I would remind you that the General Committee proposes that one of them — the third — should be referred to the First Committee, which will be asked to report on it. The third proposal reads as follows :

“Consideration of the proposals made by the Committee instructed to study the question of the composition of the Council as regards the method of election and tenure of the non-permanent seats.”

I think the Assembly will agree that there is no objection to the reference of this resolution to the First Committee without further formality.

Question 3 was referred to the First Committee.

As regards the first proposal made by M. Motta on behalf of the General Committee, the Assembly must decide first of all whether it desires to discuss it forthwith.

If no one wishes to speak, I declare that, in accordance with Article 14, paragraph 2, of the Rules of Procedure, the Assembly, without taking a vote, unanimously decides to discuss this proposal immediately. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly having decided upon the immediate discussion of the first proposal submitted by

M. Motta, I will now read the following draft resolution :

"Subject to the approval of the Council resolution mentioned in Point 3 of the agenda of the present meeting, the Assembly approves the report of the First Committee of the Special Session of the Assembly on the request of the German Government for admission to the League of Nations."

According to the conclusions of the report, therefore, the Assembly will now have to take a decision regarding the admission of Germany to the League of Nations.

Under the second paragraph of Article 1 of the Covenant, the Assembly must take its decision on this admission by a two-thirds majority.

The vote will be taken by roll-call. The name of each delegation will be called out, and one of its members will answer either "yes", "no", or "I abstain from voting". The result of the vote will be duly registered and announced.

(The vote was taken by roll-call.)

The President :

Translation : The result of the voting is as follows :

Number of States voting : 48.

All the delegations have voted in favour of the admission of Germany to the League.

I therefore proclaim that Germany is admitted to the League of Nations by a unanimous decision of the Assembly.

I think that we may congratulate ourselves upon the step that has just been taken. It vindicates those who, last March, never lost heart despite the difficulties which we all deplored — difficulties which could not have been foreseen and which may always arise to stop any great measure of progress.

By this vote we have accomplished one of the most necessary and at the same time one of the most difficult tasks with which the League has been faced — one, too, which is of momentous importance for its future. I feel sure I shall be voicing the unanimous feeling of the Assembly in expressing my joy, my very legitimate satisfaction, at the step which the Assembly has just taken, and also in expressing the hope that the representatives of Germany will take their places among us as soon as possible.

I will now ask you to take a decision on the second draft resolution proposed by M. Motta on behalf of the General Committee of the Assembly.

The draft resolution reads as follows :

"The Assembly approves the proposals put forward by the Council in its resolution of September 4th, 1926, regarding :

"(a) The nomination of Germany as a permanent Member of the Council ;

"(b) The increase in the number of non-permanent seats, which shall be brought up to nine."

In accordance with the second paragraph of Article 4 of the Covenant, the Assembly is asked to approve the Council's proposals by a simple majority.

The second paragraph of Article 4 of the Covenant reads as follows :

"With the approval of the majority of the Assembly, the Council may name additional Members of the League whose representatives shall always be Members of the Council ; the Council with like approval may increase the number of Members of the League to be selected by the Assembly for representation on the Council."

If there is no objection, I will at once proceed with the roll-call for the second proposal. The vote will be taken in accordance with Article 20 of the Rules of Procedure.

Dr. Nansen (Norway) :

Is it decided that we are not to refer the matter to a Committee ?

The President :

Translation : That has already been decided. We voted for immediate discussion.

The roll-call will now be taken.

The vote was taken by roll-call.

The President :

Translation : The result of the vote is as follows :

Number of States voting : 48

All the delegations voted in favour of the resolution.

I therefore declare that the second resolution has been unanimously adopted.

The Assembly having approved the Council's proposals by the necessary majority, the conditions laid down in the second paragraph of Article 4 of the Covenant have been fulfilled.

Accordingly, Germany is now included among the Members of the League which are permanently represented on the Council, and the number of Members of the League to be elected by the Assembly for representation on the Council has been raised to nine.

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

The President :

Translation : At its meeting yesterday, the General Committee decided to follow last year's procedure and propose that the Chairman of the Agenda Committee should be appointed a member of the General Committee of the Assembly.

If there is no objection, I shall regard this proposal as accepted. (*Assent.*)

16. — COMPOSITION OF THE FINNISH DELEGATION : COMMUNICATION BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : I have just received from the Finnish delegation a letter informing me that, in accordance with the first paragraph of Article 6 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, M. Hugo Valvanne will act as a substitute delegate for Finland.

The Assembly rose at 12.5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8th, 1926, AT 4 P.M.

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

The President :

Translation : Before we begin the agenda, I wish to communicate a decision taken by the General Committee at yesterday's meeting concerning the maintenance of order in the Assembly Hall. This decision has been published in the Assembly Journal, but I think that, in view of its importance, it would be well to have it read here. It is as follows :

"Decision of the General Committee of the Assembly.

"1. The ground floor of the Assembly Hall, except the reserved seats at the back, is intended exclusively for delegates, substitute delegates, experts, advisers, secretaries and members of the Secretariat. The public or members of the families of the persons mentioned above will not be admitted to this part of the hall.

"2. In conformity with the practice followed in national Parliaments, no applause will be allowed in the galleries reserved for the Press and for the public."

I will accordingly draw the attention of the public to the necessity of abstaining from any sort of manifestation. The interest that everyone

takes in the work of the Assembly is quite understandable, but, however interested it may be the public has no right to display its feelings. This might interfere with the work of the Assembly. I think everyone will understand this and will in future abstain from any public manifestation.

18. — THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE
COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the report to the Seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations on the Work of the Council, on the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly (Annexes 2, 2(a) and 2(b), documents A.6. and 6(a) 1926).

Count Moltke, first delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

Count Moltke (Denmark) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen— In addressing you for the first time, I should like at the outset, on behalf of the Danish Government, to give this illustrious Assembly, the distinguished persons composing it and the League which we are all here to serve, an assurance of our feelings of cordial fraternity, profound respect and unshakable confidence in the work which is being done.

Even though at the outset we could legitimately express our confidence in the League's work, and even though these expressions of confidence have, despite passing difficulties, been justified by the course of events in the first years of the existence of the League, yet it seems to me that, in this last year especially, its development has shown many hopeful signs.

I make no claim to draw up a balance-sheet of the great work accomplished by the League in any particular period of its existence, but in looking through the report on the work of the

Council — which is the subject of to-day's discussion — I cannot pass over in silence certain aspects of its work which perhaps display these reassuring signs in the brightest light.

May I refer to the solution of the Greco-Bulgarian dispute in October of last year? The dispute broke out on October 19th: nine days later the incident was closed, the menace to peace which it involved was averted thanks to the authority which the League and the Council already possessed, thanks to the prompt action of the Council and the highly commendable good-will displayed by the two Governments concerned, which constituted, as the report says, an example — I might say an admirable example — of the conduct which might be expected of Members of the League of Nations between whom some incident has arisen which threatens the peace of the world. This peaceful solution set up a new jurisprudence, as was so aptly pointed out on that occasion by the Right Hon. Sir Austen Chamberlain.

I would mention, too, the solution of the Mosul affair. I do not propose to go into the details of that important question. I simply desire to remind you of the great and beneficial endeavours made by the Council to conciliate the claims of the parties concerned, the important advisory opinion given on November 21st, 1925, by the Permanent Court of International Justice, and the agreement concluded directly afterwards between Great Britain, Iraq and Turkey, an agreement desired and welcomed by every friend of peace.

I wish also to dwell upon the importance of the auspicious event in which we took part this morning — the admission of Germany as a Member of the League. We have spoken hitherto of certain reassuring features; we now have every reason, I think, to rejoice profoundly on the occasion of this event, so long awaited, so full of promise for the future. We extend a cordial welcome to this new Member, who will take among us the place that awaited her and was due to her. The entry of Germany — a vital necessity for the development of the League in accordance with the principles forming the basis of the Covenant — gives us reason to view with confidence the outcome of our policy of reconciliation and co-operation. It also signifies a further step towards the aim upon which our hopes are set — the universality of the League.

Apart, however, from its direct action in any given matter, the League exercises a further action by reason of its fundamental qualities, its very existence as an instrument of good, its permanence and its receptivity to ideas which serve the great cause of peace. The fact that during the last few years the League has occupied a preponderating and increasing part in the proceedings of the Parliaments of the States Members deserves attention. Of even greater significance is the fact that these proceedings have served to bring the work of the League to fruition in those very States, just as the individual work of those States or groups of States in this or that domain of the policy of international understanding serves to bring to fruition the ideas on which the League is based. Reflex action of this nature is of the highest importance. It finds, and has found from the very beginning, ground prepared for its beneficent influence in the conditions arising out of the permanence of the League. Formerly, Conferences were held: sometimes their purpose was attained, but sometimes they proved abortive, or the situation remained uncertain or unsolved. The merit, the incontestable merit, of the League, is that its voice has always been heard urging the same principles during the seven years which have elapsed since its foundation.

Even when a proposal has not been adopted in its original form, it has been possible to continue the discussion and to resume the thread thanks to the experience acquired; many ideas and principles incorporated in proposals which have not been fully carried out still persist and govern our proceedings. In other words, there has been no backward step. We have behind us a record of patient, laborious and persevering work, of work calculated to consolidate this immense foundation and to reduce the sceptics to silence.

Ladies and gentlemen, I spoke just now of the individual work of the States in the cause of peace. I would remind you in a few words of what Denmark has done during this last year in pursuance of our traditional policy and in entire conformity with the principles laid down by the League.

On September 25th, 1925, the Assembly passed a resolution calling the attention of States Members of the League to the desirability, from the point of view of their security, of concluding particular conventions for arbitration or for the judicial settlement of disputes.

The purpose of this resolution was to emphasise not only the great importance of the conclusion of such conventions for the contracting States themselves, but also the indirect support which they afford to joint international efforts designed to promote the great objects set forth in the Covenant of the League, objects which may be summed up in the formula: arbitration, security, reduction of armaments.

I have always regarded the means advocated in the resolution of September 25th as highly beneficial. It has this advantage among others — that it enables each State to show by its actions that it is prepared to take its share in the realisation of these lofty aims. Hence the Danish Government took immediate advantage of the opportunity provided by this resolution to effect a drastic revision in its system of arbitration treaties.

Denmark was one of the first countries to adhere to the arbitration movement, and has always been ready to conclude conventions of this nature on the widest bases. I would venture to remind you that the Treaty of February 12th, 1904, between Denmark and the Netherlands, is the first Arbitration Treaty free from reservations ever concluded. It goes so far as to open the way to all who desire to give their adhesion and proclaims the intentions of the contracting States in the frankest possible manner by laying down in the simple terms of Article 4 that:

“Non-signatory States may accede to the present Convention. Any State which desires to accede thereto shall notify its intention in writing to each of the contracting States.”

As a result of the Assembly resolution of September 25th, 1925, the Danish Government has, during the past year, carried on negotiations with a number of States with the object of concluding conventions on compulsory arbitration. As regards Denmark's relations with the northern countries, Poland, Germany and France, these negotiations have already led to concrete results. I wish to acknowledge from this platform the frank and loyal co-operation we have received from all the Governments referred to, which have helped us along the road that leads to right, justice and mutual confidence.

The object of the Danish Government, which is continuing its negotiations with other countries with a view to completing treaties of compulsory arbitration without any reservation has been to give the widest application to the resolution — already mentioned — of the 1925 session of the

Assembly. My country hopes that by its efforts it has contributed, however humbly, to the general progress. We are glad to know, however, that we are not alone in this work and that other countries on all sides are animated with the same desire. Here on the hospitable soil of Switzerland, let me also recall the services rendered in this respect by the Government of the Swiss Confederation, and the courage and perseverance it has displayed in concluding many similar conventions with countries which are prepared to follow a similar policy of confidence.

A big movement in favour of compulsory arbitration has been set on foot. We welcome it with all our heart as a great boon for the contracting States and as a powerful aid in the realisation of the work which the League has taken in hand under the formula of "arbitration, security and reduction of armaments".

May I in conclusion call to mind a saying of one of the founders of the League, that great American, the late President Woodrow Wilson, at a time when he cherished, with his whole heart and mind alike, that idealism which contributed so much to the creation of the League. The President was then on a visit to his mother's little native town in England. After divine service in the little village church he addressed the congregation. In his speech the following passage will be found, which I venture to read first in English and then to translate into French :

"It is from quiet places like this all over the world that the forces are accumulated that presently will overpower any attempt to accomplish evil on a great scale. It is like a rivulet that gathers into the river and the river which goes to the sea. So there come out of communities like these streams that fertilise the conscience of men, and it is the conscience of the world we now mean to place upon the throne."

I can imagine no finer distinction for a nation, for a people, for a State, or for a Government, than to be counted among the rivulets or the rivers—it matters little which—that in the course of years will have contributed the most towards fertilising, by their purity and limpidity, the conscience of the world to which Mr. Wilson referred—that new conscience which has so often been mentioned by speakers in this Assembly as the indispensable condition for the success of our work.

Guided by such ideals, Denmark wishes to continue her co-operation in a spirit both of purity and of perseverance. It is her wish, ladies and gentlemen; it is also a promise.

The President :

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

M. Urrutia (Colombia) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—May I be permitted, now that the Assembly has under consideration the great work achieved by the Council and the Secretariat, and also the general interests of the League, to express to you the deep regret felt by the Colombian delegation at the decision of Brazil to leave the League and again at the absence of Spain from the present session of the Assembly.

I can assure you that the regrets I have just expressed are shared by all delegations to the Assembly from the American continent. There is no country in America which does not maintain close and cordial relations of friendship with Brazil; some of these countries, like my own,

are united to Brazil not only by bonds of geographical propinquity and by common interests, but also by kindred traditions and ideals of international justice and fraternity. Brazil has invariably endeavoured to extend her relations with her sister Republics on the basis of respect for right and in a pre-eminently pacific spirit. Who will ever forget the lofty proposals which the great Lusitanian Republic laid before the Second Hague Peace Conference, proposals which were voiced by the eloquence of Ruy Barbosa? Who can forget the brilliant co-operation of Brazil in the work of the League? Within the League, Brazil has ever and always striven to extend the dominion of right in international relations.

Spain, too, has given invaluable assistance to the League. The void caused by her absence from this Assembly is keenly felt and regretted by all, but it has a special significance and causes a particularly deep regret among the delegations from countries of the same race and tongue.

Bound to Spain by indissoluble moral ties, these countries share her pride in her glorious past and in the inestimable contribution that she has made, in the course of her celebrated history, to the work of civilisation and human progress.

Let us trust that the places we see empty to-day will not remain so indefinitely. Let us fervently hope that the League will find the means of ensuring its universality, which is the indispensable condition to its development. Let us pray that, by a strict observance of the principles of the Covenant and by a continuous endeavour to realise the ideals underlying it, the League will soon acquire sufficient moral power to attract all nations to itself and to create between them and itself spiritual bonds strong enough to withstand any future vicissitudes or emergencies such as those which deprive us to-day of the presence of Spain and Brazil.

The President :

Translation : His Highness the Maharaja of Kapurthala, delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

His Highness the Maharaja of Kapurthala (India) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen.—Before I address myself to those aspects of the work of the League which are of special interest to India, I wish to offer you, Mr. President, on behalf of the Indian delegation to this Assembly and in my personal capacity as a ruling Prince of India, my most sincere and respectful congratulations on your election to preside over the work of this session.

This is not the first occasion on which an Indian Prince has had the honour of addressing the Assembly of the League. Among my predecessors Their Highnesses the Maharajah Jam Sahib of Nawanagar and the Maharajahs of Bikanir and Patiala have been privileged, as members of other Indian delegations, to tell you something of the awakening of interest and sympathy among the Governments and the masses of India for the ideals and work of the League.

It may not be out of place to mention that India, with its vast area and population composed of peoples of different races and creeds speaking languages which are as entirely different in different parts of the country as, for instance, Portuguese is from Russian or Swedish from Greek, can more appropriately be called a sub-continent and two-fifths of this entire Indian peninsula and one-fifth of its population are ruled by the Indian Princes and chiefs, under the suzerainty and the protection of His Majesty the King-Emperor.

The principal ruling Princes are absolutely independent in the internal administration of their States. The British Indian Law is not in force in their territories, nor can the Indian Legislature legislate for them, and the High Courts of Justice in British India have no jurisdiction over their subjects.

I and my brother Princes keenly feel the honour and responsibility of being included among the representatives of India at the Assembly of the League. We are glad, as practical administrators conversant with the day-to-day problems of government, to be allowed the opportunity of bringing our personal experience to the common stock and sharing in your important deliberations.

I feel and have no hesitation in declaring that we Indian Princes, as rulers of our people, have better opportunities of diffusing the knowledge and the aims of the League — i.e., universal peace and harmony and mutual co-operation for the welfare of humanity on the basis of equality of nations — amongst our people and from there to the remotest corners of the Indian Empire than others who are differently placed *vis-à-vis* to ourselves.

With the spread of education and the knowledge and experience gained by travel in foreign countries, to which the people of India are now beginning to apply themselves, India is awakening to a spirit of nationalism and, with its own traditions and ideals and the friendly guidance and assistance of the British Government, I sincerely hope it will one day, not in the far-distant future, achieve its glorious goal and will become a united nation and self-governing country, in all its rights and privileges, like its sister dominions of Canada, Australia and South Africa, and prove a jewel of outshining splendour in the Commonwealth of nations forming the British Empire.

India is well aware that it has been essential for the League hitherto to devote its main energies to solving the grave problems left behind by the Great War. We have watched with interest the unceasing efforts of the Council and the Assembly to devise some means of promoting the great ideals of security, arbitration and reduction of armaments and its zeal in pressing forward schemes for the economic and financial reconstruction of those countries most heavily stricken during the aftermath of the war.

India, though geographically far removed from the main scenes of these activities, has been privileged also to take some share in these endeavours. Several indeed of my countrymen have been associated in the work of League organisations directed to these objects. Among those now so engaged I may mention Sir Jagadis Bose, of the Committee for Intellectual Co-operation; Sir Muhammad Rafique, of the Committee for the Codification of International Law; and Sir Atul Chatterjee, of the Preparatory Committee for the Economic Conference.

But the League has also undertaken other tasks imposed upon it by the Covenant in which India has a more direct interest and in which it has played a more conspicuous part. I speak of the international work in labour and social questions. India has been represented on the Governing Body of the Labour Organisation since 1923 as one of the eight chief industrial countries of the world. Her representatives have taken an active part in the discussions at the International Labour Conferences: they have also attended other important international gatherings organised by the League. Among these I may cite the Conferences on Transit and Communications, Customs, Passports, Opium, Traffic in Women and Children and Traffic in Arms. As a result of India's

participation in this work, twelve important international conventions concluded at the League have been ratified on her behalf, apart from the special labour conventions concluded through the International Labour Organisation which she has also accepted.

To give effect to these conventions, a number of legislative and administrative reforms have been enacted in British India. Our recent labour legislation has included the Indian Factories Act and the Indian Mines Act, which limit weekly hours of work in accordance with the Washington Labour Convention, 1919, and secure to miners the twenty-four hours weekly rest-day in accordance with the Geneva Labour Convention, 1921.

Social legislation in India to implement the ratification by India of the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children has included important amendments of the penal law devised to protect the community, and particularly minors, more effectively against sexual crime. Much has also been achieved for the protection and welfare of children by administrative measures and the devoted work of private organisations. Opportunity will arise to speak more in detail on these matters during the discussion in Committee.

The discussions at Geneva on opium and dangerous drugs have produced administrative changes resulting in the progressive restriction of the cultivation, internal consumption and export of opium, and also providing for the exchange with other countries of information designed to check the illicit drug traffic. I may here remind the Assembly that India has now decided to reduce its exports of opium by a fixed annual proportion during the next ten years so that this export trade will be absolutely extinguished save for medical and scientific purposes in ten years.

Turning to the health work of the League, I am glad to tell you that India is closely co-operating with neighbouring countries to promote the work of the League Epidemiological Bureau at Singapore and officers and doctors of her Medical Services are collaborating with European scientists in research into the cause of diseases which specially menace the East.

The Indian States in some cases are at present ahead of British India in social and educational advancement. In my own State, for instance, education is making rapid strides both for the boys and girls. It is compulsory in some parts and the compulsion is being gradually extended to other parts of the State. English, Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit languages are taught, and since a few years the French language has also been introduced in the lower and higher classes, but mine is the only State in India where this language is taught.

Modern hygienic methods, sanitary improvements and electric light are established in the State. The municipalities are given powers to elect their own Presidents, and a representative Assembly exists for examining and discussing the budgets, for suggesting fresh legislation, and for advising my Government on social, agricultural and other administrative points. Marriage is unlawful among juveniles and laws prohibiting children smoking are in force. Central and provincial committees have been formed for maternity and child welfare, and philanthropic societies organised by educated people are doing useful work for humanity, which I think is the best beginning of the aims and objects of the League.

At the risk of wearying you I have ventured to recapitulate these facts about India's share in the League work in order to show you that her activities in this field have not been

lacking. Distant as we are from the centre of League policy at Geneva, the obligations undertaken for my country by its representatives who signed the Covenant at Versailles have been brought home to the Governments and peoples of India in all directions, particularly in matters affecting social and industrial life.

On the other hand, India is a country with its own ancient civilisation and traditions, of which it is intensely proud and which, in many respects, it regards as in no way inferior to the more material civilisation of the West. It is also a deeply religious and, in many respects, conservative country, to which many of those theories and principles which have emerged from the rapid industrial, social and political developments during the last hundred years in Europe are entirely foreign.

Nor are the circumstances of India in other respects analogous to those of modern industrial nations of the West; in many cases, social and industrial problems in India must be dealt with on different lines, though we have accepted and carried out the greater part of the reforms in domestic and industrial life recommended from Geneva. It is for this reason that I feel justified in inviting you, on behalf of the Indian delegation, to consider whether in the future more particular attention should not be paid by the League to the conditions and problems special to Asia.

All of us desire that the influence and authority of the League throughout the world should be as universal as the authors of the Covenant intended. If this object is to be achieved, the decisions and policies adopted at Geneva must be truly international, they must take more account of the differences existing in mankind due to climate, traditions, civilisation and history, and must be conceived in a form which can be applied with allowance for those differences and with equally beneficial results to all parts of the world.

To us in India some of the proposals made by League organisations have seemed to be too narrowly drawn on European models. In other cases, they appear to encroach on the internal authority of the various Governments in India. My predecessor, the Maharajah of Patiala, uttered a word of warning last year relating to certain schemes both in the social and economic spheres which His Highness and his colleagues considered unsuitable in their present form for adoption in India. I will not detain the Assembly by any detailed discussion of these proposals, as such an examination can more properly be made wholly in the Committee. But I ask the Assembly seriously to consider what practical demonstration can be made to the peoples of India for whom I speak, what direct evidence can be offered to make them realise that their interests are appreciated and considered at Geneva as of equal importance with the interests of the West. Unless and until India is convinced of this it will be impossible to secure for the work of the League that wholehearted interest and co-operation which is essential for the success of its great task.

May I in particular cite one direction in which the assistance and sympathy of the West would be highly valued by all Eastern people, namely, the prevention of epidemic disease? Here is a problem on which the health and happiness of the highest and the humblest equally depend, and if the League can promise the collaboration and assistance of countries more fortunately situated than the peoples of Asia in their daily contest with plague, cholera and other similar diseases, the cause of the League would, in my judgment, be greatly advanced in the East, and the value of the great work done would be more

widely felt and known, not only amongst the millions of India, but throughout Asia. Members of the Indian delegation will refer in greater detail in Committee to the methods in which this great duty of the League may be promoted.

It only remains for me to assure you, Sir, that my colleagues and I are eager to do our share in furthering the work of the League and in making its beneficent influence as comprehensive and worldwide as possible, and it is to this end that our suggestions and criticisms will be directed.

The President :

Translation : Prince Arfa, delegate of Persia, will address the Assembly.

Prince Arfa (Persia) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — This is the sixth time that I have come among you to state the Persian view of the work of the League of Nations during the preceding year. The League has no need either of flattery or disparagement. It requires only justice and truth. With these two principles in mind I will now proffer my thanks and criticisms.

First I would express my thanks. You all know that, pending its full political development, the League has already rendered great services in the domain of international co-operation in health matters. Persia is profoundly grateful for it.

The East is afflicted by a terrible and persistent scourge, malaria. In response to our appeal, the League of Nations sent us an eminent specialist, Dr. Gilmour. Immediate results have been obtained from Dr. Gilmour's visit and from his enquiry and report. He recommended the draining of the marshes which are poisoning certain parts of Persia. He made proposals to the Health Section of the League of Nations for the training of Persian specialists. Dr. Sheikh, who was appointed by the Persian Government for this work, came to Geneva, and, supplied with the necessary instructions from the Health Section, made a tour in Europe for the purpose of experimental study. His report has made a great impression, and the Persian Government is about to undertake the draining of the marshes with the aid of technical experts whose assistance has already been secured. Thousands of human lives will thus be saved.

The East is also afflicted with another scourge, opium. This matter has been discussed for six years at Geneva from every point of view, but no adequate reduction has yet been made in poppy cultivation throughout the world. At the Geneva Conference, Persia submitted a memorandum demanding that the evil should be attacked at the root. America agreed with us and proposed that a Commission of Enquiry should be sent to Persia. The League of Nations granted 100,000 gold francs, the Rockefeller Foundation 150,000 francs, and the Persian Government undertook to defray the entire housing and feeding expenses of the members of the Commission, who were its guests throughout their stay in the country. Every facility was granted to them in carrying out their task.

The report of the Commission will shortly be submitted to you. If it is favourably received and Persia thus aided in replacing the cultivation of the poppy by some other crop, many more thousands of lives will be saved, not only in Persia, but throughout the world.

On behalf of my Government, I warmly thank the Assembly, the Council and the Secretariat for these two acts of beneficence.

I would like to have stopped here, but in relation to political events, justice and truth force me to utter a few less optimistic words. Only this

morning one members of the Assembly showed regret at the apparent tendency in the League to set aside the Assembly in favour of the Council and its Committees. This is a great danger.

The Council must not be transformed into a State within a State — that is to say, an assembly within the Assembly. Those countries, great or small, which in future will form the Council must remember that they hold their seats not in order to represent first and foremost their own interests, but, in brief, as representatives chosen by the Assembly to defend the common welfare and the superior interests of the the whole community.

For this reason, the principles of geographical representation and of rotation must be seriously applied. A Council composed of fourteen members from which Islam and the great Asiatic civilisations were excluded would give rise in the East to greater disappointment and graver doubts than a Council of eleven. No handle must be given to those critics who refuse to see in the League anything but a new form of domination by some nations over the remainder.

We proclaim here the absolute equality of races and peoples of whatever colour, religion or importance. The League of Nations can only work effectively for peace by keeping this equality in view. Privileges, exceptions, combinations and attempts at domination have always been the cause of those wars which have exhausted our poor world.

Finally, there is a point to which we attach great importance, namely, Article 10 of the Covenant. Three years ago we opposed any change in the fundamental meaning of this essential article of the Covenant. To-day the Council has been largely increased and this fact will give rise to certain difficulties in summoning it in an emergency. At the least, its decisions must, in case of need, be prompt.

The Protocol failed to find favour in the eyes of many Governments, but it did give us one thing, a thing which would have particularly facilitated the rapid and effective action of the Council in the event of conflict — that is to say, the definition of the aggressor, namely, the State which refuses arbitration.

We should be grateful and even reassured if the members of the new and enlarged Council would tell us that this definition will guide their attitude at its table, should any Member of the League be threatened by a more powerful Member.

Since we have not yet been able to bring about disarmament, let us at least attempt energetically to promote the principle of arbitration, and to secure the acceptance in practice of a definition which has received the approval of the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : M. Franco, delegate of the Dominican Republic, will address the Assembly.

M. Franco (Dominican Republic) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — As a representative of one of the youngest and, from the material point of view, one of the weakest States of the New World, I do not propose to weary you with high-sounding but empty words. Nevertheless, the importance of the subject with which we are dealing compels me to take my place upon this tribune of the nations and put before you in a few words the actual thoughts and feelings of this Latin-American people, which, in the course of its long-suffering and heroic existence, has given so many proofs of its devotion to international institutions.

The work of the League appears to the whole world as deserving of the profoundest gratitude and the highest admiration. No one doubted but

that the realisation of the dream of Emeric Crucé and Bernardin de Saint-Pierre would constitute the climax in the history of international relations. An examination of the efforts made and the work accomplished during the first few years of this international organisation justifies the highest hopes on the part of those who truly desire to put an end to the anarchy of sovereignties. This anarchy, which has been falsely described as proceeding from the fundamental idea of the equality of States, means in actual fact the destruction and negation of that principle, without which civilised life would be impossible; for civilised life depends upon an international spirit of respect and justice, confidence and sacrifice.

The noble spirit of the League thus serves to keep ever present in our minds the duty which unites us, and which, to quote a well-known author, consists in realising that the best way of serving the interests of the States represented is not to set those interests one against another, but to conciliate them as far as possible in the supreme general interest, the satisfaction of which never fails to conduce to the well-being of each member of the international community.

Thus it is undoubtedly essential, if the spirit to which I have just alluded is to prevail and extend its influence, that we should eliminate as far as possible any tendency on the part of States or their representatives to vie with each other in the pursuit of honours. To the Dominican Republic the supreme honour has always consisted, and will always consist, in being and remaining a loyal and esteemed Member of the League.

It is in this spirit, ladies and gentlemen, devoid of all ambition and all pretensions, that I now turn to examine that vital and difficult question — the composition of the Council of the League.

It is an open secret that the crisis through which the international organisation first established in 1919 has just passed owed its origin to certain claims to a permanent seat on the Council involving an increase in the number of such seats. I would mention at this point, in order fully to explain my thought, that, examined strictly from the point of view of the theory of international law, the constitution of the Council as laid down in the Covenant of the League is contrary to the principle of the equality of States, which forms the very basis of modern international law. It is obvious that, viewed in this light, the existence of permanent Council seats, constituting the exclusive and individual property of the Powers described as "having general interests", is entirely contrary to the fundamental principles upon which the Covenant itself was supposed, and was stated, to be based.

I would add, however, that the other States were moved by a sense of the realities of international politics to accept, at all events provisionally, circumstances which arose out of the facts of everyday life. This is not a tribute to brute force. Nor does it represent an honour accorded to the powerful or the abandonment of a right to certain States; it is a sacrifice designed to destroy once and for all the mischievous conception of absolute sovereignty and to inaugurate an era of order in the liberty of States corresponding more nearly to the present facts of international interdependence.

In a word, we agree and I still agree, so far as may be necessary in view of existing realities and necessities, to a position whereby the Powers which, at the time of the drawing up of the Covenant, were regarded, though wrongly, as Powers "with general interests" may acquire or retain the privilege of a permanent seat on the Council of the League. It remains for us

therefore to respect the existing situation, provided that the States enjoying this privileged position are worthy and continue to be worthy of it. Our actual life and, *a fortiori*, the progress of this international organisation make this an imperative necessity.

Having said so much, I now desire to proclaim from this platform, over which the mighty spirit of Bolivar and Washington seems to hover, that we must resolutely oppose the creation of further privileges, since these would constitute a violation of the international spirit and of international law without even the justification which exists in the case to which I have just referred. There must not be, there cannot be, any further conferring of honours within the League.

The democratic principles which lie at the foot of our American institutions and constitute the essential characteristic of the peoples of the New World make it incumbent on us to support

the proposal whereby the number of non-permanent seats on the Council would be increased as far as the normal working of that body permits, and all States, by a fair system of rotation, would be given the same rights and opportunities.

We hereby declare ourselves unreservedly opposed to the creation of new categories among the States Members of the League.

Thus, we boldly sacrifice our deepest affections to the claims of international law, to the reign of an international spirit, to the protection of the League and to the gradual realisation of our ideal. We close our ears, harden our hearts to the poignant call of blood and of the past, and heed only the call of a loftier duty and of the higher claims upon our gratitude and devotion.

The Assembly rose at 6.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, 1926, AT 10.15 A.M.

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

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the Report on the Work of the Council, and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly.

Sir George Foster, delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

Sir George Foster (Canada) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Yesterday this Assembly had the pleasure of listening to speakers from middle Europe and far-off India, from the small islands of the West Indies and from the continent of South America. It is not therefore unfitting that a voice should be heard from a not unimportant part of the American continent which comprises the large and populous countries extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the North Pole.

Sometimes in our discussions it would almost seem as though in describing this area the word "America" was entirely appropriated to our friends of the United States of America. I may be

permitted this morning to make a mild protest against that assumption and to assure you that there are others in North America who do not fly the flag of the United States.

I am not for a moment proposing to answer for all that portion of North America which lies north of the Gulf of Mexico, but I am here to state that the ideals and the purposes of the League of Nations are supported within these limits by a population of more than 10,000,000 Canadians who are in absolute sympathy with those aims and purposes. Moreover, I do not think I should be outside the truth were I to say that the overwhelming majority of the 120,000,000 people of the United States are heart and soul in unison with the ideals of the League in its aspirations for world peace and its hatred of aggressive war.

It is, I think, very appropriate that, at the opening of the Assembly each year, sufficient time should be given as is now being done to a review of the whole field of work which is being carried on by the League. During this time we may profitably examine the past, we may as profitably take stock of the present, and we may take common counsel regarding the future work of the League.

I call to mind that I was a member of this Assembly during its first session in 1920. Since that time I have not had the pleasure of participating in the actual work of the Assembly at Geneva, and I see a strong and vivid contrast between the field of work covered in 1920 and that covered by the League to-day.

In 1920, the League of Nations was but an infant in swaddling clothes. Seven years have passed, and that infant has grown to a lusty, strong and virile young manhood. In the early days there was a feeling of extravagant optimism on the part of a few, of doubt and scepticism on the part of others and of active opposition on the part of many. Seven years have proved that the idea of the League has emerged into this era of our world history as a great, a beneficent and an enduring organisation. It may not have fulfilled all the hopes of its most ardent supporters, but it is equally true that it

has disproved the scepticism and fears of those who were doubtful or hostile. I do not think it can be said with truth to-day that there are in any quarter of the wide world thoughtful and serious-minded people who are in doubt as to the good work that the League has done and as to the work which it may do in the future if properly and wisely conducted.

We have had trials and disappointments; but what organisation of any merit has not had its trials? The League has grown in strength, in purpose and in power by the very fact that it has experienced difficulties, that it has faced them, has triumphed over them and continued victoriously upon its course. I am not one who fears trials. While we do not court them in connection with the work of the League, they bring out the virtue, strength and power of the organisation.

Our first great disappointment in connection with the League of Nations was that we were deprived from the beginning of the active co-operation of the United States of America. Many a sceptic and doubter said that the absence of the United States of America from the League of Nations spelled its failure. They said that without the United States of America it would be impossible for the League to do effective, continuous and progressive work. Yet in spite of that we have continued, we have done progressive work and we have made our way forward step by step. And we have done all that with the sympathetic co-operation of the United States of America.

It is true that nationally the United States of America do not belong to the League, but it is equally true that among the population of that country there are millions upon millions of individuals whose sympathetic hearts and minds are running parallel with our own in their approbation of the great work of the League. We are therefore not without help and comfort from that quarter. And to-day, after seven long years, this Assembly has before it a proposal from that great country with a view to its entrance into and its co-operation with the Permanent Court of International Justice. I earnestly hope that this proposal may be consummated in due time.

To the north of the United States of America the Dominion of Canada, with its population of 10,000,000, is completely in sympathy with the work of the League.

Having met and survived our first disappointment, we have encountered other and serious difficulties which we have succeeded in leaving behind us. Grave and perplexing differences had to be faced in carrying out the treaties and obligations of the League. The troubles in Silesia and Lithuania were met with patience and with prudence, and the days of bitterness and strife have been succeeded by a period of co-operation and friendly fellowship.

Then came the incident of Corfu — a sudden and sharp test. In this connection, once again the sinister doubt was expressed that the League might here meet its great crisis and might fail to overcome it. But the spirit of the League prevailed again and triumphed over the older war spirit; to-day that difficulty has faded into the past, and its solution has given us added strength and power from the fact that it was met, and met successfully.

Then there is the problem of disarmament, which is the primary object of our League of Nations. The solution of this problem still lies in the future — may be in a distant future — when the nations of the world are no longer weighed down under the crushing burden of armament expenditure and war waste, when the resources

of the nations, released therefrom, may be used for the works of peace and development. First, the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance was put into concrete form. It did not meet the case and was succeeded by the Protocol, and in that Protocol the League of Nations reached the high-water mark of its ideals — arbitration for the settlement of disputes, security as the result of that arbitration instead of war for the settlement of disputes, and disarmament following upon the security gained through the medium and by virtue of the principle of arbitration. That, I say, was the high-water mark, the lifting high of the ideals of the League of Nations in view of a waiting world. From this position the League of Nations has not retreated and does not propose to retreat. It was not, however, found possible immediately to adopt the Protocol, but the agreements of Locarno which followed in direct sequence adapt the principle and substance of the lofty declarations in the Protocol and apply them in a practical and prudent manner. Thus proceeding from the smaller to the larger, from the lesser to the greater, by a system of agreements and arbitration, and as a result of the security and disarmament thereby evolved, the League will achieve the thorough and complete fulfilment of its high ideal.

In this way, through successive trials, the strength, virtue and power of the League of Nations has been demonstrated, has been appreciated and is to-day acknowledged by the whole world.

Many milestones of success and of progress have been erected in the seven years which have passed. There was first the constitution of the Permanent Court of International Justice, the fulfilment of a wish which had long existed in the world. To-day, that institution is a beneficent and efficient agency in the working economy of the League of Nations. Secondly, there have been the strong and notable achievements of the League of Nations concerning economic and financial matters. Who among those who have followed the history of the work of the League in this connection has not been struck by the prudence and wisdom of its methods — and by the success with which they have been attended — in a reconstructed Austria, a restored Hungary, and in Greece, which, in its dire necessity, could find no help from any other source but found it in the admirable dispositions of the League of Nations?

These and many other facts which might be mentioned form an imperishable testimony to the beneficent work of the League of Nations in the most important field of financial and economic reconstruction in a world which has been so torn and injured by the disastrous war. So I might pass from one to another of the successfully progressive stages of the work of the League of Nations up to the present time. The memory of a bitter March has not yet altogether faded from the minds of the lovers and the partisans of the League of Nations; but the failures of that bitter March have already been overtaken and met by the milder atmosphere and the more pleasant reflections of the month of September.

And so to-day we trace a record of trials, of difficulties successfully overcome, and of marked achievements which have taken their place in the world's history as agencies with which it will not be possible hereafter to dispense. It is very useful at a time like this to review the past and to take from it the strength to which we are entitled as a result of the progress made. It is our duty to do so. It is also our duty to renew our vows.

I may say, speaking as one coming from a far distant country separated from the centre of the activities of the League, but which follows them — as millions of our people do — with sympathy and intense interest, that we have complete faith in the ideals and in the purposes of the League, that we gather strength from its record in the past, that we feel a growing confidence in the present situation, and that we look forward to the future with unabated optimism.

But let us to-day again renew our vows. In the first flush of a new situation, marked by a great heart and a great purpose, enthusiasm mounts high and optimism takes its loftiest place. Then come the prosaic and difficult hours of everyday work when ideals must be somewhat blurred and when optimism must be a little diminished — hours which the stern realities of life and the weakness of human nature bring to an organisation and to a cause. In these hours we must go back to the old ideals — that the peace of the world is what brings us together, the attainment of a future when war shall cease and good-will shall rule the whole world.

Each of the fifty-six nations which belong to the League must again review and burnish its ideals, knowing that before it there is much yet to be accomplished through many a weary mile of progress, work which will test our patience and resources to the uttermost, but which, if followed with calm persistency and strength and with a faith which will not be denied, will bring this old world of ours sooner or later out from the fogs and miasma of war and the bitter trials which follow in its wake into the sunlight and clearness of a peace in which good-will and brotherhood shall reign the whole world over.

Now, Mr. President, just one word more before I conclude. I have already said that it is the duty of this League every now and then — and no occasion is better than when the annual Assembly of the League of Nations meets — to renew its vows in the spirit in which those vows were taken seven or eight years ago, and to consecrate itself anew to the high cause of peace and good fellowship in the world. I want to say in this connection that we must sedulously cultivate the spirit of self-sacrifice in a great world cause; that, in a prudent and moderate degree, self-interest must give way to the general interest; that personal ambitions, racial ambitions, and national ambitions, while having their due place and power amongst the nations of the world, must bear in mind that they are a part and parcel of the world aggregate and that there must be due subordination of ambitions of that kind to the purposes and work of the League.

Most, if not all, of our difficulties have arisen (as difficulties generally do arise) from mistakes made in the past. How well we see that exemplified in the last year of the work of the League. If no mistakes had been made in the past years, we should not have been confronted by the circumstances of March 1926; if no mistakes of a similar nature are made in the future, we shall not experience similar difficulties in the future. We must remember that the League of Nations has introduced a new principle and new methods into international dealings before which, and in the carrying out of which, the old practices of the past diplomacy must take a subordinate place and largely disappear from the scene of action. I hold that the League of Nations should respect itself and its interests and maintain that self-respect and that interest against all comers.

There need be no unhealthy rivalry between the Council and the Assembly; they are too intimately related for that. I do not say that there has been

rivalry before; I do not say that there will be rivalry in the future. But each of us must, as Members of the League of Nations, remember that there must not be rivalry between the Council and the Assembly and that both of them, just as they have worked together harmoniously in the past, must continue to work harmoniously in the future.

To this end, I say that the Assembly should maintain its essential independence and its essential rights as a body, which is built up directly and freshly from the different nationalities which give it substance and form, and that it must keep that self-respect and that independence and the liberties which thereby belong to it. I do not say that there is any disposition in other quarters to infringe or trespass upon those rights, but so long as we hold them prudently, hold them firmly and hold them as essential to an organisation working for peace and good-will in the world, the better we shall be prepared therefor.

The League of Nations is an organisation which must not bend either to the cajolery or to the menace of interested Powers. It must be conscious of its own rights mindful of its own purposes; it must keep them in mind and not deviate from them to the tenth part of an inch merely because some outside body or Power attempts either to menace or cajole it. We must have faith in the inherent virtue and power of our organisation; if outside parties say: "Unless you do so-and-so, we cannot come in with you", or, being already in, "we cannot stay with you", regard must first be had to our own League purposes and ideals. If we can accommodate ourselves in such a way as to bring that Power in, or retain it when in, well and good; but if that is impossible, without prejudice to our work, we can only part with regret, in the hope that we may meet again in a more reasonable atmosphere. Fidelity to our principles and reasonable self-respect can demand no less.

One last thought. What we need as the ground-work and foundation of the League of Nations is wide instruction, regarding its purposes and principles, in those fundamental and primary areas where that education can alone be successfully effected. You may send your 165 delegates here year after year; you may pass your resolutions and carry on your work from Assembly to Assembly and from Council session to Council session; you will make a certain progress in educative work but you will not thereby arrive where it is necessary for this League to arrive if it is to be a continuous, growing and successful power in the world. We must get into the homes, to the firesides, into the schools where the young mind is being taught and eagerly imbibes its principles for later action, into the colleges and the universities. Into these areas we must penetrate; we must get there and stay there, animated by a feeling that years of patient and constant effort, unmitigated in their ardour and their persistence, must be cheerfully and faithfully spent in order that at last we may familiarise our whole generation, in the home, the school and the college, with our principles and our ideals. If we can have one full generation of teaching, of precept and of sympathetic instruction, the League of Nations will be firmly based upon a broad foundation in every member nation, and then, and then only, will the League of Nations rest upon a foundation which will justify the strongest hope and the highest optimism for its future.

The President:

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

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I think anyone who looks at the report on the work of the Council will be struck by one characteristic more than by any other, namely, by its immense extent. It deals with subjects of the most varied character, from a serious international dispute between Greece and Bulgaria to proposals for the reform of the calendar and the fixing of the Feast of Easter. It deals with the traffic in opium, with commercial arbitration, with the provision of swimming baths for children, with the codification of international law and with the reduction and limitation of armaments, apart from the very serious matter of the reconstruction of the composition of the Council.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, it would be quite impossible to attempt, even if it were useful, any review of activities so widely extended as these, and in the observations which I am about to address to the Assembly, and which, I trust, will be brief, I propose to confine myself to certain very practical and serious points without attempting to make, even if I were capable of doing so, an emotional and eloquent oration.

In the first place, may I say one word on the very important topic of the codification of international law. As you know, the Assembly appointed a Committee — I think it was two years ago — to deal with that subject, and on the very first page of the report on the work of the Council an account is given of the activities of the Committee. I cannot help feeling that, though we are very grateful for that account as far as it goes, we should like to know rather more about the actual procedure of the Committee, the lines upon which it has proceeded, and whether its activities show any prospect of success or achievement in the near future. I do not intend to submit a motion on the matter, but I venture very respectfully to suggest that the First Committee of the Assembly should consider whether it ought not to make some enquiry into the activities of that Committee, since, in many parts of the world, the codification of international law is regarded as one of the most important possibilities of the League.

The next observation I desire to make arises not only from the report itself but from the exceedingly interesting opening address made by M. Benès in his capacity as Acting President of the Assembly. You will remember that he then called attention to the importance of the ratification by the Governments of Conventions concluded or suggested by Conferences called under the auspices of the League or by the League itself.

May I quote three sentences from his speech ? He said :

"In this connection, I should like to draw the attention of all the delegations to the fact that it is their duty, once they have returned to their own countries, to see that effect is given to the decisions taken at Geneva."

Then a little later on he adds :

"I think I am bound to say that, from the point of view of the Conventions drafted by the technical committees, by the Economic, Transit, Health and Opium Committees and by our Disarmament Committees, the situation is not very satisfactory. Indeed, the further progress of our technical work would be a matter of some difficulty if this situation did not improve."

This is a matter which was brought to the attention of the British Government by certain important commercial interests. They pointed out that it was discouraging to those all over the world who were interested in commerce and

industry if admirable Conventions were drawn up by or under the auspices of the League and then months and even years elapsed before those Conventions were brought into effect. The result was, as they pointed out, a gradual diminution in the belief in the efficiency of the League and also the creation in the commercial and industrial world of that uncertainty which is, perhaps, the chief enemy of industrial and commercial prosperity. It was from that document that I obtained figures stating that, as regards eight Conventions dealing with these commercial subjects, there had been fifty-five signatures and only twenty-three ratifications; the result was, of course, that the Conventions had not come into force.

A more elaborate examination of the subject has revealed facts like the following: that to the Convention on International Waterways, which was concluded no less than five and a-half years ago, there were twenty-seven signatures and only eleven ratifications, and as regards the Protocol for the Mutual Recognition of Arbitration Clauses in Commercial Contracts — one of the most useful and, as I venture to think, important commercial achievements of the League — there were twenty-seven signatures and only twelve ratifications. I venture very respectfully to state to my colleagues that we should do well to devote some of our energy to finishing what we have so well begun, even before and in preference to undertaking new responsibilities and work.

These remarks do not apply only to the commercial sphere. The Convention on the Traffic in Arms has not been ratified by a single one of the Powers which signed that Convention; thirty-one have signed it and thirty-five Powers have signed the Protocol dealing with the employment of gas in warfare which is attached to that Convention. As regards the Opium Convention, in which I take some personal interest because I happened to be one of the representatives of my Government at the Conference which drew it up, though there have been thirty-four signatures there have been so far only six ratifications, which — I may perhaps be pardoned for remarking — all come from the British Empire.

I therefore venture to propose that we should adopt the following resolution — or at any rate send it for consideration by a Committee :

"The Assembly :

"Observing with regret that many Conventions and agreements concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations have remained ineffective or have only come into force after undue delay owing to the difficulty experienced in securing a sufficient number of ratifications by the signatories;

"Desires to call the attention of the Governments of all States Members of the League to the necessity for taking all measures in their power to facilitate and expedite the ratification in all cases of Conventions and agreements signed in their name ;

"And decides to invite the Council of the League to examine the possibility of appointing a Committee to consider whether any general understanding could be promoted that would secure rapid and if possible simultaneous action by signatories of such Conventions and agreements."

I come now to the last topic on which I desire to say a few words to the Assembly and which is a topic of some delicacy and difficulty.

On more than one occasion recently, questions have been raised concerning what is and what is not the proper sphere of activities of the League of

Nations. This is an exceedingly difficult subject and one, I think, of very great practical importance. If you turn to the Covenant you will see that the object of the League of Nations is to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security, and the Assembly and the Council are told that they can deal with any matter within the sphere of action of the League affecting the peace of the world. I think everyone will agree that those indications of the sphere of action of the League are necessarily and properly, as I think, rather vague in their terms.

Different opinions may well be held as to what are proper subjects for international co-operation. Some subjects, of course, are quite clear. The question of armaments is obviously international, and one which affects the peace of the world. For many years — for a hundred years or more — the slave trade has been regarded by everyone as an international matter, and, as a consequence, slavery also, since it will never be possible to put an end to the slave trade unless an end is put to slavery. Labour conditions, I agree, do not constitute a matter with which this Assembly deals directly, for they fall within the competence of the International Labour Office; but here, again, it is obvious that the conditions of labour in one country have an important repercussion on the conditions of labour in another, and that this matter therefore is one which quite properly calls for international consideration. Broadly speaking, the same is true of all hygienic matters. Bad health conditions in one country affect or may affect the health of its neighbours and, through its neighbours, all the countries of the world.

These topics, and there are many others, are evidently within the sphere of action of the League as requiring international co-operation, and with regard to which international co-operation can certainly be beneficial. Outside these matters, however, there is a very large number of others which, by gradations, are further and further away from the international sphere and more and more nearly approach the national sphere of activity of individual countries.

Very early in the history of the League it was said that, broadly speaking, the ordinary educational policy of each country was a matter for that country and that country alone to settle. Personally, I thought at the time, and still think, that this is too broad a proposition; and that there are, at any rate, some aspects of education which are unquestionably international, as, for instance, the proposal which we have adopted at this Assembly on more than one occasion that it is desirable that the youth of the world should be instructed in the principles and activities of the League of Nations. No doubt when we come to the subject I mentioned just now — the provision of swimming baths — it seems very difficult to attribute any special international aspect to the provision of swimming baths in the different countries. On the other hand, there are cases which excite immense sympathy in the minds of every one of us, such as the case of neglected children, the case of cruelty to animals, but regarding which it is, at any rate in my mind, somewhat doubtful whether they could justly be brought within the sphere of international action.

This is not an academic question, and I will explain in a moment why I think it is of great importance for the League and for its prosperity. I have no cut-and-dried remedy. I am going to move a motion merely asking that the matter be considered. If it were possible to lay down principles with greater precision, it might be that it would be desirable to set up some kind of machinery, some kind of Committee of Referees, to

which, on the application of any country, a special subject might be referred for advice as to whether it was of an international character or not.

Certainly, as far as I personally am concerned and as far as my Government is concerned, we have no desire whatever to restrict or to diminish the legitimate activities of the League. On the contrary, I have always preached (and there is nothing in my present position which prevents my continuing to preach) that the greater the activity of the League the greater will be its success, provided, of course, it really confines itself to international action. I am not in the least afraid of its doing too much international work. On the contrary, I would go further and I would say that as a broad principle (and without dealing with any specific cases) I believe it would be desirable to concentrate in Geneva, as far as it can be done, all the official international action taken in the world.

The existence of a number of international authorities and a number of international organisations is, in itself, a bad thing and causes, as I know from what people have said to me, disquiet and uncertainty amongst those who are affected by their activity. The more we can concentrate international action at Geneva the better I shall be pleased. But I do say, with great emphasis, that it is important that we should confine ourselves to really international action and that we should not be led by any argument, however powerful and however specious, to extend our activities beyond the international sphere.

I say this for two main reasons. In the first place, if we extend our sphere of action too widely, there is a danger that we may obscure, in the public mind, the chief objects for which the League of Nations exists. We exist to secure — and let us never forget it — international co-operation making for the peace of the world. It is a tremendous and august task, and one which we shall find will strain the whole powers of every one of us if we are to accomplish it properly. Do not let us allow ourselves for one moment to be diverted from or to be weakened in that task by any appeals to deal with matters which do not contribute to that supreme object.

Secondly — and this is the most important observation — we are faced with a very delicate task. In some respects we are bound to infringe and impinge upon national sovereignty; that is essential and is involved in the very existence of the Covenant, the very existence of an agreement that we will, in certain respects, submit ourselves to international restriction and agreement. It is of the utmost importance that, since we have to do this, since we have to run the risk of rousing national feelings against us, we should not do so unnecessarily or for reasons which are less than the supreme reason of the maintenance of peace and good relations between the nations of the world, because by so doing we may give occasion to our enemies to blaspheme and to add difficulties to our already difficult task. I am convinced that the future of the League depends very largely upon this.

How far can we enlist in the work of the League that immensely powerful motive amongst men, the motive of patriotism and national feeling? There is no essential contradiction between the League of Nations and patriotism of the most burning character. What is essential is to create in the breasts of the patriots of the world (who, after all, comprise some of the noblest of the human race) a new object and a new purpose of patriotism, namely, to excel in the work of peace and to ensure the prosperity of their own nation through the prosperity of humanity at large.

I venture, therefore, to move the following resolution:

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee to consider and report what questions are and what are not within the sphere of action of the League within the meaning of the Preamble and Articles 3 and 4 of the Covenant, especially with reference to the questions which are now being dealt with by the organs of the League or are proposed to be so dealt with."

The President :

Translation : The Assembly has before it the draft resolutions submitted by Viscount Cecil on behalf of the British delegation. These documents will be printed and distributed to the delegations before the Assembly decides upon the action to be taken. This decision will be taken at the close of to-morrow morning's meeting.

M. Guerrero, delegate of Salvador, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — To all who have closely followed the work of the League since its foundation, it is most reassuring to note the continual progress it has made.

Conducted systematically, with precision and with a true comprehension of the growing requirements of mankind, its activities have been gradually extended to all questions of a moral, political, economic or legal character which are of international interest.

The report presented by the Council to this seventh ordinary session of the Assembly gives a very accurate idea of the wide scope of the work accomplished during these last few months. The work of the Committee for the Progressive Codification of International Law, that of the technical organisations, that of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission — to quote only a few examples — would be sufficient to preserve intact the hope and faith which the different nations have placed in the League.

It seems inconceivable that the manifold activities of this institution should be, as it were, brought to a standstill by an obstacle so difficult to surmount, so tremendous that in very truth the whole fabric has been shaken by it.

The peril, ladies and gentlemen, must be resolutely faced. The only real remedy for a situation which has become so serious is "the salt of truth", to quote the text so aptly cited by the eminent Archbishop who preached the sermon at the opening of this Assembly.

For this, however, everyone must be allowed to speak his mind freely and in accordance with the dictates of his conscience, in an atmosphere of trust, disinterestedness, loyalty and devotion to the common weal; and, in so doing, must be cleared in advance of the charge of adding to the complications of the situation by destroying the more or less elastic and provisional compromises by which diplomacy endeavours to circumvent difficulties — and only too often fails to overcome them.

May I be permitted, then, in virtue of this right of freedom of speech, to indulge in a few brief observations on the supremely important question now before the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly.

Our League, which has been in the throes of a crisis since the beginning of March, has in the course of a few months experienced numerical and material losses and, most serious of all, a weakening of prestige. Two great States have withdrawn their valuable collaboration. Such are the facts. Let us now trace their origin.

One of the most eminent of men, one whose consummate worth and authority dominate this Assembly — I speak of M. Briand — declared in March that the League was suffering from "growing pains". Much as I admire the opinions of our eminent colleague, I am, to my regret, unable to agree with him here, and I would venture to point out that his diagnosis has never been confirmed, and that there is nothing to suggest the likelihood of its being confirmed in the future. If it were merely a matter of growing pains, all we should have to do would be to let it develop in its own way, leaving it to time to effect a cure. Unhappily, the roots of the evil lie deeper. The League is suffering from a congenital defect, a malformation dating from its very birth.

To extirpate the germ of the evil, we must strike at its root. We must not be afraid to attack the Covenant of the League, lest Article 4 should have the effect of destroying that principle of equality among the States Members of the League which forms the very basis of its existence.

What justification is there, in the present state of the comity of nations, for a situation in which the equality imposed by the Covenant on all Members of the League in regard to sacrifices, obligations and undertakings has no counterpart in absolute equality from the legal point of view?

What is the use of dwelling upon this constitutional defect? It is known to all; it may have been of use at the outset, when the Covenant was first drawn up, but it has since cost us the abstention or withdrawal of the Argentine Republic, Brazil and Spain, three nations unsparing in their devotion to the work of peace and solidarity on which our aims are set. This, I fear, may be only a beginning; this list, already of appreciable length, may become longer still if we persist in our error and fail to apply the energetic remedies that are called for now that the situation has been considerably aggravated by the events which have followed in such swift succession since the special session of the Assembly in March.

It is never too late to mend. Nothing is yet lost if only we speed up the work of readjustment that is to restore to the League the true equilibrium and the vigour essential to the accomplishment of its task. That task, I am glad to say, appeared to be proceeding most satisfactorily, but it has so far only been sketched in broad outline, and for its accomplishment, the unity of all the Members of the League — including those who have felt it their duty to absent themselves for a time — is a necessity so absolute as to constitute a *sine qua non*.

Let us admit, then, that the League, in following the path laid down for it in the Covenant, has strayed from its true aims.

It is obvious that the solution adopted by the Council is not calculated to eradicate the evil. On the contrary, it increases the evil, since it amounts simply to a widening of the inequality already existing between States. The time is past for expedients which may serve to deliver us from one difficulty but will not prevent us from falling into another.

Desperate diseases require desperate remedies. Since the hour of sacrifice has sounded, let us accept sacrifice willingly rather than wait until it is imposed upon us by the irresistible force of events.

Let us consider who should make this sacrifice. It certainly should be the States which, when war had laid Europe in ruins, resigned themselves, solely in the cause of peace, to a situation at variance with their democratic principles. Those States have already given their full quota of sacrifice.

The States which should make the great sacrifice are those for whose benefit there was created under the Covenant the situation that has brought about the present crisis — a crisis which, I would add, will assuredly be followed by others. I refer to the voluntary renunciation of permanent seats on the Council.

By this I am simply suggesting the only means — impossible of immediate fulfilment, perhaps, but not impracticable in the future — of settling the crisis in the League once and for all; and, in my opinion, this crisis cannot be solved by one of those provisional compromises to which modern diplomacy too often has recourse.

The President :

Translation : M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

M. Hambro (Norway) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Norwegian Government is in cordial sympathy with those feelings of gratitude for and content with the progress of the League of Nations and its growing competence in settling international disputes which have already been so eloquently expressed in the addresses delivered by the delegates of various nations. I can only add to their words of appreciation that my Government has followed with special interest the work of the Permanent Court of International Justice and has decided to renew for another period of ten years its acceptance of compulsory jurisdiction according to Article 36 of the Statutes of the Court.

There is one part of the work prepared or accomplished by the League during the past year to which the Norwegian Government attaches the very highest importance. I refer to the work so successfully begun by the special Committee for the Codification of International Law. This is a practical work of far-reaching influence tending to restrict the possibilities for international friction and to help and further international knowledge and understanding of the separate usages, traditions and laws of every country. I was glad to hear the illustrious delegate of the British Empire (Viscount Cecil) emphasise so strongly the work of this Committee. We congratulate the Committee on having started with the study of the important questions concerning territorial waters, because these questions have been waiting for international examination and touch the interests and problems of most States.

If I have a few remarks to make concerning the work of the Committee, it is not in a spirit of criticism but with a view to making the results of this important examination as complete and satisfactory as possible. I do it with the highest regard for the learned Rapporteur of the Committee whose authority we all recognise, and whose works on these questions we have studied with profit, and I do it with all due respect for the members of the Sub-Committee who have worked so thoroughly and successfully.

There are, however, countries which are not represented on the Committee, countries for whose very existence the questions of territorial waters are of the utmost importance, and foremost among such countries is Norway, with a longer and more broken coastline than any other European country and with a history from time immemorial indissolubly bound up with the sea and the gifts of the sea. The northern parts of Norway would hardly be inhabitable without the fisheries, and about 90 per cent of the population of these parts of the country are wholly or partly dependent on the territorial waters for their living. These questions, therefore, are followed with the closest attention

in Norway and with the conviction that they cannot be studied exhaustively from a lawyer's point of view only. It is necessary to study them also hydrographically, geographically and historically in order to understand the established rights of centuries, rights that cannot be infringed upon and which for a great proportion of the population of Norway represent a question of existence or non-existence.

The Norwegian Government is not at present prepared to frame any proposals, but would ask the Council and the special Committee to consider earnestly and sympathetically whether it would not be advisable and save time and trouble if countries particularly interested in such questions as fall under the examination of the Committee were given the opportunity to participate even in the preparatory work of codification.

This reflexion leads me to the problem of the composition of the Committees of the League in general and more especially of the permanent Committees.

In the opinion of the Norwegian Government, it would be natural to distribute the seats on those Committees more evenly among the Members of the League, if possible, under a system of rotation similar to that which was unanimously recommended for the elections to the Council by the Assembly in 1922 and 1923. The Norwegian Government attaches considerable importance to the carrying out of these recommendations, which ought already to have been made effective, and sincerely trusts that the Members of the Council will always act in the most scrupulous way upon the resolutions and recommendations of the Assembly, bearing in mind that the seats on the Council have been given them in trust by the Assembly in order to respect and uphold the wishes and the rights of the Assembly.

I was glad to hear the same views expressed so openly by the delegate of Persia yesterday, and I have listened with the greatest interest to the address delivered this morning by the delegate of Salvador. It follows from these remarks that the Norwegian delegation will support any attempt to make the system of elections more just and in accordance with the repeatedly expressed opinions of the Assembly, and will try to counteract any attempt to create a new and more marked classification of States. It will do this in the hope that it will not prove necessary to establish an instrument for the protection of minorities in the Assembly, and in the hope that all the actions and activities of the Assembly will be inspired by a spirit of confidence and openness, of independence and fearlessness, which will steadily grow stronger, and that the necessity or the temptation to sacrifice convictions on the altar of unanimity will occur more rarely. We are happy to find in the general report of the Secretariat ample proofs that such hopes are not unfounded.

20. — REFERENCE TO THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF QUESTIONS DEALING WITH THE REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS : DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Jonkheer Loudon, delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands) :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — What I have to say does not bear on the subject under

discussion, but refers to a matter which concerns the Third Committee.

The Secretariat has distributed to the delegations document A.32, consisting of extracts from documents A.6 and A.6 (a) (Annexes 2, 2 (a)), that is to say, the Report and Supplementary Report to the Seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly on the Work of the Council, on the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly.

This document contains all the requisite information to enable the Third Committee to discuss the questions placed on the Assembly's agenda under Item No. 20; these questions have already been referred to that Committee by a decision of the Assembly.

It would, however, be desirable for the Third Committee to be in a position to discuss other sections of this important document. I accordingly propose that the Assembly should adopt the following resolution:

"The Assembly decides to refer to the Third Committee all the portions of the Report and of the Supplementary Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat which deal with the reduction of armaments."

We have also received document A.47, containing the resolution adopted by the Council on September 4th, 1926, in regard to the preliminary draft Convention on the Control of the Private Manufacture of Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War, prepared by the Committee of

Enquiry and the Committee of the Council and submitted by the latter Committee to the Council.

Under this resolution the Council refers to the Assembly, for information, the preliminary draft already mentioned. It would accordingly be proper to refer document A.47 to the Third Committee, as it contains all the necessary information on the subject.

I propose, therefore, that the Assembly should adopt the following resolution:

"The Assembly decides to refer to the Third Committee M. Benes' report (approved by the Council on September 4th, 1926) on the draft Convention for the Control of the Private Manufacture of Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War, and the documents attached thereto."

I have no doubt that the Assembly will adopt these two draft resolutions.

The President:

Translation: Jonkheer Loudon, on behalf of the Netherlands delegation, has just submitted two draft resolutions for the reference of certain questions to the Third Committee. These draft resolutions will be printed and distributed to members of delegations, so that I shall be able, at the close of to-morrow morning's meeting, to ask the Assembly to take a decision on them.

The Assembly rose at 12.30 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1926, AT 10.30 A.M.

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21. — CREDENTIALS OF THE GERMAN DELEGATES: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CREDENTIALS.

The President :

Translation : The Chairman of the Committee on Credentials will read the report and submit the decisions of the Committee on the credentials of the German delegation.

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

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Committee instructed by the Assembly to examine the credentials of delegates met to-day at 10 o'clock in the Salle de la Réformation to examine the credentials of the German delegates to the Assembly.

The Committee has examined the credentials of the delegates of Germany signed by the President of the Reich and the Minister for Foreign Affairs. This document having been found in good and true form, the Committee considers that the delegates of the German Government to this Assembly have been duly accredited.

The President :

Translation : If nobody has any remarks to make, I will declare the conclusions of the report of the Committee on Credentials adopted.

The conclusions of the report were adopted.

The President :

Translation : The conclusions of the report being adopted, I invite the German delegates to take their seats.

(The German delegates took their seats in the Assembly.)

22. — WELCOME TO THE GERMAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — My rôle as President to-day is an easy one, since I have but to voice the unanimous sentiments of the Assembly in extending a warm welcome to the German delegates who have just taken their place amongst us.

This event is, for the League of Nations, both happy and memorable in a twofold sense.

In the first place, it marks a new step towards that universality to which the League is inevitably progressing, despite difficulties which we hope are only temporary.

Secondly, the essential object of the League is the maintenance of peace, and the admission of a great European Power is a happy omen for the peaceful future of the continent which has suffered most from war.

We have therefore the double good fortune to see the accomplishment of an act for which the League has never ceased to hope, and to see in it the prelude of new successes in its mission of peace. The preparations for this happy event were made last year, and this year, too, both within and without this hall, but its achievement was made possible by the will of this Assembly which, the day before yesterday, expressed its opinion with a unanimity the symbolic importance of which will be plain to all.

I am glad to see Germany take her rightful place amongst us as a great nation desirous of supporting our work for international security and understanding.

In extending a cordial invitation to the distinguished representatives of Germany to take part in our work, I welcome their presence as a new pledge for the success of international collaboration in the cause of peace.

M. Stresemann first delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

M. Stresemann (Germany), speaking in German :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The President of this High Assembly and the President of the Council of the League of Nations have been good enough to accord Germany a joyful welcome on her entry into the League, and in addressing you from this platform I feel it my first duty to express Germany's thanks to these two gentlemen and to the Assembly. Allow me at the same time to express our gratitude to the Swiss Government, which is now extending its traditional and generous hospitality to Germany as a Member of the League of Nations.

More than six years have passed since the League was founded. A long period of development was thus necessary before the general political situation rendered it possible for Germany to enter the League, and even in the present year great difficulties have had to be overcome before Germany's decision could be supplemented by the unanimous decision of the League. Far be it from me to revive matters which belong to the past. It is rather the task of the present generation to look to the present and to the future. I would only say this, that, although an event such as Germany's entry into the League is the outcome of a long preliminary process of development, yet that very fact constitutes perhaps a surer guarantee of its permanence and of its fruitful results.

To-day Germany enters a circle of States to some of which she has for decades been attached by unbroken ties of friendship, whereas others were allied against her during the Great War. It is surely an event of historical importance that Germany and these latter States are now brought together within the League of Nations in permanent and peaceful co-operation. It is a fact which indicates more clearly than any mere words or programmes that the League of Nations may in very truth be destined to give a new direction to the political development of mankind, and civilisation would be exposed to grave dangers indeed at the present time if the nations could obtain no assurance that they would be able to perform in peaceful and untroubled co-operation the tasks which their destiny has assigned to them.

The catastrophic events of a terrible war have recalled the conscience of mankind to a consideration of the tasks which confront the different nations. In many countries we have witnessed the ruin of whole classes of the population, who are not only valuable, but intellectually and economically indispensable to the life of the nation. We are beholding the birth of new forms of economic life, and the disappearance of older ones. We see how economic life is overleaping the old national boundaries and creating new forms of international co-operation. The old economic situation of the world had no statutes, no programmes, to guide its co-operation. This co-operation was based on the unwritten law of the traditional exchange of goods between the different continents. It must be our task to restore that exchange. If we really desire the economic development of the world to proceed undisturbed, we shall not obtain that end by erecting barriers between the countries, but rather by bridging over the gulfs which hitherto have separated the different national economic systems.

But there is something which far transcends in importance all material considerations, namely, the souls of the nations themselves. There is just now a mighty stirring of ideas among the nations of the world. We see some that adhere to the principle of self-contained national unity

and reject international understanding, because they do not wish to see all that has been developed on the basis of nationality superseded by a more general conception of humanity. Now I hold that no country which belongs to the League of Nations thereby surrenders any of its national individuality. The Divine Architect of the world has not created mankind as a homogeneous whole. He has made the nations of different races; He has given them their mother-tongue as the sanctuary of their soul; He has given them countries with different characteristics as their homes. But it cannot be the purpose of the Divine world-order that men should direct their supreme national energies against one another, thus ever thrusting back the general progress of civilisation. He will serve humanity best who, firmly rooted in the faith of his own people, develops his moral and intellectual gifts to the utmost, thus overstepping his own national boundaries, and serving the whole world, as has been done by those great men of all nations whose names are writ large in the history of mankind.

Thus the ideals of nationality and of humanity may unite on the intellectual plane, and they may similarly unite in pursuit of political ideals, provided that there is the will to make common progress in this field.

The political outcome of these ideals is a moral obligation on the part of the different countries to devote their efforts to peaceful co-operation. This moral obligation also applies to the great moral problems of humanity. No other law should be applied to their solution than that of justice.

The co-operation of the peoples in the League of Nations must and will lead to just solutions for the moral questions which arise in the conscience of the peoples. The most durable foundation of peace is a policy inspired by mutual understanding and mutual respect between nation and nation.

Even before her entry into the League, Germany endeavoured to promote this friendly co-operation. The action which she took and which led to the Pact of Locarno is a proof of this, and as further evidence there are the arbitration treaties which she has concluded with almost all her neighbours. The German Government is resolved to persevere unswervingly in this line of policy, and is glad to see that these ideas, which at first met with lively opposition in Germany, are now becoming more and more deeply rooted in the conscience of the German people. Thus the German Government may well speak for the great majority of the German race when it declares that it will wholeheartedly devote itself to the duties devolving upon the League of Nations.

During the past six years the League has already taken in hand a substantial portion of these tasks, and has done most valuable work. The German delegation does not possess the experience which the members here assembled have acquired. We believe, however, that, as regards the new work which lies before us, the subjects dealt with first should be those in which the individual nations can do most by combining in joint institutions. Among other institutions which the League has created, we have in mind the World Court, which is the outcome of efforts made to establish an international legal order.

Furthermore, the efforts made towards disarmament are of particular importance for the consolidation of organised international peace. The complete disarmament of Germany was stipulated by the Treaty of Versailles as a preliminary to general disarmament. It is to be hoped that practical steps will be taken to further this

general disarmament, and thereby furnish evidence that the lofty ideals of the League of Nations already contain within them the seeds of a great positive force.

Germany's relations to the League are not, however, confined exclusively to the possibilities of co-operation in general aims and issues. In many respects the League is the heir and executor of the Treaties of 1919. Out of these Treaties there have arisen in the past, I may say frankly, many differences between the League and Germany. I hope that our co-operation within the League will make it easier in future to discuss these questions. In this respect mutual confidence will, from a political point of view, be found a greater creative force than anything else. It would, indeed, be incompatible with the ideals of the League to group its Members according to whether they are viewed with sympathy or with antipathy by other Members.

In this connection I reject most emphatically the idea that the attitude hitherto adopted by Germany in matters concerning the League of Nations has been dictated by such sympathies or antipathies. Germany desires to co-operate on the basis of mutual confidence with all nations represented in the League or upon the Council.

The League has not yet attained its ideal, which is to include all the Powers of the world. Germany's entry into the League does, it is true, constitute an important step towards its universality. But we desire at the same time to express our deep regret that Brazil has manifested her intention to withdraw from it. We regret this more particularly because we believe that if the League is to be world-wide, one continent alone should not have a predominant influence within it. Furthermore, we share with the other Members of the League the firm hope that we may retain the valuable co-operation of Spain. We are convinced that the appeal which has been addressed to Spain by all the Powers will reveal to that great country and its people how detrimental it would be to the high ideals of which Spain has been a leading champion if she were long absent from Geneva at this period.

Universality alone can protect the League against the danger of using its political forces for other purposes than in the service of peace. Only on the basis of a community of all nations, without distinction and on a footing of perfect equality, can mutual assistance and justice become the true guiding stars of the destiny of mankind. Upon this foundation alone can that principle of freedom be set for which nations and individuals alike are constantly striving. Germany is firmly resolved to found her policy upon these lofty ideals. To all the nations assembled here we can apply the words of that great thinker who said that we belong to a generation which strives from darkness towards the light. It is our fervent hope that the tasks of the League may be fulfilled on the basis of the noble conceptions of peace, freedom and unity. So shall we draw nearer the ideals to which we aspire, and it is the firm resolve of Germany to assist wholeheartedly in that task.

The President :

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

M. Briand :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen— I sincerely thank my colleagues on the General Committee of the Assembly for having allowed the delegate of France to follow the distinguished representative of Germany on this platform, to welcome the German delegation on its entry into this Assembly and to assure you that we are resolved to

collaborate with that delegation, cordially and sincerely, in the work of international pacification. My colleagues on the General Committee doubtless realised—and I thank them for it—that the presence of the delegate of France on this platform at this moment, after the eloquent and lofty words which you have just heard, would perhaps do something to emphasise the character of this occasion and make clear its significance, its consequences and all the hopes which the peoples of the world rightly centre in it.

Those who indulge in irony and detraction at the expense of the League of Nations, who daily cast doubt upon its soundness and time after time proclaim that it is doomed to perish, what will they think if they are present at this meeting? Is it not a moving spectacle, and a specially ennobling and comforting one, when we think that only a few years after the most frightful war which has ever devastated the world, when the battlefields have hardly ceased to reek with blood, the peoples, the same peoples who were hurled in combat against each other, are meeting in this peaceful assembly and are expressing to each other their common will to collaborate in the work of world peace?

What a renewal of hope for the nations! From this day on how many mothers will look at their children without feeling their hearts contract with fear.

Peace for Germany and for France: that means that we have done with the long series of terrible and sanguinary conflicts which have stained the pages of history. We have done with the black wells of mourning for sufferings that can never be appeased, done with war, done with brutal and sanguinary methods of settling our disputes. True, differences between us still exist, but henceforth it will be for the judge to declare the law. Just as individual citizens take their difficulties to be settled by a magistrate, so shall we bring ours to be settled by pacific procedure. Away with rifles, machine-guns, cannon! Clear the way for conciliation, arbitration, peace!

Countries do not go down to history as great solely through the heroism of their sons on the battlefield or the victories that they gain there. It is a far greater tribute to their greatness, if, faced with difficulties, in the midst of circumstances in which anger all but drowns the voice of reason, they can stand firm, be patient and appeal to right to safeguard their just interests.

Gentlemen of the German delegation, our nations need give no further proof of their strength or of their heroism. Both nations have shown their prowess on the battlefield, and both have reaped an ample harvest of military glory. Henceforth they may seek laurels in other fields.

For many months now M. Stresemann and myself have been working together at the same task. He had every confidence; so had I. I do not regret that confidence; I trust that he also will have no occasion to regret it. With the help of a man whose noble and generous spirit and sincerity are known to you all—I refer to my colleague and friend the first delegate of the British Empire, Sir Austen Chamberlain—we have worked together. Both of us needed all our courage in our endeavour to reach a goal which was then so distant. As the crow flies, Locarno and Geneva are not far distant, but the road between them is by no means easy. It has to pass round many obstacles, and since we all admire faith when it moves mountains, we should certainly feel pride in the faith that has brought the Lake of Locarno so near to the Lake of Geneva.

If at the outset we had allowed ourselves to lose heart; if, influenced by the expressions of doubt, hesitation and mistrust emitted by some in our countries, we had gone no further, all would

have been at an end. Far from taking a further step towards peace, the seeds of renewed mistrust would have been sown between countries already divided.

I have perhaps the right, speaking from this platform, to feel a special pride in having taken part in to-day's manifestation, for I have the great satisfaction of seeing in it the outcome of a personal effort — although that, of course, is a small matter — and above all I foresee that there will henceforth be no possibility of a repetition of the terrible events which we have witnessed in recent years.

Before we could arrive at the stage we have reached to-day, certain difficult problems had to be settled by means of private negotiations. In point of fact, these negotiations were recommended by previous Assemblies, which displayed remarkable political insight and realised that, if certain *rapprochements* were not made outside the League of Nations, if certain concessions could not be obtained from both sides, if certain conversations could not be held in preparation of solutions to be submitted to you, the task we were jointly pursuing would never be accomplished.

At the last Assembly, we came very close to the danger-spot. I am glad now that at the time I never doubted of the final result and that it was I who caused the special Assembly to adopt the motion which enabled the German representatives to leave Geneva in the certainty that morasly Germany's application had been unanimously accepted by the Assembly.

In the interval we discussed matters, and we prepared for solutions by conciliation. This kind of work, I hasten to add, does not partake of the true spirit of the League of Nations. In the League everything must be done in public and in collaboration with all the nations belonging to it. I can now proclaim, with the certainty that I shall not be contradicted by my friends, that in future it will no longer be necessary to resort to proceedings of this nature.

All the Members of the League of Nations, great and small, without distinction, must collaborate with a view to attaining the objects laid down in the Covenant.

If, during these difficult times through which we have passed, some of you have felt perhaps that it was our intention not to admit you to a share in our decisions, let me persuade you that you have been mistaken. No one is more firmly resolved than the delegates of France that in future the work of the League shall be done in the light of day and with the collaboration of all its Members.

I have no fault to find with the remarks made by the representative of Germany concerning his conception of collaboration with us on the League. As regards the delegate of France, I may say that the German delegation can be sure of finding in him a loyal collaborator.

The fact that we are both present in this Assembly and that, on the plane of the ideal, we can hold communion with one another does not destroy existing obstacles. Such obstacles still exist, as you, Sir, so tactfully indicated. Of this fact I am fully aware. M. Stresemann and I, each in our respective countries, are in a position which enables us to perceive those obstacles, and the mere fact that he has left the Wilhelmstrasse and I the Quai d'Orsay, to meet here in the fair city of Geneva does not mean that these difficulties have disappeared through the good-will manifested in our words.

It is sufficient, however, if both of us, voicing deep-rooted feeling in our countries — and I

can assure you that it is the feeling of my country — have the will to meet these various difficulties, firmly resolved to settle them by conciliatory means. That is enough to prevent any dispute between us from becoming an armed conflict.

It is especially those peoples who have not always been in agreement who have most need of the League of Nations: for, if it is true that there may be some divine plan whereby the nations are prevented from making war on one another, M. Stresemann will readily agree that, during the long years of the past, this plan has been singularly disregarded. I should like to see it applied from to-day onwards, and you may be sure that I will do nothing to prevent it. I simply wish to say this: If you are here as a German and only as a German, and if I am here as a Frenchman and only as a Frenchman, agreement will not be easy. But if we come here, not forgetting our respective countries, yet as citizens sharing in the universal work of the League, all will be well, and we shall attain spiritual communion with our colleagues in the atmosphere peculiar to Geneva.

You said, Sir, that you were inexperienced; that will not be for long. You possess intuition, the statesman's supreme quality — this your speech has clearly proved — and you have the sensitive perception which enables you to realise the spirit of the League.

I have often arrived at Geneva, or in some other town where the Council of the League was sitting, with the helpless feeling of being at grips with problems impossible of solution and confronted with the comments of the Press and of politicians which sometimes serve to render them more obscure. On such occasions, I have often said to myself that we should separate without coming to an agreement or finding a solution. But a solution has always been found, because, directly we were seated opposite one another, under the safeguard of the Covenant, infected by the spirit of the place, ennobled in one another's eyes by our great purpose, realising the moral responsibility which weighed upon us not only toward our individual nations but the whole world, we readjusted our minds, we made a supreme effort, and at the most critical moment, just when a solution appeared to be escaping us for ever, we were able, by a kind of miracle which I will not attempt to explain, to reach an agreement, to the amazement of all and particularly of those who perhaps had not desired the success of our endeavours.

But such a result could only be attained upon one condition, which I am now going to put before you. It is a condition which applies no less to myself than to you all, for I, like any other statesman, am not strong enough to resist committing that kind of error. I have in the past been guilty of many such errors, and I trust that what I am going to say will be taken not as advice but largely as a confession.

There are two spirits in which delegates may come to Geneva: the objective spirit and the fighting spirit. If the League takes on the semblance of a kind of tourney; if, under the stimulus of polemical debates or actuated by an overheated national sense of pride, we come here as champions to fight, with the desire to gain the perilous successes of prestige, then all will be spoilt. Victories of prestige bring no result save in appearance. Think of the havoc they have wrought in the past! Prestige stimulates the imagination, aggravates selfish interests, urges States to feverish demonstrations of national pride and incites them to oppose the statesmen, who then lose the guiding rein of reason and the power to find moderate solutions. It is impossible for statesmen, under

Such conditions to work in a spirit of conciliation. They face one another like wrestlers in the ring, with their peoples eagerly looking on and asking which is going to throw the other. That is the spirit of war; it is a spirit which must not exist — least of all in the League.

For my part I promise to do my best to avoid bringing this spirit here, and I count on the intelligence, the pacific spirit and the lofty sentiments of the German delegates to do the same.

If we are egged on against each other, if we are urged in interviews and speeches to oppose each other, we must put aside all such temptations; let us thrust them far from us! That is the road of blood, the road of the past, covered with the dead, the road of mourning, of destruction and disaster. It is not our road.

Henceforth our road is to be one of peace and progress. We shall win real greatness for our countries if we induce them to lay aside their pride, if we persuade them to sacrifice certain of their own desires in the service of world-peace. This sacrifice will not diminish, it will increase their prestige.

When Europe has regained its economic and moral equilibrium, when the peoples realise their security, they will then be able to cast away the heavy burdens imposed by the dread of war, they will be able to work together to improve their respective positions. There will arise at last a European spirit which will not be born of war, and will for that reason be nobler, loftier and more worthy of admiration.

It is for us to make this effort. It is easy to blame the peoples, but it is generally their leaders who are to blame. It is they who should know how to control themselves, who should have a proper understanding of events and should always interpret them in a spirit favourable to efforts of conciliation.

Arbitration! That word is now at the height of its prestige and its power. Arbitration treaties are increasing; nation after nation is promising to abjure war and to accept intermediaries. Peace is making its way through all these undertakings. The spirit of the League is at the root of them; and for that reason all nations should devote themselves heart and soul to the League's defence. It should be sheltered from all attacks and placed above all other considerations.

With the League goes Peace! Without it, the menace of war and blood from which the peoples have suffered too long!

This day should be commemorated with a white stone. The words of collaboration which Germany and France have just exchanged in a like spirit of sincerity should be marked with a white stone — and for one will never change the colour of that stone.

And now, apologising for having presumed upon your patience so long, may I say that the League

has to-day, by the entry of Germany, made another step towards its object—universality. Although this is a cause for rejoicing, our joy is darkened by the fact that two great nations of the League are no longer with us.

I endorse your remarks both as regards Brazil and Spain. These two great countries were deeply imbued with the spirit which animates us all; they have rendered many services to the League in difficult circumstances. It is therefore not surprising that even our joy at to-day's event should be tinged with regret at their absence. But we do not give up hope, and I am deeply convinced that soon we shall see the representatives of Spain and Brazil among us once again.

The League is not going back; its future will be one of constant expansion. To-day it has taken one step forward; to-morrow it will take another. Our presence, both yours and ours, is of great significance.

I am glad to have been able to take part in this event. It will, I am sure, take a great place in history. It is for us to ensure that no imprudence on the part of any of us will endanger the hopes of the peoples of the world.

The President:

Translation: Ladies and gentlemen — Sharing as I do the deep emotion with which you have listened to the last two speakers, I am convinced that the Assembly will wish me to convey our thanks to M. Stresemann and M. Briand and to assure them that their sincere and touching words have reached our inmost hearts.

It was indeed a moving spectacle to see the delegates of Germany and France mount the same platform, animated by the same desire to proclaim their deep faith and unshakable conviction in the future of the League!

Their words, I am convinced, will prove a determining factor not only in the work to be accomplished here, but also in the whole future of this great international association.

Sir Austen Chamberlain (British Empire):

I beg to move that the speeches which you, Mr. President, have addressed to us from the Presidential chair and the speeches of the honourable representatives of Germany and France be printed verbatim in the Assembly Journal.

The President:

Translation: I take your applause to mean that the Assembly has adopted the proposal of the first delegate of the British Empire.

I think that, in view of the deep emotion we have all experienced, it would be inopportune to continue the discussion of the agenda at this morning's meeting. I propose, therefore, to adjourn until this afternoon. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly rose at 12.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

EIGHTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th, 1926, AT 3.30 P.M.

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

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the continuation of the general discussion of the Report on the Work of the Council, on the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly.

Mr. J. G. Latham, first delegate of Australia, will address the Assembly.

The Honourable J. G. Latham (Australia) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In the first place I desire, on behalf of Australia, the country which I have the honour to represent, to associate myself with the sentiments expressed this morning on the occasion of the entry of

Germany into the League of Nations. This morning a great step was taken towards the universality of the League — a step which many have said was impossible. It has, however, been accomplished. The unanimous desire to receive Germany into the League is inspired by the faith and the hope that Germany will work with the Members of the League for the accomplishment of the ideals for the promotion of which the League was formed.

Many will remember that during the war in France millions of men and women looked forward to peace and happiness *après la guerre*. In the words of M. Briand this morning : "*Plus de guerres*". It is the greatest hope of mankind to-day that this statement may prove to be true. The events of this Assembly, marked as they have been by the surrender or sacrifice of certain ambitions in order to attain unanimity, in order to reach an agreement, help to justify the hope that the statement of M. Briand, supported as it was by the statement of the representative of Germany (a statement which is also a prophecy), may be realised in the world of fact as well as in the realm of aspiration and hope. The possibility of attaining the ideals of the League depends in the judgment of most, if not all, who are present here to-day upon the League pursuing its work in accordance with the principles for which it stands.

It is difficult after the events of this morning to return to the ordinary work of the day, but that I conceive to be the proper duty of those who are here representing their countries upon the League. I therefore make no apology for resuming the debate upon the work of the Council and of the Secretariat during the past year.

The report before us is a record of useful activities constituting an effective reply to any persons who would suggest that the League is not worthy of support. I propose to deal briefly this afternoon with three subjects only. In the first place, I propose to say something on the subject of the International Economic Conference. Secondly, I propose to make a small

practical suggestion which I venture to hope may facilitate the work of the League. Thirdly, I propose to make some remarks upon the question of disarmament and certain associated subjects.

The peoples of Australia are very interested in the proposal to hold an International Economic Conference. They regard it with interest, but also, I am bound to say, with some degree of concern. I refer to this question in order that, if there be any misunderstanding, it may be dispelled in the interests of the League and of the Members of the League.

In the first place, it is necessary to understand exactly what the present position is. This matter was initiated by a resolution of the Assembly passed on September 24th, 1925, which remitted to the Council the question of the desirability of holding an International Economic Conference. That resolution did not itself determine that a conference should be held, but it left the convening of the Conference under the auspices of the League to be a matter for subsequent decision by the Council. The Council then considered the matter and passed a resolution appointing a Preparatory Committee for the purpose of preparing and collecting such economic information as would be useful if the Economic Conference were held. There was, however, no definitive decision of the Council to hold a conference, and there has not been, I venture to suggest, an authoritative description by the Council of the nature and the scope of the Conference which it is proposed to hold.

It is true that the Economic Committee which reported to the Council had a very definite idea of both the nature and the scope of this Conference, because in its report the Committee made the following statement :

"In response to the request made to it in connection with the composition of the Preparatory Committee, the Economic Committee desires to point out that the membership of such a body must depend essentially upon the nature, composition and aims of the Conference itself.

"The Economic Committee has accordingly assumed that the Conference would consist of persons having commercial, industrial, and economic qualifications, who would be appointed by, but not responsible to, their Governments, and whose object in meeting would be to discuss matters with complete freedom and not to draw up conventions.

"On this assumption the Economic Committee considers that the composition of the Preparatory Committee as proposed by the French Government answers, on the whole, to the duties allotted to that Committee and to the nature of the proposed Conference. The Committee feels, however, bound to offer the following observations :

"It desires to emphasise its entire agreement with the view taken in the French memorandum that the members of the Preparatory Committee should not be regarded as Government delegates. It also thinks that any members of technical organisations of the League who may take part should sit as experts and should not be hampered by instructions from the technical organisations to which they belong, though they would, of course, keep those organisations informed of the progress of the Preparatory Committee's work."

Again, in taking its decision, the Council approved the report of the Rapporteur, which contained the following statement :

"One point in respect of which there appears to be unanimous agreement, and on which I feel sure it is essential to insist, is this : it would seem that the Conference is not to have a strictly Government character and that it is not to be composed of responsible delegates invested with full powers for the conclusion of conventions; it is intended rather to organise a general consultation in the course of which, as at the Financial Conference at Brussels, the various programmes and doctrines may be freely exposed without the freedom of discussion being restricted by any immediate necessity to transform the conclusions of the Conference into international engagements.

"The Council will, in any case, have to consider this point before taking a definite decision as to the convening of the Conference after receipt of the Preparatory Committee's report, but I have thought it necessary to mention it at once since it may be an important factor in determining the scheme of work of the Preparatory Committee itself".

The particular point which I desire to make is this — that the Council has not yet taken any decision upon these questions and, in view of the nature of the provisional recommendations of the Preparatory Committee, it is important that the Council should arrive at that decision as quickly as possible.

There is a certain fear that the Conference may feel itself entitled to make recommendations, upon which the League may be asked to take action, regarding questions many of which are essentially domestic in character; it is very desirable, therefore, that the Council should, as soon as possible, make a declaration upon the scope and nature of the suggested Conference.

Reference to the list of matters which the Preparatory Committee has under consideration as potential subjects of enquiry shows that they include, among others, questions of tariffs, the question of protection and free trade, more particularly the question of preferential tariffs, selling organisations, State trading, bounties, the organisation of internal trade and commerce in relation to the utility of middlemen and similar subjects, and various questions affecting migration. I venture to ask, therefore, for the consideration by the Council at an early date of the scope and nature of the Conference.

In the meantime, information upon these problems will be collected and it may be that matters will be allowed to drift in such a way that it will be assumed that all these problems are to become subjects of enquiry by the League of Nations. Upon a number of the matters to which I have referred, political opinion within the various countries of the world is acutely divided, and I suggest that it would be an error for the League to hold a conference of such a character that the League would run the risk of becoming associated with one side or the other in any form of domestic controversy.

The work of the League, as Viscount Cecil suggested yesterday afternoon, is marked out for it, and it is in the true interests alike of the League and of the world that it should, whilst doing that work, confine itself to the legitimate functions which it has under the Covenant.

To make a complete study of these questions would occupy many years, because the conditions and circumstances in every country vary greatly. In Australia, before we impose a protective duty, the matter is sent for enquiry to a Tariff Board, and sometimes many months are occupied in examining a single industry. In the same way,

we have a Development and Migration Commission, which is charged with the duty of considering the economic development of the country. In this case, again, the problems will undoubtedly occupy a considerable time in detailed study before action can be taken.

I venture, therefore, to ask for a definite decision upon the nature and scope of the Conference, in accordance with the principles that the Conference should be a conference of experts as recommended by the Economic Committee, that it should not be a conference of representatives of Governments as such, and in accordance with the further principle that the League will best serve its own interests, and therefore the interests of the world, by avoiding domestic questions which are not truly international in character.

I come now to a relatively small matter upon which I desire to make a practical suggestion for action by the League. There is no formal document in the world to which reference is so frequently made as the Covenant of the League of Nations. The Covenant is now presented in a form which is unsuited for ready and convenient reference. Some of its articles are lengthy and contain many paragraphs. Article 15, I think, contains ten paragraphs; Article 22 contains nine. My suggestion is that it would facilitate reference to the Covenant and would accordingly in some measure facilitate the work of the League if the paragraphs of the articles were numbered. Accordingly, I propose that the First Committee be requested to consider and to report to the Assembly upon the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant in all copies of the Covenant published by the League. This is not, I conceive, an amendment to the Covenant; a direction to the printer of the League's publications will be sufficient. I suggest, however, that it ought to be done and by the proper authority.

Finally, I wish to speak shortly on the subject of disarmament. Disarmament is one of the principal objects of the League. If the League fails to achieve results in this direction, it is difficult to see how it can effectively attain its object of securing peace.

It is the general view at present that the subjects of arbitration, security and disarmament are inseparably linked together and that no one of them can be solved unless the others are simultaneously solved. At this Assembly these questions are again under consideration. The League has already explored — unfortunately without success — the possibility of general agreements such as those embodied in the draft Treaty of Mutual Assistance and in the Protocol. In view of the failure to secure general assent, new methods of approach are being utilised.

I venture to make two observations upon this aspect of the matter. In the first place, all lawyers are familiar with the distinction between substantive law and the law of procedure. Procedural law merely provides the means for administering substantive law. It is substantive law which actually defines and specifies the rights and duties of those persons who are subject to the law. I suggest that arbitration belongs not to substantive law but to procedural or adjective law. Arbitration is merely a method of ascertaining facts, of declaring and of enforcing rights, which rights are derived from some other source than the arbitral procedure itself — that is to say, arbitration, speaking generally, operates as a means of procedure within a system of law, that system of law defining the rights and duties to which it is the function of the arbitrator to give effect. There are some special instances in which

individuals agree that they shall submit their differences to arbitration without any insistence upon legal right, so that the matter is simply left to the discretion of the particular arbitrator. In this case, everything depends upon his knowledge, impartiality and fairness. The effect of this procedure is that the matter is removed from the realm of law to that of the opinion of an individual or individuals. There are obvious objections to such a process, or rather there are obvious limitations of the utility of such a procedure in the case of important differences, especially when they involve questions of policy or of national aspiration.

What, then, is required? Something more than arbitration as a procedure is required. What is required is either a system of law or the making of agreements between nations. That system of law or those agreements will define rights and duties, and then there is an appropriate sphere for the exercise of the functions of an arbitrator. Accordingly, among the most important subjects with which the League may properly concern itself, a function which it is seeking to discharge, is the problem of the codification of international law. This is one of the fundamental questions upon which, I suggest, the future of the League depends, and, in particular, the effectiveness of any system of arbitration depends upon something of this character.

The second observation which I make upon arbitration is this. There are certain dangers attached to the institution of a system of arbitration in which the arbitrator, instead of applying a law derived from another source than himself, or interpreting and applying an agreement made by the parties, is left to act according to his own view of the case. The effect of such a procedure is that the arbitrator, instead of administering any form of law or applying any agreement, really makes a law, and we have found in Australia that when a body is set up for the purpose of determining industrial disputes without any rules being laid down as to the law according to which they are to be determined, the result is that, in order to invoke the jurisdiction of the tribunal, a dispute is created. We do not want to get into a similar position in international affairs, and the mere establishment of a tribunal for the settlement of international disputes incurs the risk of the creation of disputes in order that an appeal may be made to the jurisdiction of the international tribunal. In such a case the claimant has nothing to lose and may gain something. This, again, is another reason for the development of a complete system of international law and for the making of further agreements between the representatives of the nations.

A final word upon disarmament itself. The Preparatory Commission has prepared a questionnaire which attacks the problem of disarmament in analytical detail. No one will deny either the importance or the relevance of the issues raised, but what must strike any student of the report is the remarkable complication, the extraordinary complication, of the problem, and the difficulty, amounting, I should think, in some instances almost to impossibility, of securing any general agreement upon the answers to the questions proposed. I mention, by way of illustration, Question V (a) from the questionnaire, which is in these words:

“On what principle will it be possible to draw up a scale of armaments permissible to the various countries, taking into account particularly population, resources, geographical situation; length and nature of maritime communication, density

and character of the railways, vulnerability of the frontiers and of the important vital centres near the frontiers, the time required, varying with different States, to transform peace armaments into war armaments, the degree of security which, in the event of aggression, a State could receive under the provisions of the Covenant, or of separate engagements contracted towards that State."

That is one question out of seven. On reading these questions, we begin to wonder whether, if disarmament is to await a general agreement upon the answers to these questions, it is within the sphere of human vision. These questions, with their balancing and opposing consideration, remind me of the dialectical discussion upon the subject of whether to marry or not to marry, to be found in a famous French classic. The risks of an unfortunate marriage are so great if they are really thought out that the truly reflective man or woman would have missed all opportunities for marriage if he or she insisted upon fully accomplishing the process of reflection, and yet we do marry and we do take the risks. Surely, in the case of disarmament, something can be done even if the whole problem in all its aspects cannot be completely solved.

I hope that the Chairman of the Preparatory Commission will be able to make some reassuring statement to the Assembly upon this subject before it rises. The Treaty of Locarno, which we now hope is to come into effective operation, goes far to promote security in a large area of Europe. The peoples of the world await a definite step towards disarmament. The problem, ladies and gentlemen, is urgent. It cannot wait; it cannot be postponed indefinitely. Action depends upon the Governments of the peoples. I venture to appeal to the representatives of the Governments not to lose the opportunity by over-elaboration of discussion even of very necessary and relevant questions. Those who are prepared to lead the way on this question by action, in addition to discussion, will earn and fully deserve the undying gratitude of mankind.

The President :

Translation : A draft resolution has been submitted to the General Committee by the Australian delegation. The text will be published in the *Assembly Journal* so that Members may consider the action to be taken on it at the next meeting.

M. Ramek, delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

M. Ramek (Austria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The report of the Council of the League, which is on the agenda for discussion, gives us, by the variety of the subjects handled, an accurate picture of the complex and splendid work accomplished by the League of Nations.

The reconstruction of Austria, which has just been brought to a successful conclusion, is an integral part of this work and attaches my country to the League more than most by ties of sincere gratitude.

Further, I note with keen satisfaction that the Council has succeeded in completing its work by solving the very difficult questions of organisation which arose during the year.

From the bottom of my heart, I extend a very cordial welcome to the new Member of the Assembly, for Germany and Austria are peopled by one and the same race. The entry of Germany should mean a powerful reinforcement of the League, which, by the reconstruction of Austria, has shown how great is the vital force engendered by the united efforts of the nations.

In this solemn hour I would evoke the memory of those great leaders of mankind, of all civilised nations, who have worked together throughout the centuries to build up those ideas which are gradually assuming practical shape before our eyes. It cannot, I feel sure, imply any depreciation of the merits of the others if I single out by name one of the most illustrious sons of the country which has to-day taken its place in this Assembly.

I would recall those noble flights of genius which are scattered throughout the work of the great philosopher Kant. When designing the plan for his League of Peace, Kant saw on the horizon the outline of this noble institution, the League of Nations. The scaffolding erected by this prince of thought and other kindred minds in other countries was too far in advance of the political thought of the age. Their ideas had no practical result, but they have survived, championed and nurtured by devoted and persevering men throughout the world until that decisive hour when, after the disasters of the war, they took on lasting and solid shape in this town of Geneva.

The new League of Nations, like all human work, could hardly lay claim to perfection; it could not attain its ideal of universality, nor has it done so even to-day. The eastern and the western wings of our great building are still missing, but the central structure is now firmly set on its foundation; it can weather any passing storms that may arise, and is unshakable for all time.

The deep emotion we have felt should, I am sure, impel us to offer our thanks to all who have bent their efforts to the reconciliation of the nations and so paved the way for the historical event we have witnessed to-day.

It is with sincere joy that we warmly welcome the new Member of this Assembly.

As I have already stated, the advent of Germany must strengthen all that is sound and vital in the League. The principal source of its strength must, however, be confidence in the future — the very life-blood of the great League of Nations — that splendid confidence which has brought us through to this memorable day and which is alone capable of leading us to greater and ever greater heights of perfection for the good of mankind.

The President :

Translation : Viscount Ishii, first delegate of Japan, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Ishii (Japan) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Since the beginning of the year the League has had to deal with a particularly difficult question — the reorganisation of the Council. This time the evil came from within, and just as a physician, even the highest in the land, can seldom treat himself with ease, so the crisis through which the League has passed was full of incident and attended by moments of anxiety.

The League has invariably proved successful in solving the problems — sometimes of a delicate and difficult nature — with which it has been confronted during the past six years. We are happy to note that it has succeeded once again in overcoming a great difficulty, thus proving to the world that by good-will and a spirit of sacrifice a satisfactory solution can always be found.

It is a matter of deep regret, however, from the point of view of the universal extension of the League, that one of the great Latin-American republics should have announced its intention of withdrawing from our counsels. Public opinion in Japan has been profoundly impressed by the retirement of this great and friendly Power, which

has contributed so brilliantly to the work of the League. We fervently hope that her absence will not be more than temporary.

It is a matter of no less regret to me that Spain, whose co-operation in the work of the League has been so greatly appreciated, should, as it appears, have the intention of withdrawing from all active part in our work. We trust most sincerely that she will reconsider her decision at an early date.

To turn to Germany, I desire, on behalf of the Imperial Government and the Japanese nation, to offer her my hearty congratulations on her entry into the League with a permanent seat on the Council.

If, from the purely legal point of view, the Treaty of Versailles restored peace between the belligerents, Germany's entry into the League may be said to mark the happy re-establishment of political peace between former enemies. The Locarno agreements restored order in Europe, and now the participation of the Reich in this great institution will effectively assist in the work of general stabilisation throughout the world. With Germany's entry into the League, the spirit of suspicion and antagonism will give place to a spirit of trustful and brotherly co-operation, and with this new circumstance the League's work will become more normal and regular, more solid and durable.

Now that the incident of the organisation of the Council is happily closed, we must devote ourselves untiringly to ensuring the development of the League along sound lines.

Suggestions have been advanced from various quarters with regard to its future. One of these contemplates the establishment of several Leagues on a continental basis, the head organisation at Geneva being retained as a co-ordinating and recording centre. All international questions would thus be referred to these new continental Leagues. In my opinion, this suggestion should be put aside. There is the danger that, with several continental Leagues in existence, misunderstanding, suspicion, competition and even intrigue might gradually develop. Inter-continental difficulties, should they arise, would be the more alarming in that they would cover a far wider field than difficulties between individual States. Continental bodies of the kind proposed, instead of contributing to world peace, would give rise to grave perils and new antagonisms.

In a general manner, groups formed on a continental basis or on the basis of religion or race are, in our opinion, by no means to be encouraged, since they would necessarily have a sectarian or regional tendency, however praiseworthy their original purpose.

True world peace can only be achieved after every barrier erected upon continental, religious or racial considerations has been broken down.

I am firmly convinced that the task of the League is to conciliate and bring into harmony the various sentiments and interests existing in the different parts of the globe, and to facilitate and promote cordial co-operation between the different States, the different continents and the different races. If our faith in the League is unshakable, it is because the League, instead of dividing mankind, seeks to unite it. It is because the Covenant constitutes a great charter of international concord between the civilised peoples of every continent.

In conclusion, I wish to proclaim my conviction that our one aim and purpose should be to consolidate, expend and intensify on sound and general lines the development of the League and its organisation as it now exists at Geneva.

It is in this spirit that Japan, the Japanese Government and the Japanese people will devote themselves loyally to the work of the League, proud to join hands with all their friends in Asia, Europe and America.

24. — REFERENCE TO THE THIRD COMMITTEE OF QUESTIONS DEALING WITH THE REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS : ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION : COMMUNICATIONS BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : May I remind the Assembly of the proposal I made, at the end of yesterday's meeting, in regard to the draft resolutions submitted by the Netherlands and British delegations. These drafts have been published in the *Journal* of the Assembly and have also been specially distributed to delegates, so that you have now had an opportunity of becoming familiar with them.

I also said that I should submit the necessary suggestions at the end of to-day's meeting in regard to the action to be taken on those draft resolutions.

I will first remind you of the terms of the resolutions submitted by the Netherlands delegation. They read as follows :

1. "The Assembly decides to refer to the Third Committee all the portions of the Report and of the Supplementary Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat which deal with the reduction of armaments."

2. "The Assembly decides to refer to the Third Committee M. Benes' report (approved by the Council on September 4th, 1926) on the draft Convention for the Control of the Private Manufacture of Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War, and the documents attached thereto."

I propose that the documents mentioned in these resolutions should be referred to the Third Committee.

If no one has any objection, I shall regard this proposal motion as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

25. — RATIFICATION OF THE AGREEMENTS AND CONVENTIONS CONCLUDED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE PREAMBLE AND ARTICLES 3 AND 4 OF THE COVENANT : REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : We next come to two draft resolutions submitted by the British delegation, the first of which reads as follows :

"The Assembly :

"Observing with regret that many Conventions and agreements concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations have remained ineffective, or have only come into force after undue delay, owing to the difficulty experienced in securing a sufficient number of ratifications by the signatories ;

"Desires to call the attention of the Governments of all States Members of the League to the necessity for taking all measures in their power to facilitate and expedite the ratification in all cases of Conventions and agreements signed in their name;

"And decides to invite the Council of the League to examine the possibility of appointing a committee to consider whether any general understanding could be promoted that would secure rapid and, if possible, simultaneous action by the signatories of such Conventions and agreements."

The second draft resolution submitted by the British delegation is as follows :

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a committee to consider and report what

questions are and what are not within the sphere of action of the League within the meaning of the Preamble and Articles 3 and 4 of the Covenant, especially with reference to the questions which are now being dealt with by the organs of the League or are proposed to be so dealt with."

In accordance with custom, I propose that these two draft resolutions should be first referred to the Agenda Committee, which will perhaps be good enough to meet as soon as possible, so as to present suggestions on the action to be taken in regard to them.

If no one has anything to say, I shall regard my proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

The Assembly rose at 5.5 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

NINTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th, 1926, AT 3.30 P.M.

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

The President:

Translation: Before turning to the agenda of the meeting, I should like to read you the following communication.

The General Committee, at its meeting held on the morning of September 13th, discussed various measures to help the President to maintain order during the plenary meetings of the Assembly.

In particular, the General Committee desired that the attention of the Assembly should again be called to its previous decision, which was brought to the notice of the delegations through the *Assembly Journal*.

This decision, as you know, was to the effect that the floor of the Assembly hall should be exclusively reserved for members of delegations or of the Secretariat, and Press representatives, photographers and the public would in no case be admitted. This rule applies, therefore, to relatives and friends of delegates, and the General Committee wishes to appeal to delegates to see that it is scrupulously observed.

Further, in order to maintain silence during the speeches and to allow freedom of movement during the translations, I should like to submit to the Assembly the following suggestions which, if they meet with approval, will assist me in my difficult task of maintaining order:

1. Between the end of a speech and its translation, an interval of one or two minutes will be observed to enable anyone who does not wish to listen to the translation to leave the Assembly Hall.

2. The doors of the press and public galleries will be kept strictly closed, except during the interval between two speeches or between a speech and its translation.

3. The attendants will be instructed to check conversation and movement amongst members of the public during speeches and translations.

If no one has any remarks to make on these suggestions, I will take it that they have the approval of the Assembly and will have them published in the *Assembly Journal*.

The proposals were adopted.

27. — INTERPRETATION OF THE PREAMBLE AND ARTICLES 3 AND 4 OF THE COVENANT, AND RATIFICATION OF THE AGREEMENTS AND CONVENTIONS CONCLUDED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED BY THE BRITISH DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the report of the Agenda Committee on the draft resolutions submitted by Viscount Cecil on behalf of the British delegation. The report is as follows :

"The Agenda Committee met on September 11th, 1926, under the Chairmanship of H. E. M. Urrutia.

"It has examined the two draft resolutions which have been sent to it following the decision of the Assembly taken at the meeting of September 10th, 1926.

"After this preliminary study, it was decided unanimously to propose to the Assembly to refer to the First Committee the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee to consider and to report what questions are and what are not within the sphere of the League of Nations within the meaning of the Preamble and Articles 3 and 4 of the Covenant, especially with reference to the questions which are now being dealt with by the organs of the League or are proposed to be so dealt with."

"On the other hand, it was unanimously decided to propose to the Assembly to refer to the Sixth Committee the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly :

"Observing with regret that many Conventions and agreements concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations have remained ineffective, or have only come into force after undue delay, owing to the difficulty experienced in securing a sufficient number of ratifications by the signatories ;

"Desires to call the attention of the Governments of all States Members of the League to the necessity for taking all measures in their power to facilitate and expedite the ratification in all cases of Conventions and agreements signed in their name ;

"And decides to invite the Council of the League to examine the possibility of appointing a Committee to consider whether any general understanding could be promoted that would secure rapid and, if possible, simultaneous action by the signatories of such Conventions and agreements."

If no one has anything to say, I will ask the Assembly to vote on the Agenda Committee's proposals.

The proposals were adopted.

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

The President :

Translation : M. Bouroff, first delegate of Bulgaria, will address the Assembly on the Report on the Work of the Council and of the Secretariat.

M. Bouroff (Bulgaria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — My sole motive in addressing this Assembly is the imperative duty of expressing my country's gratitude to the League of Nations.

Among the many problems relating to peace for which the League has found a solution, there are two which are of particular concern to Bulgaria. These two questions are dealt with in the report of the Secretariat. The first is the frontier incident which occurred at Petritch in October and which might have entailed serious complications. Within the brief space of a few days, the League of Nations, by its pacific intervention and thanks to its great moral prestige, succeeded in averting the dangers involved and in liquidating the consequences of the incident, thereby earning the deep gratitude of the two countries concerned and reaffirming not so much its moral prestige — which was already great enough — but its efficacy in action.

A few months after this beneficent intervention on the part of the League, Bulgaria requested your assistance in the solution of another problem of a social, political and financial nature, namely, that of the Bulgarian refugees.

The refugees, who, after a succession of wars, left their homes and fields and crowded into Bulgaria, in most cases without any means of subsistence, still constitute to-day a very heavy burden on the country and are the cause of serious disturbance in its social and political life. This horde of human beings, uprooted from their native soil and subjected to many a cruel ordeal, forms a favourable ground for subversive propaganda. Poorly nourished, even more poorly housed and clothed, and living in lamentably unhygienic conditions, they fall an easy prey to sickness and suffering of every kind. They yield an abundant harvest to the scythe of Death. Industry is as yet so backward in Bulgaria that their temporary settlement in our cities has led to a decline in wages and an increase in unemployment, and this fact further complicates the labour problem of the country.

The ordinary resources of the State being found inadequate to remedy the position, a foreign loan was imperative for the final settlement of the refugees, since their settlement was both essential for themselves and salutary for the State. In the circumstances in which she found herself after many wars, Bulgaria was unable to conclude a foreign loan without assistance. She was unable to furnish the necessary securities, her entire resources being pledged for reparations. Only the intervention of the League could smoothe out her difficulties and render a loan possible. She confidently solicited your intervention. At the beginning of May this year we addressed a petition to the League, and at the beginning of June a favourable solution had been found as regards the principle of the question involved, while, in the course of its present session, the Council has unanimously agreed to grant the loan for which we asked. We have to-day at our disposal an advance of £400,000 for the needs of the refugee settlements, pending the receipt of the loan as soon as conditions on the financial market permit of its flotation.

It is the bounden duty of a country which, within a brief space of time, has had the rare good fortune of experiencing on two separate occasions

the beneficent and effective intervention of the League, to proclaim its deep gratitude towards this organisation and its abiding faith in the efficacy of its action and in its future.

Let others criticise or doubt; the Bulgarian delegate cannot. He can only solemnly declare that Bulgaria is firmly resolved to adhere to a policy based on the pacific ideal of the League and to contribute, within the measure of her limited resources, to its ever-ennobling work.

The expression of our gratitude would be incomplete if I did not also offer our thanks to the permanent organisations of the League. I have had the opportunity of working with the members of the Secretariat in circumstances of great perplexity and intricacy, and I have come to recognise the lofty idealism, combined with untiring perseverance and a full sense of reality, that they bring to the accomplishment of their task. To them, too, I tender my country's deepest thanks.

I do not, however, wish to leave the impression that our confidence in the League and our devotion to it are due to our gratitude alone. My belief in the future of this great family of organised nations rests on deep-seated reasons of a general nature. The League is the living embodiment of the peoples' undying wish for a fuller measure of justice, equity and, above all, for the consolidation of the benefits of peace. So long as common sufferings and warring interests exist, so long as there are questions which can only be solved effectively by international collaboration, so long as there is danger of armed dispute, so long will the need for and the usefulness of the League be felt in an ever-increasing degree. There will still be difficulties to be faced and crises to be met, but if an organisation has the power of life, the difficulties it encounters, so far from enfeebling it, only steel it and strengthen it.

But to my mind the surest guarantee of the future development of the League is the fact that, conceived in the chancelleries of diplomacy, it has become the work of the nations themselves, and its vigilant guardian is the conscience of the world.

Let us, then, have the faith that creates and the optimism that engenders action. Let us ever have present in our minds the unforgettable memories of that historic day, September 10th.

As I listened to the eloquent words, so pregnant with sincerity, ripe reflection and active good-will, spoken by the distinguished representatives of Germany and France, I was profoundly moved, and I realised that a change had come over the world, that it had turned towards international collaboration and a belief in the brotherhood of man. Let us follow the example of concord and self-denial set by these two great nations; let us express to them our heartfelt gratitude for pointing out to us the true path.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have done. I share in the unanimous regret of the Assembly at the withdrawal of Brazil and Spain, two great countries which are devoted to the cause of peace, and I trust that circumstances will permit them to reconsider their decision at an early date. I have only to tender to you once more the deepest thanks of the Bulgarian nation and Government and solemnly to reaffirm their unshakable resolve to co-operate loyally and untiringly in the League's work of peace.

The President:

Translation: Jonkheer Loudon, first delegate of the Netherlands, will address the Assembly.

Jonkheer Loudon (Netherlands):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have no desire to waste the Assembly's

time, but I wish to draw your attention to certain sections in the Council's report which call for special mention.

The first point concerns a legal question in which the Netherlands delegation took a special interest at previous Assemblies, namely, the report of the Special Committee of Jurists referred to in the Council's resolution of September 28th, 1923.

At our instance, the Assembly had addressed a request to the Council, with which the latter complied by its resolution of September 26th of last year instructing the Secretary-General to invite the Governments which might find in the report of the Special Committee of Jurists points requiring elucidation or which might have other comments to make on the report to inform the Secretariat with a view to a possible examination of the matter by a committee to be appointed by the Council.

We find on page 7 of the Council's report that twenty-one Governments replied to this invitation. Their notes have been printed and published.

I do not propose to go into the details of their replies. It is sufficient to say that the observations they contain refer mainly to the coercive measures mentioned in the fourth question submitted to the jurists, most of the Governments being ostensibly preoccupied by the question of such measures.

One of these Governments writes:

"In reality, coercive measures described as not being acts of war... may constitute a grave danger for the security of the smaller States... it is essential that an individual State should not be allowed to take the law into its own hands and presume upon that inequality of strength which must always subsist between States."

Several Governments consider coercive measures to be incompatible with the fundamental principles of the League, that they represent the imposition of the individual will by means of force, and that in the absence of any criterion for determining their legality or illegality it is hardly possible to decide in what circumstances or in what form they should be permitted. Assuredly, the intentions of the Government responsible for such measures would not settle the question, and, as one of the Governments points out, measures which take the form of the violation of territory are inadmissible as being incompatible with Article 10 of the Covenant.

In addition to the question of coercion, there are other points which also give rise to doubts.

In short, the replies communicated to us by the Council prove that, after studying these questions, many Governments are still not satisfied and desire additional explanations.

The Council considers, however, that there would be no practical advantage in attempting to carry the matter further by appointing a new committee which would reconsider the answers given by the Special Committee. It is of opinion that the five questions examined are general questions of interpretation of the Covenant and of international law which cannot be authoritatively or finally settled by a report from such a Committee.

While I regret that the Council proposes to forego the re-examination suggested in the resolution of September 26th last, and although I am unable to share the Council's somewhat optimistic opinion that, since all the Governments have had an opportunity of expressing their opinion, the essential object has been attained, I recognise that it would be difficult to arrive at a practical solution of the problems under consideration by appointing a new committee to reconsider the jurist's answers, although the object is rather to throw further

light on these answers than to formulate fresh replies to the same questions, as stated in the Council's report.

The Netherlands delegation will accordingly not insist for the moment on the procedure which it had proposed. We consider it, however, to be the duty of the Assembly to take special note of the assurance given by the Council that it will not fail, if necessary, to take into consideration the observations received from so many Members of the League. This official assurance constitutes an undertaking.

In my country great interest and sympathy have been manifested in the work of the Committee of Experts engaged in the question of the progressive codification of international law. If I might be allowed to submit an observation on this work, I would urge that for the time being attention should be concentrated on questions of special urgency for which the preparatory studies have reached a point at which codification has become a practical possibility. We all know that the preparation of international conferences requires much time. If the Committee of Experts would confine itself for the moment to questions which are of primary importance and are now ready for codification, we should, I think, arrive more rapidly at definite results.

It would, moreover, be expedient, in order to avoid any chance of overlapping, to leave on one side questions which have already formed the subject of special international conferences, such as the Brussels Conference on Maritime Law, the Berne Conference for the Protection of Industrial Property and Literary and Artistic Works, the Hague Conference on Private International Law or, lastly, the Pan-American Conferences.

In his instructive speech last week, Lord Cecil said that the Assembly was entitled to demand fuller information concerning the work of the Committee of Experts. He expressed the wish that the First Committee of the Assembly might enquire into the activities of the Committee for the Codification of International Law. I would venture to go a step further and to put before you a resolution referring to the First Committee the report of the Committee on International Law. It is surely desirable that the First Committee should take official note of the experts' work, in view of the fact that the Committee over which M. Hammarskjöld presided with such distinction is the outcome of an Assembly resolution.

Before passing to another question, I beg to inform the Assembly that the Netherlands Government recently renewed for a period of ten years its adherence to the compulsory clause of Article 36 of the Statute of the International Court.

Many centuries of wide experience as a colonial Power give the Netherlands a special interest in the mandates problem and the work of the Permanent Mandates Commission. I have on several occasions drawn the attention of the Assembly to the good work done by this Commission and also by the mandatory Powers, work which has been acknowledged in the Council's reports. This year's report, too, shows how important the work of the Mandates Commission has been. Its duty is to maintain a general supervision over the administration of the mandated territories in accordance with the resolutions taken by the Council at San Sebastian in 1922 on the report of M. Hymans. It has also to supervise the moral and intellectual welfare of the inhabitants of the mandated territories. This is a difficult and often delicate task. The Commission is careful to avoid giving to its work of supervision any character of interference.

Its work deserves, I am sure, the wholehearted approval of the Assembly.

I now turn to the great question of disarmament. The reduction of armaments is the problem most exercising public opinion throughout the world. It is the great object of Article 8 of the Covenant. As has been said by a notable English writer, Noel Baker, it is the beginning of the demilitarisation of human society, which since 1860 had flung itself at an ever-increasing pace into the fatal and, from every standpoint, destructive competition of armaments. We all feel that this is one of the most difficult problems to solve, because of its very close connection with security.

This year we are no longer engaged in the discussion of appropriate methods. The preliminary work for what is called an International Conference on Disarmament, that is to say, the progressive reduction and limitation of armaments, has been begun and, I venture to assert, is well in hand. The Preparatory Commission has been working since May 18th, 1926. You have read in the Council's report that at the outset the Commission set up two Sub-Commissions, one to deal with the military, naval and air aspects of the problems referred to it, the other to study their non-military aspects. These problems are also set out in the Council's report in the form of a questionnaire, with the instructions added by the plenary Commission.

It is obvious that these Sub-Commissions, and particularly the Military Sub-Commission, have a very arduous and intricate task before them.

The science of disarmament is still new and it opens up a variety of prospects, many of them very remote. It deals with some exceptionally thorny questions.

During the summer, the Military Sub-Commission has achieved a great deal of work in two long sessions, each lasting several weeks. It will resume work at the end of this month, as soon as the Secretariat, which is at present fully occupied with the Assembly, is again able to give its indispensable assistance.

The Sub-Commission has finished a large part of the work entrusted to it, which consisted chiefly in elucidating and defining the technical military aspect of the questions involved with a view to the preparation of an agreement on the reduction of armaments.

The task of the non-military Sub-Commission is to consult such bodies or persons as it may consider proper regarding the points in the questionnaire. At its first meeting, it referred certain questions for opinion to the Commission which was set up by the Council under the name of the Joint Commission and which consists of representatives of the Economic and Financial Organisations of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office. This Joint Commission has been given the power to call in other experts.

I will not go further into details, nor can I foretell the date on which the Preparatory Commission, of which I have the honour to be President, will have finished its work.

That work requires great deliberation and is extremely intricate, but it is being carried on assiduously and in a spirit which does honour to the League and displays a fixed determination to succeed.

How can it be said, ladies and gentlemen, when we consider these achievements, when we consider the admirable work of the Secretariat, of the different organisations of the League, of the Permanent Court of International Justice and of the numerous committees of the League; when we consider the very notable work of the Council, which by its tact and rapidity of decision has settled disputes

that had already given rise to bloodshed, how can it be said that within the few short years of its existence, the League of Nations has not justified its creation?

What is the opinion of "those who indulge in irony and detraction", to quote the admirable words of M. Briand at the memorable meeting of September 10th, when, hardly seven years after the most frightful of wars, the enemies of yesterday are expressing to each other their will to collaborate in the work of world peace?

If I am not mistaken, it is not so much the chief detractors of the League who require to be convinced of its soundness as the indifferent and lukewarm, who say, with a shrug of the shoulders and a smile of compassion: "Yes, this League of Nations is all very well, but how can you expect to change human nature?"

Change human nature! We should not attempt to do so, nor should we try to minimise the noble sentiment of patriotism, as was so ably pointed out the other day by Viscount Cecil. What we need to-day is to accustom men and nations, led by their Governments, to reflect on the unhappy results, for victors and vanquished alike, of having recourse to arms for the settlement of disputes. Such is the moral disarmament which the League of Nations has in view.

We have just made an immense advance towards universality. We have greeted with enthusiasm the advent of Germany amongst us. We listened—and I can vouch for many of us—with tears in our eyes, our hearts and minds alike stirred, to the eloquent speech of M. Briand in reply to the lofty words of the first delegate of Germany.

Latterly, it is true, and in particular last Saturday, we have had great disappointments. Two Members of the League have, for reasons which it is not for me to discuss from this platform, considered it necessary to withdraw from the League. This is regrettable, no doubt, but you will agree. I am sure, that it can in no way weaken the great Geneva institution. Our work here, with its ever-increasing ramifications throughout the world, is sufficiently strong to withstand a few passing shocks.

Let us not exaggerate in words the importance of this work. Let us rather work as much as possible in silence. Those nations who have left us will soon realise, without our telling them, that the League of Nations, despite its youth, is indispensable to the common life of the nations.

The President:

Translation: I now have to lay before the Assembly the following draft resolution, submitted by Jonkheer Loudon on behalf of the Netherlands delegation:

"The Assembly decides to refer to its First Committee the section of the Secretary-General's report dealing with the work of the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law."

This text will be printed and distributed to the delegations in the *Assembly Journal*. At a future meeting, I will submit suggestions to the Assembly as to the action to be taken on the draft resolution. (*Assent.*)

Dr. Nansen, the first delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway):

Ladies and gentlemen— I would like, first of all, to express our gratitude to M. Briand for the remarks which he was good enough to make in his epoch-making speech the other day on the subject

of the future working of the League. I need not say that we welcome very warmly his assurance that publicity and co-operation among all the Members of the League are to be the basic principles of its constitutional methods. I am sure you will forgive me if I refer very briefly to one or two other points of the same nature.

The first relates to the desire expressed in certain quarters that the work of the Assembly should finish at a fixed date, to be decided upon very shortly after the Assembly has opened and even before the debate on the Secretary-General's report is finished.

I need not say that we desire as ardently as anyone that there should be no waste of time and that the meeting of the Assembly should not be unduly protracted. On the other hand, it seems to us of the greatest importance that there should be no undue haste, but that full time should be given for the adequate discussion of the grave and complicated matters which we have come here to consider. The whole work of the League during the next year depends in great measure upon the decisions taken by the Assembly. This year we have to deal with many questions affecting the whole future of the League. It is essential, therefore, that we should avoid the mistakes into which undue haste may cause us to fall. From much that I have heard I know that in this matter I am only expressing the opinion of many delegations.

The same is true, I believe, as regards the second point which I wish to mention. It relates to the conduct of the present debate on the report of the Secretary-General. There are many members who consider this debate to be a most important part of the work of the Assembly. Those who hold this opinion cannot but regret that it should have been thought necessary to interrupt the debate in order to press on with such haste with the work of the various Committees. They understand, of course, the special circumstances of the present case. Nevertheless, they regret that we should still be discussing here in general terms the work which the Council and the Secretariat have been able to perform during the past year, while at the same time, before our general survey has been completed, the Committees have already gone a long way into the detailed programme of the work for the coming year. We hope, therefore, and I am sure that on this point I am speaking for many of my colleagues, that the special practice of this year will not be a precedent for the future.

I attach more than usual importance to our general survey this year, because I believe that the course of events in some matters which have been dealt with during the past twelve months should afford very valuable guidance and encouragement to the present Assembly. In saying this I have in mind one question to which the Government of Norway attaches great importance. I refer to the question of disarmament. I have received special instructions to raise this question in the Assembly. The Norwegian Government believes that the solution of this problem is of vital importance to the successful working of the League. I fully agree with what was so eloquently said upon this matter by the honourable delegate for the Netherlands.

A year ago, after considerable debate and with much hesitation on the part of some Members of the Assembly, it was agreed to invite the Council to set up a special committee to prepare a concrete programme for a Disarmament Conference. A committee was set up, and, happily, the full co-operation of Germany and the United States of America was obtained. Our Government regrets that on this important Committee there is not a larger representation of States which, owing to their geographical position, are free from great

armaments, and which, therefore, are in a specially favourable position to contribute to a constructive programme. Nevertheless, they think that a good start has been made in the difficult work of preparing a scheme for the reduction and limitation of armaments of all kinds. They are very happy that this start has been made and hope that the Committee will press on with all speed. If there is even a chance that from the work of this Committee there should result a real solution of this very difficult problem, I think it should encourage the Assembly to go forward without fear or hesitation in fulfilment of all its great international tasks.

I now pass to a subject which is dealt with at great length in the Secretary-General's report. I refer to the administration of mandated territories for which the League is responsible. Here, again, I associate myself entirely with M. Loudon's eloquent description of the work done during the last year.

I venture now to propose a resolution similar to those which I have put forward in previous years, the purpose of which is to secure the consideration by the Sixth Committee of questions relating to mandates. The debates in previous years have been very valuable and I am sure the Assembly will agree that the practice is one that should be continued. I therefore propose the following resolution :

"The Assembly :

"Following the precedent already established in previous years;

"Decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other documents dealing with the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly."

I now come to the principal matter to which I wish to draw the attention of the Assembly, namely, the question of the settlement of the Armenian refugees. Many members of the Assembly will remember the prolonged debate which we had on this subject in the Fifth Committee a year ago. Perhaps I may briefly refer to the subsequent development of the question set out in the Secretary-General's report.

The Fifth Committee last year agreed that the schemes put forward for the settlement of the Armenian refugees deserved the most serious consideration. They agreed that only in the Republic of Erivan could they hope to see a national home for the Armenian people. They agreed that the Armenian people had undergone sufferings so terrible that they had a very special claim upon the interest and support of the whole civilised world, and there were few of them who did not feel that the promises made by many Members of the League constituted a moral and political obligation of the strongest kind. On these general grounds, they urged the Council to set up a Special Committee to study the technical realisation of the plans for settlement and national reconstruction which had been proposed.

This Committee was duly appointed by the Council and included among its members distinguished citizens of Great Britain, France, Germany and Italy. The Committee held a number of meetings during the course of the year and they sent to Armenia two representative experts, one of whom was a highly qualified British engineer. As the result of the investigation which the experts made and the preparatory work with the Armenian Government, the Committee came to the unanimous conclusion that the plans prepared for irrigation and other works and for

settlement in general were, from the technical point of view, absolutely sound. As regards this part of the task, therefore, the Committee may be said to have been completely successful, and if the necessary funds were available the carrying out of the scheme could have been begun at once with the certainty of the best results. But, unfortunately, in connection with the second part of the task, the raising of the necessary funds, the Committee were confronted by the greatest difficulty. It had hoped to be able to raise a loan of the same kind as those raised for Greece and Bulgaria. To this end it obtained certain important guarantees for a loan from the Armenian authorities and the State Bank.

Unfortunately, owing to circumstances into which I need not enter, the Financial Committee of the League did not find it possible to recommend the issuing of a public loan without additional guarantees of a different kind. I need not remind the Assembly that I had hoped and believed that such guarantees would be forthcoming from Governments of the Western Powers and that they would agree to establish for the Armenian loan a system of divided responsibility similar to that set up for the Austrian reconstruction loan, which had such a striking success.

For some time these hopes received great encouragement. The Governments of France, Italy and Germany had all given promises of a guarantee of a part of the loan under certain conditions, and other Powers had promised that they would consider the proposal favourably if the greater Powers were ready to take action.

I should especially like to express my gratitude to the French Government for having been the first to make such a conditional promise. Unfortunately, its condition, which was that the British Government should also participate in the collective guarantees, could not be fulfilled. For reasons which seemed to the British Government conclusive, it felt unable to carry out the policy to which some members of the Government, including the Prime Minister, had previously given their warmest support.

The Assembly will understand how bitter is the disappointment of the Armenian people and their friends that, after coming so near to the guarantees which would have brought this plan into practical effect, they have nevertheless been compelled to witness the failure, or rather, as I trust and believe, the postponement of their hopes.

But it is not my purpose to go over this ground again. What has happened has happened. I want rather to make a new appeal to the Governments to consider afresh the present situation as it actually exists. I do not ask for their help in any specific form. I do not now put forward any concrete proposals to which they might have some great objection. I only wish now to beg them to take a new and generous view of the tragic destiny of the Armenian people, of the sufferings which they have endured for so many centuries of their blood-stained history, of the promises which they have received, and of the future to which they can look forward.

I beg them to think for a moment what the history of the Armenian people has been. During the past twelve months, I have spent a great part of my time in studying the story of the Armenian people, and I have been forced to the conviction that no people in recorded history have endured misery and maltreatment in any way comparable to that through which the Armenians have passed. I cannot attempt to give even the briefest sketch of the heartrending horror of this story. I would not dare to evoke again the picture of what

happened to them in the years 1915 to 1918 and even afterwards right on to 1922. I would not care to describe the nerve-shattering terror and the nameless infamy of the appalling pilgrimage of death which the historians will call the deportations, when innocent victims — men, women, greybeards and tiny children — perished not by hundreds, not by thousands but by hundreds of thousands, and with every circumstance of savage torture. They were beaten, they were killed, they were sold, they were driven on till they starved to death.

Here was a people with intense national feeling, with a remarkable history of achievements in bygone days, with the finest gifts of intellect and practical capacity, a people who had made — though few of us here may know it — a great contribution to the mediæval culture from which our modern civilisation is in so great a part derived — here was this people in a few years almost wiped out or scattered to the winds. And yet the surviving remnant of this people, with a tenacity and a national patriotism which no one can sufficiently admire, is now making with desperate courage another valiant attempt to build up a new national home.

The Republic of Erivan is nothing less than that to Armenians of every class and every party in whatever land they may now be. Whether they be for the present Government or not, whether they be rich or poor, they look not to Syria, not to Anatolia, not to South America, but to Erivan, the land at the foot of the eternal snows of Ararat, as the place where the destiny of their nation must in future lie. There year by year they are striving to build up a new community, a political and social system which is Armenian through and through.

Slowly they are gathering together by tens and by hundreds their destitute brothers who had found a temporary refuge in foreign lands, and they are sending them, with such funds as they can privately contribute, to the Armenian State of Erivan. In Erivan itself they are going forward. Since I described the country to the Assembly as I saw it a year ago, great changes have taken place. Distress has been considerably reduced, production of all kinds has been increased, the whole condition of the country has steadily improved.

I now want to beg the Governments who lead the League to find some means by which they can help the Armenian people in the gallant effort they are making. Compared with what the Armenians have previously been led to hope, how small a thing it is that they now ask, how infinitesimal the sum of money which is required to realise these schemes. A million and a-half pounds sterling among the civilised peoples of the world; can we not find this sum to pay so great a debt — a debt of honour and of pity that lies on all mankind? This sum, divided amongst us all, should be for us a trifling thing, but to the Armenians it means very much indeed, for if we can but find it it will give them new hope and new courage in the struggle for a national existence in which they are engaged. It will be a pledge to them that mankind has not forgotten the sufferings they have endured. It will be another great step forward in the reconstructive work to which the League has so profitably set its hand. It may yet be that, by some means which we do not now foresee, we shall secure the kind of loan for which we had previously hoped. It may be that we must turn to new sources and use different methods to achieve our ends.

However this may be, I cannot, for my part, abandon hope that a definite result can be achieved, and I must therefore press on until every possible way has been explored. I appeal, therefore, to the

Assembly not to close the door on any path by which the goal may be attained, and I appeal to the representatives of the great and generous-hearted peoples who are gathered here to think again whether there is no way in which their help may yet be given and in which their great collective burden of responsibility may be discharged. If they will conjure up before their minds the tragic story on which I base the urgent appeal that I have made, I cannot but believe that even yet they will find this way.

The President :

Translation : On behalf of the Norwegian delegation, Dr. Nansen has just put the following motion to the Assembly :

“The Assembly :

“Following the precedent already established in previous years;

“Decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other documents dealing with the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly.”

The motion will be printed and communicated to Members of the Assembly in the *Assembly Journal*. I will submit at a later meeting a proposal on the action to be taken on this motion. If there is no objection, I shall regard my proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

The President :

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

M. Mitileneu (Roumania) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — In mounting the steps of this platform to address you I cannot but feel a certain emotion, especially after the memorable and impressive meeting held last Friday. This is my first appearance among you as representative of Roumania, and I am anxious to reaffirm once again the devotion felt by my country for the League of Nations. In saying so, I am not using the meaningless expressions of conventionality: I am giving utterance to a genuine and deeply felt sentiment.

Roumania is anxious and eager for peace above all things. She observes treaties and the obligations and rights which they entail for her. Hence she regards the consolidation of the League and the extension of its influence to all parts of the world as the surest means of attaining universal pacification. She regards this sacred union of all the peoples, this common endeavour of all the nations of the world, as the realisation of a universal aspiration for an atmosphere of peaceful work and the tranquil development of international relations.

And so we may trust that the day is not far distant when all the peoples will be united here in a common ideal and bound by identical feelings of brotherhood.

We trust that we shall witness the return of those who have left us and that our appeal will be heard by those who are not yet here. That day will be heralded with joy by Roumania. Roumania — let me to-day solemnly repeat it once again — is still prepared, behind the shelter of the frontiers she now possesses, to sign a pact of non-aggression with all her neighbours without distinction.

Eager to collaborate on the closest and most loyal terms, Roumania reaffirms her sentiments of lively admiration and sincere friendship for this illustrious Assembly.

29. — QUESTION OF THE DESIRABILITY OF NUMBERING THE PARAGRAPHS OF THE ARTICLES OF THE COVENANT: REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly will remember that at its last meeting the Hon. J. G. Latham, first delegate of Australia, submitted to it the following draft resolution :

“That the First Committee be requested to consider and to report to the Assembly upon the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the Articles of the Covenant published by the League.”

This text has been published and communicated to the Members of the Assembly through the *Assembly Journal*.

You will also remember that at the time I asked your permission to suggest at a later meeting what action we should take in regard to this draft resolution.

I now propose that it be referred to the Agenda Committee, and I will ask that Committee to be so good as to meet as soon as possible and submit its conclusions.

If there is no opposition, I shall consider this proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

30. — INCLUSION OF THE QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM IN THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: PROPOSAL OF THE DELEGATIONS OF FINLAND, POLAND AND SWEDEN.

The President :

Translation : I have just received a communication submitted jointly by M. Setälä, first delegate of Finland, M. Zaleski, first delegate of Poland, and M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden. This document reads as follows :

“In its practical activities in the field of social, economic and humanitarian questions, the League has more and more been compelled to deal with the question of alcoholism. Thus the report to the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat contains the information that the Traffic in Women and Children Committee was unanimously of the opinion that an interdependence existed between the two evils, namely, alcoholism and prostitution (page 111), and the Child Welfare Committee, after having considered the report furnished by the International Bureau against Alcoholism, requested the Council to ask the Governments to protect children and young people from the danger of alcoholism by every possible means (page 114).

“The difficulty of the mandatory Powers and the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations in dealing with the importation and consumption of liquor in the mandated territories is well known, as well as the lack of clearly defined terms and of uniform methods in this respect (pages 57 and 66).

“Moreover, the absence of co-ordinated international action against alcoholism is felt in the most civilised countries. As an example may be mentioned the smuggling of alcoholic liquor which is much in evidence on the frontiers of all countries and especially on the seas and which, to the disgrace of civilisation, renders vain the most praiseworthy efforts of the peoples and Governments to settle the alcohol question.

“On various sides (United State of America, States around the Baltic Sea) recourse has been had to conventions passed between States in order to extirpate the evil, but without uniform international action there can be no hope of success.

“Various organisations founded to protect society against alcoholism have for a long time been endeavouring to secure international official action against this scourge of the world.

“The International Conference of Studies against Alcoholism which met at Paris on April 3rd, 4th and 5th, 1919, under the presidency of M. Vandervelde, now Foreign Minister of Belgium, requested the Peace Conference to consider whether it would be possible to ask the League of Nations to take the question of alcoholism under detailed examination.

“The International Conference against Alcoholism which met at Geneva on September 1st, 2nd and 3rd, 1925, voted a series of resolutions relating to the questions of the colonies, of smuggling and of the conflicts between alcohol-exporting States and States with advanced alcohol legislation, and requested the Council of the League of Nations to examine in what way the League could concern itself with the alcohol problem. Finally, the Eighteenth International Congress against Alcoholism which met at Dorpat (Esthonia) from July 21st to 29th, 1926, adhered to the resolutions voted by the Geneva Conference and requested the League of Nations to interest itself in the alcohol question.

“Several Congresses assembling representatives of very many countries have appealed to the League of Nations, hoping that, with all the authority at its command, it will now undertake a co-ordinating action for the future settlement of the alcohol question, so important for the future of humanity.

“There are divergencies of opinion as regards the alcohol question and the best means of solving it. What has to be done now is to examine the question thoroughly and scientifically and to endeavour thus to prepare the proper measures to be taken.

“When the different Governments and the different currents of opinion join together for a common task, undertaken in the spirit of the League of Nations and on the basis of impartial scientific research, one may hope that this work will bear fruit which will prove beneficial to humanity.

“The undersigned therefore venture to request that the Assembly should decide to include in the programme of the work of the League of Nations the question of alcoholism and should ask the Council to take measures to this effect.”

This text will be printed and distributed, and at a subsequent meeting I will suggest what action we should take in regard to this proposal. (*Assent.*)

The Assembly rose at 5.50 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TENTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 1926, AT 10 A.M

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31. RULES DEALING WITH THE ELECTION OF THE NINE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, THEIR TERMS OF OFFICE AND THE CONDITIONS OF RE-ELIGIBILITY.

- Report of the First Committee.

31. — RULES DEALING WITH THE ELECTION OF THE NINE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, THEIR TERMS OF OFFICE AND THE CONDITIONS OF RE-ELIGIBILITY: REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President:

Translation: The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the proposals made by the Committee on the Composition of the Council regarding the method of election and tenure of the non-permanent seats on the Council.

M. Motta, Rapporteur and Chairman of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland), Rapporteur:

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—The First Committee begs to submit to-day the result of its work concerning the rules applicable to the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, their terms of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

As Chairman of the First Committee, I have been requested to explain to you the proposals which it unanimously adopted. My explanations will be purely verbal, as I have had no time to prepare a written report, owing to the fact that the Committee did not conclude its work until last night.

I desire to point out, first, that the Committee's work proceeded in a friendly atmosphere of courtesy and mutual understanding. Nothing was done with undue precipitation; we avoided any suspicion

of dangerous haste. It was thus possible for us to discuss the question in that atmosphere of calm and serenity which can alone safeguard the absolute liberty and dignity of the Assembly. Our work had been facilitated by the investigations of the Committee appointed by the Council, which approved the conclusions of those investigations and recommended them to the Assembly.

I should, however, be failing in my duty and in the requirements of justice if I omitted to mention that the discussions in the First Committee, while adhering to the guiding principles of the scheme submitted by the Committee of enquiry, defined that scheme still further, improving and amplifying it to a very considerable extent.

The work which we are about to accomplish will thus not be a mere solemn formality of purely superficial import but a real legislative act re-affirming the sovereignty of the Assembly.

The draft resolution submitted by the First Committee is divided into two parts. The first, consisting of Articles I to III, fixes the rules applicable under normal circumstances; the second, which consists only of Article IV, indicates the temporary provisions applicable to this year's elections.

I propose first to explain the general principles underlying the system recommended to you. I shall then briefly dwell on the differences between the permanent or normal provisions and the temporary provisions.

The dominating principle is that of rotation. The term of office is fixed at three years. On the expiry of this period, the non-permanent Members will not normally be re-eligible. They then enjoy what I may describe as a spell of rest. The term of office begins immediately on election and ends on the day of the elections held three years later by the Assembly. The period during which a retiring State remains ineligible lasts only for three years; on the expiry of this period, that State again becomes qualified for election.

The re-election of the non-permanent Members of the Council is effected by thirds: that is to say,

the annual elections apply only to three of the nine non-permanent Members. This system satisfies two essential requirements: that of appointing to the Council as many States as possible in succession and that of continuity.

The great idea of equality between the States which are non-permanent Members of the Council is thus reconciled with the necessity of ensuring in the Council a feeling of continuity accompanied by sound methods of work.

The principle of rotation does not, however, constitute an absolute, rigid or inflexible rule. Situations may arise in which it is imperative, in the interests of the League, to make exceptions. It may be desirable that a State should remain on the Council for an extended period; it may be that the services which it has rendered or may still render in the cause of peace will justify an exception in its favour. Such an exception, however, must not be allowed to become a rule. Hence, the draft resolution provides that it shall only be confirmed by a separate secret ballot, in the case of each individual State, and by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast in the Assembly. The vote may be taken only upon the request of the State concerned and, as a general rule — apart from the temporary provisions for the present year — only on the expiry of the term of office or during the years which I have described as years of rest.

Blank or spoilt votes are to be deducted in calculating the two-thirds majority. It is only right that a State should be required when voting to express its opinion by a definite "pro" or "con". The question of blank voting papers, moreover, ceases, to my mind, to be of any practical importance directly their actual value, significance and effect are realised.

The scheme provides, further, that the Council shall in no case include at any one time more than three States which have qualified as re-eligible.

The Assembly — and this is a point I would emphasise — is free at any time to exercise its right to proceed, whenever circumstances call for such action, to a new election of all the non-permanent Members of the Council. Hence no vested right has been created in the seats on the Council. The Assembly remains the sovereign power. It may take away what it has given, but it will only exercise this right by a two-thirds majority and will determine the special rules applicable in this case.

This right reserved by the Assembly, which gave rise yesterday to a long and interesting discussion in the First Committee, is derived from the general spirit of the Covenant. It does not constitute a menace to anyone — this I would emphasise — it is simply the supreme means whereby the Assembly can intervene to deal with critical situations which admit of no other solution.

The rules which I have just explained as clearly as I can are subject to certain modifications for the present year. First and foremost, the elections for this year apply not to one-third but to all the non-permanent Members: three States are to be elected for a term of three years, three for a term of two years, and three for a term of one year. The procedure is to be determined by the General Committee.

I ask your permission to explain this special point. You will find in the proposal now before you a provision laying down explicitly that the General Committee, in virtue of powers delegated by the Assembly, shall decide the procedure for this year.

This is the crux of the matter. The ballot this year can be taken in two ways. The Assembly could first proceed to elect nine non-permanent

Members by one ballot, and then, by three further ballots (thus making four in all), it would divide these seats between the nine elected Members, indicating those elected for three years, then those elected for two years and, finally, those elected for one year.

Another way would be, instead of proceeding first to the election of nine Members and then dividing them into different categories, to take three successive ballots, electing first the States to be nominated for three years, then those for two years, and finally those for one year.

The Committee recommends that the Assembly should refer this question for decision to the General Committee, and I hope you will give the General Committee this mark of confidence, which it certainly merits.

Further, the declaration regarding re-eligibility will follow the election and not precede it. As I have just explained, the declaration of re-eligibility would normally precede the election itself. This year it will not be so. It would, in fact, be illogical to ask a State to become a candidate for re-election before it knew that it had been elected.

If — which is most improbable — several States should be candidates, only those obtaining the greatest number of votes — at least two-thirds of the total number of votes cast — would be declared re-eligible.

In the case of a tie, the general provisions of the Rules of Procedure would apply and there would be a fresh ballot.

In 1927 and 1928 the Assembly will be able to declare other States re-eligible. Nevertheless, if this year more than three, or at least three, States are declared re-eligible, it should only make use of these powers in quite exceptional circumstances.

These are, in brief, the proposals which the First Committee has the honour to submit to you. I trust that you will adopt them unanimously — although according to the Covenant a two-thirds majority would be sufficient — and so set the seal on the compromise intended to conciliate the differences of opinion which have arisen in the past few months.

The elections will be held to-morrow. You will not forget that the Council and the Assembly, in increasing the number of non-permanent Members from six to nine, desired *inter alia* to give a larger share than at present to Latin America. You will bear in mind, too, that wisdom and justice alike demand a better representation for Asia.

At yesterday's sitting of the First Committee, the delegates of Persia and China again urged that two non-permanent seats should be allocated this year to Asia and Africa. Is this possible? In present circumstances, can the continent of Asia for once be allowed more non-permanent Members?

You will understand that I must treat this subject with reserve, seeing that the freedom of action of the Assembly is involved. Nevertheless, I venture to think that we cannot overlook, either this year or — and more particularly — in future years the claims of the enormous populations and the inexhaustible wealth of Asia. Moreover, we should not forget that Asia was the birth-place of the most ancient philosophies and civilisations.

You will all be guided, as in the past, by the spirit of conciliation which underlies this compromise. The compromise is not perfect. That remark is becoming almost a commonplace. I realise that as well as anyone. But if I had to choose between a palace of great architectural beauty built on principles of pure reason and a

house of plainer design but answering the needs of everyday life, I should select the practical house in preference to the palace.

The compromise is certainly defective in many ways. It would, however, be unjust, and more than unjust, to say that it was inadequate and hastily conceived. Even before its main lines had been laid down, it brought us to the great day of September 10th. M. Briand and M. Stresemann, in their noble gesture of reconciliation between France and Germany, told us that their Governments would do as much as was humanly possible to close the road leading to bloodshed.

Near my seat there was seated a woman in mourning. I was moved with great sympathy to see her. Her eyes were filled with tears. She was, I am sure, a sacred and symbolic picture of all mothers and wives whom the poet had in mind when he wrote the words: "*Bella matribus detestata*". That is sufficient to vindicate and justify the compromise.

But the compromise does more than this. It demonstrates the wisdom of the Assembly. It proves that each one of us can subordinate individual views to the general interest. Our policy has not been dictated by considerations of prestige. The Assembly has not abandoned its proper rôle. By its unanimity it will, I hope, assure the moral force and prosperity of the League of Nations.

The President :

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

M. Löfgren (Sweden) :

When some days ago, at a moment of historical importance, the first delegate of France, in a remarkable and memorable speech, welcomed the great State which then entered the League, he emphasised the necessity of counteracting within this world-wide institution all the dangers which national vanity and national prestige may let loose. In moving words he reminded the leaders of all the States of their duty earnestly to try to moderate the egotism of their different peoples and to induce them to sacrifice their selfish aspirations in the interest of general peace. That a ready response may be made to this mighty appeal to the good-will between the nations is a desire fervently cherished by millions of men and women in all countries.

The optimism which characterised the speech of the eminent French statesman, as well as the report of our honourable Rapporteur, does not, I fear, generally prevail. It may, perhaps, not be out of the way to recall on this occasion how, in the minds of many, the very long and extremely difficult crisis which will to-day, I hope, be settled, brought into daylight how far the different peoples are from the time when national egotism and policy will cease to be deciding factors in international affairs.

In all the countries of the world there are those who believe that if the League, during this crisis, has been shaken to its foundations, this has been due less to differences of real interest than to tendencies of national pride and prestige, such as exist among almost peoples and in most countries. I express no opinion on the question whether this view is justified or not. But I cannot abstain from emphasising that the solution of the crisis which is now at hand — a solution which is probably the only one obtainable — is, in my opinion, and in the opinion of the country I have the honour to represent, so far from being an ideal one that it may, on the contrary, imply grave dangers and difficulties for the League in the future.

Circumstances have compelled Sweden to take a more active part than many other Members of the League in the preparation of this solution; but it would be a mistake to think that we look with pride and entire satisfaction on the result achieved. Without pretending in any way that our standpoint has always been the only right one, the Swedish representatives on the League have time after time tried to prevent decisions which, in their modest judgment, seemed to be rash or unwise.

With regard to one vital point, namely, the organisation of the Council, their views have prevailed. They have, however, opposed in vain the increase in the number of the non-permanent Members of the Council and certain provisions in the proposals before us. In giving up one or other point of view, which we had held without any selfish motives, only believing that we were acting in the interests of the League, we did so in the belief that the long-drawn-out struggle being waged within the walls of the League must be brought to an end, lest the League should suffer incalculable harm.

In this spirit we accepted some days ago the decision to increase the number of Members of the Council, a decision which the situation made inevitable. In the same spirit I shall vote to-day for the proposal made by the First Committee. I feel able to do this because I believe that the stipulations before us cannot rightly be interpreted as violating any basic principle of the League. Explicit assurances have been given to me (and I think the sense of the text itself will bear witness in the same direction) that the scheme does not involve any classification of States, does not involve any privilege being conferred on any special State nor any guarantee whatsoever for re-election.

Nothing could give us greater satisfaction, in watching the work of the Council as an ordinary Member of the Assembly, than to find that our apprehensions have been unfounded, and that the application of the scheme will bring about not only a temporary peace but also a definite and lasting solution with regard to the organisation of the Council. May this constitutional peace, for which we all hope, assure us a new era of good-will for all the Members of the League.

With this desire in view, I shall support, on behalf of my Government, the plan laid before us.

The President :

Translation : Sir George Foster, first delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

Sir George Foster (Canada) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Allow me for a moment to associate myself with the observations made by the delegate of Sweden in his note of appreciation concerning the influences and feelings which have been manifest in this present session of the Assembly, notably in connection with the speeches made by the delegates of Germany and France.

Those of us who have not attended the different sessions of the Assembly but who from distant points have watched with unabated interest the work of the League cannot help contrasting, and with great joy, the difference between the conditions at this present Assembly and those of the Assembly in March last. If we had then to pass through a bitter crisis we can now congratulate ourselves upon having passed it successfully and upon finding ourselves a few months afterwards in a stronger position as a League of Nations and higher in the estimation of the world than at any preceding stage in the history of the League.

Let me call the attention of the delegates to this one fact which we must always keep in mind. The League of Nations was not sent down to us from Heaven fully organised and equipped with perfected plans upon the basis of which it should work out its great purposes and ideals. It was an experiment confided to human and fallible beings, to men who had to learn from experience and build up a new organisation — a world organisation at that — upon the results of their experience. The thought that comes to me strongly, and that I believe we should all keep in mind, is that this institution is an evolution, an experiment upon a world-scale unexampled in the history of nations, and that it is from step to step, from grade to grade, from position to position, based upon experience, that this organisation has ultimately to be built up.

Coming to the subject of to-day's discussion, what have we? There is a feeling amongst all the Members of this Assembly that the one thing necessary is that within the Council we should have the best ability, the widest experience and the greatest prestige possible. An executive which has to do what the Council of the League of Nations has to do needs to be made up of the very best material that the League can provide and place in the position of counsellors for the execution of its policy. We are all agreed upon that. We are all agreed also, I believe, that continuity is a very strong element in the successful work of the Council. The Covenant itself provides for both in making permanent Members of the great Powers that had signed the Treaty of Peace. They were not only influential, they were not only experienced, they not only had the largest view of the world's work from a diplomatic and political point of view, but they were also there from the first to preserve continuity in the work of the Council.

So much was gained. The Assembly was at first represented on the Council, as we know, by four Members, afterwards by six, which affirmed the position of the Assembly as a paramount power in the work of the League of Nations. Then came the practical difficulties, which do not need to be recounted here, and these difficulties led the way to a reconsideration of the question of the composition of the Council and of the methods of procedure of the Assembly and the Council as related one to the other.

The Committee's report now placed before us brings the whole matter to a unanimous conclusion, not as the ideal thing, perhaps, as the delegate from Sweden well remarked, nor yet as the definitely and absolutely fixed position which shall be maintained for all the years to come, but as the best that we can achieve for the present, leaving the future to take care of itself as experience points the way for amendments and improvements in our methods.

Much, then, is gained if we keep in mind that this is a matter of evolution and that we are preserving continuity in the work of the League of Nations by its permanent memberships and at the same time are bringing from the Assembly from year to year fresh views and fresh methods of application of those views.

We shall have gained another element of continuity if we pass this present report, which provides that a non-permanent Member instead of being elected for one year will be elected for three years, and will thus have the advantage — and it is a very great advantage — of adding year by year to its experience and becoming a more capable and a more useful Member of the Council than if the appointment were a yearly appointment.

I think we shall have gained in strength and power if the Assembly approves of the report.

But we have also gained one thing more, which I think was essential and which may be looked upon as a very strong addition to our working methods. We have made it absolutely impossible, if we adopt this report, for there to be a repetition of what took place in March 1926, an event which we, who believe in the League, all deplored and an event which was equally deplored by a great mass of public opinion in nations which did not belong to the League and had not consented to co-operate with it. We have made it absolutely sure that the Assembly of the League will have the power, whenever it wishes to exercise it, to recall the mandates, so to speak, of its appointed non-permanent Members and to give different instructions and, if necessary, to a different set of Members. This, in my view, is a strong and essential factor in connection with the work and efficiency of the League of Nations.

I think, then, that those delegations which have had strong and differing views with reference to permanent and non-permanent Members may congratulate themselves on the net result, and I for one, if I may be permitted to do so, congratulate those members of delegations who have held such strong views and have held them so sturdily, but who, in the general interests of the League of Nations, have been able to meet their brethren of different views and so come to a unanimous conclusion. This is proof positive that in the brotherhood of nations which is represented in the League it is possible for the strongest diversity of view, held with perfect honesty, to be merged into conclusions which, whilst they are not entirely satisfactory to either one or the other, are accepted because they are in the interests of general co-operation and world peace.

I think, too, that we must make a distinction between what is the official position and utterance of the League of Nations with reference to the matters dealt with in the report before us and the incidental favourable allusions made by the Committee of Fifteen. Some things will have been absolutely affirmed when this report is adopted, and those I have stated. There are other considerations which have not been affirmed in this report but which have been favourably commented upon and recommended by the Committee which reported to the Council and whose report is now before us. These latter refer to the general question of the allocation of seats and their distribution among the Members of the Assembly.

A geographical distribution of seats has been mooted and discussed and the Assembly after Assembly has passed resolutions thereon. Weight has been given, and I think rightly, to the question of geographical distribution. I am in favour of a reasonable and efficient distribution of seats based in part on geographical conditions and necessities; my point of view, however, is this — I give it with all modesty but with sincere conviction — that in this matter the Assembly should not bind itself at this or any particular juncture as regards the kind of geographical distribution that may be best in the distribution and allocation of seats in the Council by the Assembly.

I do not like to see a great world organisation dividing itself up by rigid rules into water-tight compartments and fettering and hampering the action of the League of Nations for future years. I believe that it is best to allow entire freedom to the League of Nations Assembly itself to be guided by circumstances and the experience of later years and to make its dispositions with regard to those groundwork principles. Therefore, whilst I am in favour of a reasonable and proper allocation on the grounds of geographical conditions, I am not willing to bind myself or to bind this Assembly

to any cut-and-dried specific numerical allocations which will force our hands in the future.

The Committee also showed its favourable consideration of the Latin countries in South America and sympathised with the allocation of three seats to Latin America. This allocation applies entirely to a group of countries located in one continent, a group of nations having a racial and cultural unity and similarity. I have every respect and give reasonable support to the underlying sentiment upon which that claim is founded, and the most generous appreciation of that claim when once it is made. But, again, I ask myself, and I ask this Assembly, to consider the fact that, after all, we are a world society and we must avoid as far as we possibly can the setting up of a series of racial or cultural divisions which take the form of groups and make their appeal on those grounds. I hope the Assembly understands what I mean.

Cultural divisions there will be, racial divisions there will be, and whilst there must exist, and while due respect must be given to their claims, we in the League of Nations must always keep in view the fact that it is a world organisation, and that it is to a world co-operation that we have to appeal. With this in mind, while giving these different groups their due power and consideration, we must hold ourselves free to do our work in the League from the world point of view. From that point of view a man is a man, whatever his race and whatever his culture, and in the League nationalities must meet together, if its purpose is to be ensured, upon a groundwork of brotherhood, and must aim at the achievement of a great work of peace and amity which shall be as wide as the world itself. The division into groups, racial or cultural, begets rivalries, leads to discord, and tends to break up that broad union so necessary to success.

Let me add one more word in continuation of this line of argument. It should, I think, be kept in mind — and I wish particularly to refer to it at this time — that, after all, the League of Nations must look for its support and its success to the individual moral and intellectual conscience of the wide world. Unless in our different nationalities we can bring our League of Nations, with its principles and ideals, into the hearts and minds of the units of each nation, and found our hopes for access in our work upon that individual conviction, we shall never have a League with the power and permanence for which we hope. None of us will find in our hearts any opposition to this contention, that it is upon this great worldwide conviction in the hearts of individual men and women that we must erect our temple, that we must place our altars, that we must make our vows, and that we must depend for the support of the League of Nations in its great work.

In this way we come together, men of different nationalities, men of different convictions, men of different cultures, and we place ourselves upon the common level of men of the world and brothers in humanity, working together and co-operating throughout the whole world, and having respect for all the different portions of the great world which makes up our membership.

I have thought that it is not at all out of place to call the attention of the Members of the Assembly this morning to one fact. We have heard much of the claims for representation on the Council of cultural and racial groups, but we have not, during the six years that the League of Nations has been in operation, heard anything of that group, if I may call it such, of Members of the League of Nations made up of the overseas dominions and possessions of the British Empire. Away out in

the Pacific Ocean there is an immense island continent peopled already by six million inhabitants of the British race and with all the resources, industries and development of a great and growing nationality.

On the North American continent there is the Dominion of Canada with ten million inhabitants, with rich and almost boundless resources, with well-developed industries, with great strength in the present and greater hopes for the future.

In South Africa we come upon another rich and widely extended Member belonging to this group. On the Indian Ocean there is an immense population possessing a large geographical section of country which is being developed with persistency and success.

Then, in addition, there is the Dominion of New Zealand and the Dominion of the Irish Free State, both enterprising and progressive countries. All these, united in similar cultural and political sentiment, form an aggregate of present potency and future possibility which may well bear comparison with any within the membership of the League.

These different dominions for seven years more or less have been units of the League of Nations and Members of this Assembly occupying a position of absolute equality with every other nation Member of the League. They have been steady, unflinching and uncomplaining supporters of the League.

During those six years you have never heard, with one exception (because I understand this morning that the delegates of the Irish Free State propose to submit a claim for a seat on the Council), of any demand or claim from that group of free peoples for special precedence or consideration or for a place in the Council. I do not think it is beyond what is fair and reasonable to make that statement before this Assembly. So far as my country and the other members of the British overseas countries are concerned, we have not hitherto made and are not now making any claim for a seat on the Council of the League. But it is pertinent, and I think it is right at this stage, to say to this Assembly and to the League itself that we consider that we have equal rights to representation on the Council and otherwise with every one of the fifty-six Members of the League of Nations, and that we do not propose to waive that right.

With reference to filling seats on the Council, with reference to the apportionment of honours that are invested in, and rightly invested in, the League of Nations, we make no claims except to equal status and equal privileges with all other Members of the League. My own view of membership of the League is this: that it is for every Member of the League of Nations not to seek overmuch for place and honours which may be given in the course of the work of the League, but to search his own heart and find out what he can do to give of his best and his truest to the work of the League itself, in the way of effort, of sacrifice and of co-operation. The moment we set our minds more upon the ribbons and feathers, upon the honours and the positions, the more we are led away from our primary and central duty, which is to give, and to give until it costs, for the benefit of humanity in the cause of peace and with self-abnegation.

It pained my heart, and it pained the hearts of millions of people in my country and in the North American continent, when the impression came to us last March that in some respects more regard was being given to honours than to service. But, happily, we have passed from that bad atmosphere, and to-day we have before us that most splendid and most heartening assertion which was made from

this platform to the Assembly on Friday last, when the representative of France, replying to the representative of Germany, flashed into view for a moment the battlefields and the long lines of dead and the casualties of the war, and said: "C'est fini, c'est fini". Those are words which will ring round and round this old world of ours and bring hope to a million hearts. "C'est fini".

These assertions and these sentiments which we have heard in this Assembly have raised the prestige and strengthened the purpose and power of the League of Nations to a degree which is incalculable and have given grounds for hopeful optimism for the future. The cold cynics say: "Words are good, but wait till you see the fulfilment". I put no such limitation upon the words which we have heard in this Assembly. I take it that the heart then spoke through the tongue and that conviction in the heart was simply put into French and German words by the representatives of those two countries respectively. I have absolute faith in their convictions and the strength and honesty with which they were expressed, and I look forward with undiminished faith and confidence to their being carried out in the future.

I have taken fresh courage for the League of Nations from the work and the sympathetic co-operation of this Assembly, and I ask for it in the future, at the hands of its friends, the most unabated and sacrificing work on its behalf, at the hands of sceptics and of its enemies, a fair and honest appraisal of the great work which it has done, and from all lovers of humanity their unflinching support.

The President :

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

Mr. Fitzgerald (Irish Free State) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I think this resolution may be described as a facing up of the situation. I do not think that, in principle, the proposals are desirable. For instance, fourteen is too large a number for the Council, seeing that each Member possesses a veto. I think also that the provision debarring elected Members from re-election is theoretically undesirable, as it limits the Assembly's choice in selecting representatives.

The League has to be guided to a large extent by practical experience. We know that an enlarged Council became necessary or practically necessary in order to overcome some of the difficulties that arose during the last year, and we know that non-eligibility is practically desirable though in theory wrong, because our short history shows that elected Members regard their seats as theirs by prescriptive right, overlooking the fact that those seats were the free gifts of the Assembly, to be given to whomsoever the Assembly chose. Consequently, the Assembly was placed in an invidious position when it came to remove one Member and to replace him by another. It was not only placed in an invidious position but had, possibly, to face a crisis and the withdrawal of the aggrieved nations from the League.

The position being what it is, I think we may be justified in agreeing to the resolution, but in doing so we must be watchful that we do not create a situation worse than that which existed before. The difficulty of the fourteen vetoes is overcome, to some extent at least, by Article III, which allows the Assembly to recall an elected Member of the Council who exercises his veto against the wishes of the Assembly. It is, on the whole, better to limit our power of choice rather than to have the elected Members regarding themselves as permanent Members who are merely to go through the formality of an election from time to time, with the threat

of withdrawing from the League if the Assembly exercises its undoubted right to change its representatives. On the face of it, then, I agree with the resolution as practically worthy of support.

But let us face the situation frankly. Are we getting rid of the claims of prescriptive right to a seat? Is it not common property that alongside of the proposals in the resolution is the division of the League into geographical constituencies, with seats allocated to them? Are there not behind the suggestions which are placed before us other plans calculated to give certain States or certain groups of States very good grounds for saying hereafter that if they do not get the seats they now have but have no particular right to expect they have a grievance? I say that there seems to be behind the present proposals a proposal which may be interpreted as giving a right to certain seats to particular groups of States, geographical groups or groups based on alliances or understandings.

We recognise the desirability of having a Council on which there is representation of the different States and civilisations comprised in the League. At the same time, we think that we must never lose sight of the fact that the Assembly as a whole elects the non-permanent Members and that accordingly the non-permanent Members must represent the Assembly as a whole. Every effort must be made to preserve to the Assembly the greatest possible freedom of choice as to the States that shall from time to time be appointed to the Council. Accordingly, while we hold that all shades of opinion and every sort of interest in the League should from time to time be represented on the Council, we deny the right of particular groups to be at any time represented thereon in any specified proportion, and we deny more emphatically still the right of any group to choose from among themselves a State which the Assembly would be under an obligation to elect.

Such an arrangement means that not only will there be a hierarchy in the Council, itself undesirable but practically necessary, but a hierarchy in the Assembly. It means that in the Assembly the continent of Atlantis has the right to three seats and the country of Ruritania has a right to one seat, and there are certain other countries with no right whatever to a seat. The Assembly will be divided into a hierarchy of States which are due to be Members of the Council once in every two years or every three years or every four years, and States that are only due to be Members of the Council once every ten years, and those others which, with these States revolving in their orbits, will never get a seat at all.

I say that we cannot stand by now and see such a situation created either by resolution or by the establishment of precedent. It may be said that no such arrangement is made; but last March we saw a situation arise whereby a country deemed that, because it had been elected by the Assembly on a number of occasions for a number of years, it held its seat by prescriptive right.

The whole history of the League shows that the establishment of prescriptive right tends to take away entirely all the powers of the Council. What is the chief power of the Assembly? We know perfectly well that we come here every year unorganised. We have only one power that is really vital and that is really great, and that is our power to control the Council. We control the Council by our power to elect the majority of its Members. That I consider to be the greatest and the most important power possessed by the Assembly.

I hold the view that the conscience of the world as a whole is always going to be right, but I do

not think that any one nation will on every occasion be right; I will not even claim that quality for my own country. I do not think that any group of nations at any one time will always be right. I think, therefore, that for the proper exercise of the Assembly's power, for a proper implementation of the world-conscience, the Assembly must retain as one body, representing almost all the nations of the world, the power to choose freely from year to year, without any consideration of established prescriptive right, whatever representatives it likes. It must also, at any time, be able to say that it is not satisfied with any Member or Members of the elected Powers on the Council and to tell those Members that they must make way for another. It must be able to do that with a perfectly free hand and not be called upon to weigh the possibility of fresh crises, the possibility of the League breaking up as a result of its action or the weakening of the League and of the power of the League through crises arising when nations — because they have a grievance or feel that they have a grievance which we consider imaginary but which they, with a certain amount of right, consider to be real — decide that they will have nothing more to do with the League because the Assembly has not voted for them. To our minds, the very essence of voting is choosing, and it seems to us that behind all these arrangements is an attempt to let us veto but not to let us choose those who are to represent us on the Council.

The President :

• *Translation* : M. de Brouckère, first delegate of Belgium, will address the Assembly.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium) :

• *Translation* : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I must first crave the Assembly's indulgence for speaking this morning.

We are now at the end — at the very end, I trust — of certain lengthy negotiations which have created, not in the Assembly itself but in its environment, an atmosphere of nervousness. It is essential that the clouds which darken our sky should be dispersed as quickly as may be, and I should therefore reproach myself if I were to delay this happy event even by a few moments.

After hearing some of the previous speakers, however, I found it impossible to resist the desire to address you.

I have listened with the greatest attention and interest to M. Löfgren, the distinguished representative of Sweden. I listened with no less attention and interest to Mr. Fitzgerald, the representative of the Irish Free State. And since both these speakers expressed apprehension and regret, since M. Löfgren, to some extent, voiced the disappointment and pessimism felt by a certain section of public opinion, I desire not to put forward a different view but as it were to supplement the picture by explaining why I am in an optimistic frame of mind and why I shall give my country's vote, in a spirit not of resignation but of joy, in favour of the motion now before us.

To what echoes of disillusionment have we had to listen for some time past! We have been told that the League is passing through a crisis and that no reasonable solution will ever be found but only expedients adjusted to one another, Heaven knows how. We have been told that egoism incompatible with the very existence of the League is being displayed on every hand.

That men should still be men, that the nations should not lose their national egoism — is this really a matter of surprise to an assembly of statesmen?

Did we expect the League to develop regardless of human nature? Did we propose, heedless of the realities of time and space, to set up a structure of geometrical perfection? Or did we intend the League to be a real political organisation, taking into account all the conditions of life? Perhaps we may have been passing through a crisis, but I think it only right and fair to add, as a matter for congratulation, that, despite so many pessimistic forecasts, we have come safely through that crisis.

The League to-day has gained in material and moral power. It has taken a decisive step in the direction of universality. It has acquired a new Member: Germany has taken her seat among us.

And we have not lost a single Member. I am fully aware that two Powers have forwarded what I may call a preliminary notice of withdrawal, and that there is the risk of our losing them two years hence. But I would ask you: Are we resigned to this? Have we not still two years before us in which to work and do all that lies in our power to win them back again, to show them our sympathy, and perhaps, too, to make them understand that their duty to mankind and to themselves forbids them to abandon the task to which they have set their hand?

We have been told that the nations bring with them to this Assembly purely personal, and some have even said egoistic, sentiments. It is not for me to form an opinion of the sentiments which actuate the different States. But this I can say, that we need not be surprised, since men are men and States are States. It would even be a matter of regret if everyone were to abandon here a consideration or care for national interests. We do not believe that those interests should be ignored or sacrificed; on the contrary, we must endeavour to reconcile these different individual aspirations, bring them into harmony, and unite them in one great aspiration common to all mankind.

We have been told: "You find nothing but expedients and temporary makeshifts". I would urge those who speak in this strain to read again the report submitted in 1922, on this very platform, by M. Barthélemy. I would urge them to read again the remarkable speech delivered the year before by Lord Balfour. They will find in them the same preoccupations and a foreshadowing of the same solutions. They will realise that the League is not confronted with an unforeseen emergency arising out of the rashness of a few or the imperfection of mankind, but that it is under the necessity of solving a great problem of constitutional law, and that, in solving it, it will accomplish an immense step forward.

What is the task before us? It is to find a method of constituting a Council of the League which shall be truly representative of all the peoples. This it must be. I do not propose to determine at this point the respective rôles of the Council and the Assembly. I do not propose to determine which of these two bodies should be predominant over the other. I simply wish to place on record certain facts. The Council has to play the principal part when the task is that of settling one of those big disputes which might become a menace to peace. Consider, then, with this ideal of a universal League before us, how ludicrous it would be if we failed to obtain, for the solution of the difficulties which may beset the League, a Council which was also universal in character.

The Council is entrusted, under the Covenant, with the difficult and even formidable task of administering certain territories. It is its duty to supervise and control the exercise of the mandates. In whose name is this control to be exercised if not in the name of all mankind?

Finally, though perhaps the Covenant contains no provision to that effect, custom, born of the necessities of life, has brought it about that, whenever the Assembly adopts a decision, it entrusts its execution to the Council. The Assembly cannot act on behalf of a majority; it must act unanimously in its own name or not at all. How could it, then, create a body to carry out its instructions or decisions unless it imparted to that body the universal character it itself enjoys, and so contrived that all shades of opinion were really represented on it?

That is the problem before us—to create a really representative Council. I will not detain you by repeating what you all know, or review all the stages we have passed on the road towards this goal.

You will remember that at the outset it was suggested that the Council should consist solely of the representatives of the great Powers. If we face the facts and bear in mind the part played by the great Powers in the world, we must admit that the League would be an empty name if it had not the power to enforce its decisions. When we recollect that the essential part of the force available for the execution of the League's decisions is concentrated in the hands of the great nations or great Powers, we cannot but realise the great, the very great, part which those great Powers must of necessity assume in the Council.

It was, however, realised that, notwithstanding the importance of the rôle played by the great Powers, they did not represent the whole of mankind. There exist, side by side with them, many smaller nations. It was decided, therefore, that, if the Council were to present a true picture of the human race, these smaller nations must be represented. The elective system was accordingly adopted.

Mr. Fitzgerald, the distinguished representative of Ireland, has just told us that the Assembly must take care to preserve the full freedom of its electoral powers. I could not help thinking then that the whole history of the successive Assemblies of the League down to the seventh is but a long record of its attempts to find a means of escape from this unorganised freedom. Article 4 of the Covenant says you will nominate your representatives to the Council freely and your freedom shall be such that you are forbidden to limit it yourselves by any regulations as to voting. For years this clause has paralysed the Assembly.

The Assembly may be likened to an inhabitant of a town where, with the ostensible object of allowing complete freedom to traffic, motor-drivers are not obliged to keep to their right or left and are thus left entirely free, by which very fact they are caught in a block and unable to move. The position of the Assembly, powerless to organise its own freedom—for freedom can only be effective in so far as it is organised—was not far different.

Every year speakers have come to this platform to demand that the Assembly should have the right to lay down rules for voting and to establish a genuinely representative system.

It would, to my mind, be deplorable if the Assembly, in the very hour in which it has won this right, should declare that, in the exercise of its freedom, it refused to make use of it. That would practically amount to a confession that all the work of the past years had been in vain.

The Assembly, however, has made use of this right. Successive committees have drawn up a text, and M. Motta, in a speech which will still be in your minds, has pointed out the necessity of arriving at a decision. Is it really true that what he has proposed on behalf of these different

committees consists of nothing but a collection of expedients or lame forms of words devised in order to shirk certain difficulties to-day, only to be confronted with greater difficulties to-morrow?

I will not read the text of the motion again; I will recapitulate very rapidly, as rapidly as I can, the main ideas governing the proposed system of voting.

First—and this, I think, is the most important point—we have the principle of geographical representation. It would be ridiculous if, while declaring that the League of Nations should be universal, we left whole continents or important groups of nations entirely unrepresented. Let me assure you, however, that I fully realise that we must proceed with the greatest caution here.

Various speakers, and more particularly the representative of Canada, have rightly drawn our attention to the dangers of establishing at this moment a hard-and-fast system of electoral divisions. Why? Because the world has not yet found its final form. And it never will find it. We must cherish the hope that the world will always be capable of change and improvement, but we can affirm that at present it has perhaps not yet found a lasting form.

We are not dealing here with a clearly defined problem, and therefore we should, as regards geographical representation, look for purely temporary expedients. We should take no definite or binding decisions, so that, if necessary, we can modify and perfect our work year by year.

But it is a striking fact that in almost every case we have been led alike by necessity and by experience to distribute seats on a geographical basis. I venture to draw your attention to the fact that the necessity for geographical distribution not only arises from the universal character of the League but is dictated by experience, which will in the future show more and more clearly that, side by side with world interests, there are group interests whose claims must also receive satisfaction.

If we wish to help the League to fulfil its destiny, if we desire that these group interests should be organised within the League, under its authority and, I had almost said, under its supervision, we can only do so if the distribution of seats is placed on a real geographical basis. This being so—and I will not labour the point—can it really be said that the number of elective Members now proposed is too great?

I ask you to examine this problem in a practical light and suggest, if you can, any other solution which takes the geographical factor into account. You will at once see the difficulty that arises from the fact that Europe is still very little organised and presents a large variety of interests, and that it will be a long and arduous task to bring about any unity.

How can all these different European interests be represented on the Council unless there is a sufficiently large number of representatives? And, again, if the number of European representatives is fairly large, how can an equitable geographical representation be obtained unless a proportionate number of seats are given to America and the other continents?

Try to solve this problem with less than nine non-permanent Members. You will find you cannot.

I am well aware of the objections to a large number. It is said that a Council of fourteen Members would not work—that it would be too large. I admit that a smaller Council works more easily. As one of my country's statesmen says: "If a committee is to be of any use, it must have not more than one member"; and perhaps he is right.

But this is not a world of ideals; and I may point out that in most great countries the Cabinet which is at the head of affairs consists of fourteen members, or even more. If this is feasible in conducting national affairs, why should it not be so in international affairs?

Then, again, it is said: "There is the right of veto. You will increase the chance of having everything held up by the persistent veto of one elected Member". But we must not forget Article III of the proposal before us, which explicitly empowers the Assembly to withdraw the mandates it issues and proceed, as it were, to dissolve the elective part of the Council and hold a new ballot.

I sincerely hope that this right will never be exercised. I am sure it will not. But its very existence will have its effect and will remind all the Members that they are there not merely to further their own interests but to fulfil a mandate given them by the Assembly as a whole.

I now come to the last problem, which I should like to survey rapidly, in order to reply to the last objection that has been raised, namely, the question of re-eligibility. What has not been said on this subject? It has often been alleged that re-eligibility is contrary to the elementary principles of democracy.

I know that in the old days there were outstanding examples — such as Athens — of republics where the principle of non-re-eligibility was pushed to its extreme; where, in fact, the position might have been summed up by saying that the functions most comparable to those of the President of a modern republic were exercised for one day each by every citizen in turn. But I do not believe that this was the reason why the Athenian Republic was such a brilliant one. It was simply because, by force of genius, the Athenians succeeded in remedying the very defects of so absurd a system.

Under our modern system of democracy, citizens are not entitled to serve as deputies in turn, but have the right to appoint their representatives freely. Directly we begin to institute a system of geographical representation under the control of the whole League, should we not leave it to some extent to the discretion of the geographical groups to determine whether each nation wishes to hold office in turn or whether they consider it more expedient, more useful to themselves and to the whole League to entrust the mandate during a given period — to be determined by themselves, almost at their own discretion — to the nation which they consider most capable of exercising it?

If we propose to maintain the principle repeatedly affirmed in this Assembly, that the mandate should be exercised not in the interest of the mandatory but in that of the whole League, is not the latter entitled to retain on the Council those Members whose presence it considers necessary?

I am well aware that certain sacrifices have had to be made to the principle of rotation, but these sacrifices were, in my opinion, quite legitimate, since, owing to the perhaps fastidious courtesy practised among us, it was sometimes rather difficult to speed a parting Member and replace him by another representative who might be considered more useful. It was hoped that this somewhat unpleasant procedure might be avoided by the establishment of a kind of automatic system whereby retiring Members would no longer be regarded as "retiring" but as "having retired" and might more easily be replaced by others.

The League would, I believe, have foundered, not through the egoism of certain Powers but through a flaw in the framing of its constitution,

if it had insisted on this qualification of non-re-eligibility and had thus departed from the true democratic principle that those who can render the greatest service may be appointed to hold office.

I would add a further observation. It would be regrettable, in my opinion, if the necessity of re-election, in many cases, were so conceived as to result in the creation of a special category of States, namely, those which have been described as "predestined to re-eligibility".

I believe that, as far as possible, the Assembly should refrain from dealing with the question of re-eligibility until that question arises — that is to say, until we are asked to vote on the re-election of a State. I desire to point out, however, that, despite the repeated statements which have appeared in the Press, the authors of the proposal now before you have adhered strictly to the principle involved, except only in the case of the first election, and that for two reasons which I do not hesitate to give.

The first reason is of a technical character and is in itself conclusive. If, in 1927, a State had been declared re-eligible under the present rules, without it being indicated at the same time which States, in the view of the Assembly, were entitled to be re-elected in 1928 and 1929, you would have created in favour of those retiring in 1927 a privilege far more dangerous than any resulting from the rules now proposed. That is my first and technical reason.

The second reason, which led to the substitution of 1926 for 1927, is political in character and is based on grounds of expediency; it satisfies the desire for continuity and is intended to solve the immediate problem. I for one do not regret the sacrifice which as a member of the Committee I offered on the altar of pure reason. I am entirely of the opinion of our Chairman. We are not here to create a work which will accord with the dictates of pure reason; we are here to accomplish a duty in the light of practical commonsense.

At one of our previous meetings I heard a delegate express the desire that Members should never again sacrifice their chosen principles to the requirements of unanimity. I humbly venture to conclude by expressing exactly the contrary view. Suppose that each of us were to refuse to yield an iota of his chosen theories, there would be a succession of eloquent speeches from this platform, but what would happen when it came to taking a vote?

We are governed by the rule of unanimity. This rule can only operate, and consequently the League can only endure, if we make mutual concessions. When, therefore, in the interests of the whole League and in order to overcome the prepossessions and satisfy the legitimate ambitions of certain States, I am asked to concur in a slight violation of logic by substituting 1926 for 1927, I do so gladly, satisfied that I am thereby helping not to weaken the League but to prove that it is in normal working order and that its Members are in the political frame of mind which enables it to work with success.

And now, one word in conclusion. I said just now that the real issue consists in the solution of this constitutional problem — or, rather, in a first attempt to solve it, for the final solution will undoubtedly take long to find — the real issue consists in the solution of this constitutional problem of making the Council of the League as truly representative of the whole world as it is possible to imagine it. It is essential that those whom you are about to elect should regard themselves as representatives, that they should regard themselves not as men endowed with a special privilege but as men who have undertaken a definite

responsibility. There can be no shame to a State in soliciting this responsibility. It is easy to imagine certain States, with full confidence in their powers, coming before the Assembly and saying: "I feel myself worthy of this honour", but they can only really be worthy of it if they have decided, in the exercise of their mandate, I do not say to sacrifice their national interests—let me repeat, there is no question of this—but to realise to the full and defend to the uttermost the general interests of all.

The President :

Translation. I propose that the continuation of the discussion on the report of the First Committee be adjourned until this afternoon at 4.15. We will then resume the discussion on the report of the Council, which I hope will be concluded this afternoon.

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

ELEVENTH PLENARY MEETING

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th, 1926, AT 4.15 P.M.

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32. — REFERENCE TO THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE SECTION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL DEALING WITH THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS FOR THE PROGRESSIVE CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW : ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE NETHERLANDS DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen.— You will remember that at yesterday's meeting several resolutions were submitted to the Assembly. These have been published, and the delegations will have been able to take note of them.

I reserved the right to make suggestions to the Assembly at a future meeting in regard to the action to be taken on these draft resolutions.

The first draft resolution was submitted by M. Loudon, first delegate of the Netherlands, and read as follows :

"The Assembly decides to refer to its First Committee the section of the Secretary-General's report dealing with the work of the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law."

I propose to the Assembly that this resolution should be adopted and the matter referred to the First Committee.

If no one has any objection to make to this proposal, I will consider it adopted. (*Adopted.*)

33. — REFERENCE TO THE SIXTH COMMITTEE OF DOCUMENTS DEALING WITH THE MANDATES QUESTION : ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The second draft resolution was submitted by Dr. Nansen, first delegate of Norway. It reads as follows :

"The Assembly,

"Following the precedent already established in previous years,

"Decides to refer to the Sixth Committee the annual reports of the mandatory Powers, the reports of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and all other documents dealing with the mandates question which have been distributed to the Members of the League since the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly."

I propose that the Assembly should adopt this draft resolution and refer the matter to the Sixth Committee.

If no one has any objection to make to this proposal, I will consider it adopted. (*Adopted.*)

34. — INCLUSION OF THE QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM IN THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS : REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE PROPOSAL OF THE DELEGATIONS OF FINLAND, POLAND AND SWEDEN.

The President :

Translation : The third draft resolution was submitted by M. Setälä, first delegate of Finland, M. Zaleski, first delegate of Poland, and M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden.

I will not read the text of this draft resolution now, as it has been printed and distributed.

I propose that it be referred to the Agenda Committee, which will meet as soon as possible to discuss what action is to be taken on it.

If no one has any objection to make to this proposal, I will consider it adopted. (*Adopted.*)

35. — RULES DEALING WITH THE ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, THEIR TERM OF OFFICE AND THE CONDITIONS OF RE-ELIGIBILITY : CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION : ADOPTION OF THE RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion of the proposals made by the Committee on the Composition of the Council regarding the method of election and term of office of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

(*At the invitation of the President, M. Motta, Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee, took his place on the platform.*)

The President :

Translation : Count Moltke, first delegate of Denmark, will address the Assembly.

Count Moltke (Denmark) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Danish delegation has listened with

keen interest to the very lucid report submitted by M. Motta, Chairman and Rapporteur of the First Committee.

This report makes clear the view taken by the First Committee on this important question, and, as we know, this result was not at all easily reached.

It has been said that the Committee's report was a compromise, and the same may be said of the result of the First Committee's work. The word "compromise" is sometimes used in a disparaging sense, implying that success has only been obtained through what amounts to a partial abandonment by the parties of their original principles.

In an Assembly such as this, however, it would be quite wrong to come to such a conclusion. No State actuated by a spirit of international collaboration comes to the League to impose its will on the other States assembled here; the object of us all is to obtain by common accord a result which, if circumstances admit, can command general acceptance and which signifies a further step in the direction of our common aim.

This calls for heroism — a kind of heroism, moreover, which does not win public applause like other heroic acts, but which nevertheless is often none the less heroic, for it is the heroism of self-sacrifice. The First Committee has given proof of this and the Assembly will assuredly follow its inspiring example. We shall act in the spirit of the League, in a spirit of international tolerance and individual self-sacrifice.

As the Danish delegation has already said, we view with some misgiving the actual form of the solution now proposed for the question of the elections to the Council.

I desire on behalf of the Danish delegation to support the view just expressed by the first delegate of Sweden. At the same time, we welcome wholeheartedly the introduction of the system of rotation, which we have always strongly advocated. We view with a certain degree of apprehension — though we accept it with full confidence — the considerable increase which is to be made in the number of non-permanent Members of the Council.

Our confidence is due to the fact that we rely upon that sense of international responsibility which has always inspired the Members of the Council and will do so to an increasing degree in future. Whether a Power on the Council be big or small, its duty remains the same, for it must act in conformity with the fundamental idea underlying the League. Even if it were alone in its views, its voice might still be the voice of conscience, and would gradually make itself heard.

It is a well-known fact that in every country and every assembly opinions invariably differ over political aims, methods and persons, and even over art, ideas and so on. These divergent opinions, often inexact and even erroneous, are the outcome of individual points of view or national character and are sometimes devoid of adequate foundation. Such a phenomenon may come to pass even in this Assembly.

After a time, a general opinion begins to be evolved in regard to the various questions under consideration, the facts of the case and the methods to be adopted, and this general opinion dominates all others and eventually gains final acceptance. It is the *vox populi* which imperceptibly becomes the *vox Dei*.

If many of the delegations in this Assembly have found themselves able to accept the result now awaiting our confirmation, it is because they are firmly convinced that the delegates will take their decision in the sense which I have indicated when they come to record their vote.

The President :

Translation : His Excellency M. Chao-Hsin Chu, first delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :

Mr. Président, ladies and gentlemen — I beg to support, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, the report of the First Committee submitted by the Rapporteur, M. Motta, who has made a great effort in helping to work out a solution for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

The most important factor set forth in the new scheme is that we have now definitely adopted the principle of geographical distribution advocated by the Chinese delegation at previous Assemblies. It is of particular satisfaction to us that it is clearly stated in the report that adequate representation on the Council must be given to Asia.

On this occasion allow me to beg of you that China, which is a most important figure in the continent of Asia, should receive due attention by the League of Nations as regards her geographical position and the privileges to which she is entitled. I sincerely hope that China will be the first among the Asiatic States to occupy a non-permanent seat on the Council when the new scheme comes into force.

Asia has a perfect right to claim two non-permanent seats, but if only one seat is to be allocated to that continent this year, I am justified in demanding, on behalf of Asia, that this seat should be granted for a term of three years.

Finally, allow me to call your attention to China's legitimate request for one of the nine non-permanent seats on the Council. I hope my country will not again be disappointed in the coming election. If it were, the Chinese people would misunderstand the attitude of the League towards their country and would think that the League did not sufficiently appreciate the efforts made by China and her co-operation in the great work of this international organisation.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall regard the discussion on the report of the First Committee as closed.

The discussion is closed.

The Assembly will now have to take a decision, in accordance with paragraph 3 of Article 4 of the Covenant, on the rules for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility. These rules read as follows :

The Assembly, acting in virtue of Article 4 of the Covenant, decides as follows :

RESOLUTION MAKING RULES DEALING WITH THE ELECTION OF THE NINE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, THEIR TERM OF OFFICE AND THE CONDITIONS OF RE-ELIGIBILITY.

Article I.

The Assembly shall each year, in the course of its ordinary session, elect three non-permanent Members of the Council. They shall be elected for a term commencing immediately on their election and ending on the day of the elections held three years later by the Assembly.

Should a non-permanent Member cease to belong to the Council before its term of office expires, its seat shall be filled by a by-election held separately at the session following the occurrence of the vacancy. The term of office of the Member so elected shall end at the date at which the term of office of the Member whose place it takes would have expired.

Article II.

A retiring Member may not be re-elected during the period between the expiration of its term of office and the third election in ordinary session held thereafter, unless the Assembly, either on the expiration of the Member's term of office or in the course of the said period of three years, shall, by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast, previously have decided that such Member is re-eligible.

The Assembly shall pronounce separately, by secret ballot, upon each request for re-eligibility. The number of votes cast shall be determined by the total number of voting tickets deposited, deducting blank or spoilt votes.

The Assembly may not decide upon the re-eligibility of a Member except upon a request in writing made by the Member itself. The request must be handed to the President of the Assembly not later than the day before the date fixed for the election; it shall be submitted to the Assembly, which shall pronounce upon it without referring it to a committee and without debate.

The number of Members re-elected in consequence of having been previously declared re-eligible shall be restricted so as to prevent the Council from containing at the same time more than three Members thus elected. If the result of the ballot infringes this restriction to three Members, those of the Members affected which have received the smallest number of votes shall not be considered to have been elected.

Article III.

Notwithstanding the above provisions, the Assembly may at any time by a two-thirds majority decide to proceed, in application of Article 4 of the Covenant, to a new election of all the non-permanent Members of the Council. In this case the Assembly shall determine the rules applicable to the new election.

Article IV. — Temporary Provisions.

1. In 1926, the nine non-permanent Members of the Council shall be elected by the Assembly, three for a term of three years, three for a term of two years, and three for a term of one year. The procedure of the election shall be determined by the General Committee of the Assembly.

2. Of the nine Members thus elected in 1926, a maximum of three may be immediately declared re-eligible by a decision of the Assembly taken by a special vote by secret ballot, a separate ballot being held for each Member, and adopted by a majority of two-thirds of the number of votes cast. Immediately after the announcement of the results of the election, the Assembly shall decide upon the requests for re-eligibility which have been presented. Should the Assembly have before it more than three requests for re-eligibility, the three candidates having received the largest number of votes, in excess of two-thirds of the votes cast, shall alone be declared re-eligible.

3. The according in advance in 1926 to one, two or three Members elected at that date of the quality of re-eligibility shall not affect the Assembly's right to exercise the power given by Article II in the years 1927 and 1928 in favour of other non-permanent Members retiring from the Council in those years. It is, however, understood that, if three Members already possess the quality of re-eligibility, the Assembly will only exercise this power in very exceptional cases.

I would remind you that under the rules a majority of two-thirds is required. If any Member of the Assembly so desires, a vote will be taken by roll-call.

As no one wishes for a roll-call vote, I shall consider, if there is no objection, that the Assembly has unanimously adopted the resolution of the First Committee and has thus decided, in application of Article 4 of the Covenant, on the rules for the election of the nine non-Permanent Members of the Council, their term of office and the conditions of re-eligibility.

The resolution proposed by the First Committee was unanimously adopted.

36. — REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL AND OF THE SECRETARIAT : CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion on the Report on the Work of the Council, on the Work of the Secretariat and on the Measures taken to execute the Decisions of the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu, first delegate of China, will address the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I am speaking now on the work of the Council and of the Secretariat as set forth in the report before us.

First of all, I wish to remind the Assembly of the proposal which I put forward last year on behalf of the Chinese delegation asking for a reconsideration, in accordance with Article 19 of the Covenant of the League, of treaties between China and foreign Powers which were regarded as out of date and inapplicable. Public opinion in China is now focussed on the time-honoured issue of the revision of unequal treaties. The Chinese Government, reinforced by popular support, has been making a great effort to deal with the foreign Powers concerned in this question.

The Tariff Conference now sitting in Peking has adopted a resolution to the effect that China will have her tariff autonomy in three years, and it is now considering the question of a proportional and reasonable increase of Chinese tariffs during the interim period before autonomy takes place. Let us hope that, according to the resolution passed by the Assembly last year, the Peking Conference will, at an early date, work out a satisfactory solution which will be in the form of the revision of the unequal treaties.

China, as a sovereign State, should exercise the right of fixing her own tariffs. The present tariff rate, limited to 5 per cent. on all kinds of foreign commodities, is far from being sufficient to balance the budget of China, hence it is the cause of financial and political chaos. The Chinese Government is very anxious to increase the tariffs by means of which China will be able to reorganise her national finance and adjust her economic position on a sound basis.

Further, China is welcoming the negotiation of new treaties with foreign Powers, particularly with those the treaty status of which in China is or will be terminated according to the terms of the old treaties. China is to be congratulated on having concluded treaties of equality and reciprocity with some foreign Powers, notably with Germany and Austria. The Chinese delegation has been

instructed to register with the Secretariat of the League of Nations the newly concluded treaty between China and Austria, and the registration will take place on September 15th — that is to-day — which is the exact date when the Sino-Austrian treaty comes into force.

The Chinese Government is of opinion that, in order to make the League a real league of all nations, we must fully recognise the geographical position of the important nations and the privileges to which they are entitled. We have indeed taken due consideration of these factors and this is proved by the welcome which has been given, as Member of the League, to one of the great Powers of the world. On this occasion I offer my German colleagues who are now in our midst my sincere congratulations, and I am sure that we all look for their co-operation in the work of world peace.

I sincerely hope — and I am sure that all the Members of the Assembly share that hope — that Brazil and Spain will soon return to us and that other great nations which are still standing outside the League will join us in the near future. In this way, the scope of the League will be enlarged to the utmost and its activities will be carried out to a still greater extent.

In conclusion, let me, on behalf of the Chinese delegation and in the name of the Chinese Government, express our great satisfaction with the work which has been done during the past year by the Council and by the Secretariat of the League of Nations.

The President :

Translation : M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

M. Hambro (Norway) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — My colleague, M. Vogt, has already announced in the First Committee that the Norwegian Government is in favour of a system of proportional representation. The Committee's task was, however, so delicate, that he refrained from asking for an immediate discussion.

The draft resolution submitted by the First Committee has just been adopted, and the question of proportional representation, which calls for very thorough examination, can be considered apart.

In my country, we adopted the proportional system first for municipal elections and then for Parliamentary elections. Our Parliamentary commissions and committees are now constituted entirely on this principle.

It is inconceivable that we should forego the guarantee which would be afforded by the division of responsibility among all parties and minorities in the Assembly. It would, in our view, be quite in keeping with the spirit of the League if this system were adopted for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council. Whatever may be said about the system — when applied to Parliamentary elections — it would appear to be very practicable and very fair for the elections to the Council.

I have the honour, therefore, on behalf of my Government, to submit the following proposal :

“The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee :

“1. To study the question of the single transferable vote and the principle of proportional representation in general as regards the problem of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council ;

"2. To report on the method of election of the non-permanent Members in sufficient time to lay the question before the next session of the Assembly." (See Document C. 299. M. 139. 1926. V, page 143.)

The President :

Translation : This draft resolution will be printed in the *Assembly Journal* so that delegations may be able to consider it.

At a later meeting I shall submit suggestions as to the procedure to be followed in regard to this proposal.

If no one else wishes to speak, I shall declare the discussion on the report of the Council closed.

The discussion is closed.

The Assembly rose at 5.15 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE

SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY

OF THE

LEAGUE OF NATIONS

TWELFTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th, 1926, AT 10.15 A.M.

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

The President :

Translation : I have just received from the delegation of Uruguay a communication which I will read to the Assembly at the conclusion of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

Let me first recall briefly the Rules adopted by the Assembly as temporary provisions for the 1926 elections.

The first paragraph of Article IV prescribes that in 1926 the nine non-permanent Members of the Council shall be elected by the Assembly, three for a term of three years, three for a term of two years and three for a term of one year.

As I announced at the end of yesterday's meeting, the procedure laid down by the General Committee for these elections has been communicated to delegations through the *Assembly Journal*. Delegates have, therefore, been able to acquaint themselves with the procedure. Nevertheless, I should perhaps briefly recall the salient features.

Three secret ballots will be taken by roll-call. The first ballot will be for all the nine seats to be filled, that is to say, the voting papers should designate the nine States which delegations desire to elect as Members of the Council.

After the result of this ballot has been proclaimed, a second secret ballot will be taken, whereby the Assembly will choose three of the newly elected Members to be represented on the Council for a term of three years.

After the results of the second ballot have been proclaimed, a third secret ballot will be taken, whereby the Assembly will choose from the remaining elected non-permanent Members those to be represented for a term of two years.

The results of the third ballot will be proclaimed and it is understood that the Members not chosen in that ballot will be those to be represented for a term of one year.

Before opening the ballot, may I call attention to the relevant Rules of Procedure in this connection ?

"2. Where several seats are to be filled, the election shall be made by voting a list of names. Any ballot paper containing more names than there are seats to be filled shall be null and void.

"3. No Member shall be elected at the first or at the second ballot unless it has obtained at least the absolute majority of the votes. If, after two ballots, there still remain seats to be filled, a third ballot shall be held upon a list consisting of the candidates which obtained most votes at the second ballot, up to a number double that of the seats still to be filled, and those Members shall be elected which obtain the greatest number of votes.

"4. If two or more Members obtain the same number of votes and there is not a seat available for each, a special ballot shall be held between them; if they again obtain an equal number of votes, the President shall decide between them by drawing lots."

My explanations will, I trust, prevent any confusion.

I will therefore open the first ballot, which is for the election of the nine Members.

I will ask Viscount Ishii, first delegate of Japan, and M. Scialoja, first delegate of Italy, to take their places on the platform to act as tellers.
The ballot is now open.

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

Number of States voting	49
Number of votes cast	49
Absolute majority required	25

The votes obtained by the States were as follows :

Colombia	46	votes
Poland	45	"
Chile	43	"
Salvador	42	"
Belgium	41	"
Roumania	41	"
Netherlands	37	"
China	29	"
Czechoslovakia	23	"
Persia	20	"
Portugal	16	"
Finland	14	"
Irish Free State	10	"
Uruguay	9	"
Canada	2	"
Denmark	2	"
Estonia	2	"
Siam	2	"

etc., etc.

The following States have obtained the absolute majority required and are therefore elected non-permanent Members of the Council :

Colombia	Belgium
Poland	Roumania
Chile	Netherlands
Salvador	China

The ninth non-permanent seat has still to be filled.

According to the Rules, a second ballot will be taken for the election of the ninth non-permanent Member of the Council. Voting papers should indicate only one name.

We will now proceed to the election.

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

Number of votes cast	49
Absolute majority required	25

The votes obtained were as follows :

Czechoslovakia	27
Finland	11
Portugal	7
Irish Free State	4

Czechoslovakia, having obtained an absolute majority, is therefore elected a non-permanent Member of the Council.

I have now the privilege and the pleasure of congratulating the States which have obtained non-permanent seats on the Council of the League.

A letter received this morning from the delegation of Uruguay will now be read. I should inform the Assembly that, despite the urgent request of the delegation of Uruguay, this letter could not, owing to precedent, be read before the election which has just been held. I understand that the contents have already been communicated unofficially to the different delegations.

The letter reads as follows :

[Translation.]

"The events, now made public, which took place at the private meetings of the delegations of the Latin-American States now at Geneva, impose upon the delegation of Uruguay the duty of bringing directly to the knowledge of the Assembly the reasons which prevented it from concurring in the procedure established by the delegations of the other States for the nomination of candidates to the Council from the Latin-American Republics.

"Under Article 4 of the Covenant of the League, the non-permanent Members of the Council are to be elected by the Assembly in its discretion, and by the duly prescribed majority.

"Nominations put forward in any way other than that prescribed can only be regarded as the expression of certain tendencies in some particular electoral group and, *in fine*, may fail to be in keeping with the general feeling of the electoral body. The Assembly, and the Assembly alone, possesses the right, the power and the authority necessary to select candidates, with due reference to the following factors :

- "1. The general interests of the League ;
- "2. The political circumstances of the moment ;
- "3. An equitable distribution of forces from the continental point of view.

"The Assembly can and should correct any tendency that is incompatible with international realities, if, for instance, it were confronted with nominations not in keeping with the common desires of any one continent.

"The adoption by a group of States of a system of voting — other than that of unanimity and more particularly of a system of secret voting such as has recently been the case — might have the highly regrettable result of enabling a group of delegates which by chance happened to be numerically stronger to impose its will not only upon all the members of that group but eventually upon the whole Assembly.

"It is essential to guard against so improper a contingency.

"The following is the actual position of Latin America in the League : of the twenty States of which it is composed, only twelve are now present at the Assembly. For various reasons, the following are absent : the Argentine, Mexico, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Costa Rica and Honduras. It is unnecessary for us to draw the Assembly's attention to the significance of this fact.

"In view of this very exceptional situation, we are entitled to enquire whether, from the point of view of the fair and adequate representation of a whole continent, it is right that six States, probably belonging to the same region, should be regarded as qualified, by means of a secret ballot in which they constitute a majority, to interpret in the Assembly of the League the real aspirations of the whole of Latin America.

"For the above reasons, therefore, the delegation of Uruguay is regretfully obliged to state that the meetings of American representatives, in which its own representatives have always taken a most sincere and cordial part, must be regarded by the Assembly only as an unofficial exchange of views and as admitting of no other interpretation.

"While emphasizing the above considerations, and persuaded that they represent the views of the Assembly also, the Uruguayan delegation has decided not to maintain its candidature to one of the three seats assigned to the Latin-American States at the time of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

"Our country, which has had the honour of sitting on the Council for four years, desires to convey to the Assembly its profound thanks for the confidence shown to Uruguay on more than one occasion, and to assure it that in the future as in the past it will remain loyal to the ideals of the League.

(Signed) J. C. BLANCO.
 GUANI.
 FERNANDEZ Y MEDINA.
 BUERO.

(Delegation of Uruguay)"

The President:

Translation: The Assembly has now to choose from the newly elected nine Members three who will retain their seats on the Council for a term of three years.

The Rules of Procedure governing the first ballot apply in this instance also.

I will ask Viscount Ishii and M. Scialoja to be kind enough to continue to act as tellers for this ballot and the next.

I would mention that any voting papers containing more than three names will be void. We will now proceed to the ballot.

The President:

Translation: The result of the ballot is as follows:

Number of votes cast . . .	49
Absolute majority required . . .	25

The votes obtained by the States were as follows:

Poland	44	votes
Chile	41	"
Roumania	30	"
Netherlands	16	"
China	6	"
Colombia	3	"
Belgium	3	"
Czechoslovakia	1	"

The following Members have therefore been elected, in conformity with the temporary provisions of the new Rules, for a term of three years:

Poland, Chile, Roumania.

The Assembly has now to choose from the remaining Members three to be represented on the Council for a term of two years.

The Rules of Procedure governing the first two ballots will apply here too.

I would mention that any voting papers containing more than three names will be void.

We will now proceed to the ballot.

The President:

Translation: The result of the ballot is as follows:

Number of votes cast . . .	49	votes
Absolute majority required . . .	25	votes

The votes obtained by the States were as follows:

Colombia	47	votes
Netherlands	47	"
China	34	"
Belgium	11	"
Salvador	4	"
Czechoslovakia	3	"

The following countries are therefore elected, in conformity with the temporary provisions of the new Rules, for a term of two years:

Colombia, Netherlands, China.

The others three Members of the Council are elected for a term of one year, namely:

Belgium, Salvador, Czechoslovakia.

38. — DESIGNATION OF POLAND AS A RE-ELIGIBLE NON-PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL.

The President:

Translation: I have received a request for re-eligibility submitted by Poland, which has just been elected a non-permanent Member of the Council. The request is submitted under paragraph 2 of Article IV of the Rules adopted by the Assembly.

I will read the paragraph in question:

"2. Of the nine Members thus elected in 1926, a maximum of three may be immediately declared re-eligible by a decision of the Assembly taken by a special vote by secret ballot, a separate ballot being held for each Member, and adopted by a majority of two-thirds of the number of votes cast. Immediately after the announcement of the results of the election, the Assembly shall decide upon the requests for re-eligibility which have been presented. Should the Assembly have before it more than three requests for re-eligibility, the three candidates having received the largest number of votes, in excess of two-thirds of the votes cast, shall alone be declared re-eligible."

I will therefore now read the request for re-eligibility submitted by Poland to the Assembly:

[Translation]

"By to-day's vote the Assembly of the League of Nations has elected Poland a Member of the Council.

"In conformity with the new Rules for the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, which were adopted by the Assembly on September 15th and which provide for the re-eligibility of the elected Members of the Council, I would beg you to place before the Assembly the request of the Polish Government that the Republic of Poland should be declared re-eligible under the temporary provisions of the above-mentioned Rules.

(Signed) Auguste ZALESKI,
 Minister for Foreign Affairs,
 First Delegate of Poland."

I propose that the Assembly should decide on this request for re-eligibility, and I may remind you that a two-thirds majority of the votes cast is necessary for a State to be declared re-eligible.

We will now proceed to a ballot by roll-call.

Each State will be called by name and a representative of the delegation will come up and place his voting paper in the ballot-box.

Those in favour of re-eligibility should write "yes" on their voting papers and those opposed should write "no".

The ballot is now open.

The President :

Translation : The result of the ballot is as follows :

Number of votes cast	48
Blank papers	4
Number of votes valid	44
Two-thirds majority	30
Votes in favour of granting the request	36
Votes against	8

The Polish request having received more than the requisite two-thirds majority, I declare Poland re-eligible for election to the Council on the expiry of her present term of three years.

Let me warmly thank M. Scialoja, first delegate of Italy, and Viscount Ishii, first delegate for Japan, for their kind assistance in acting as tellers at the many ballots we have held to-day. This has entailed a very great deal of hard work and I offer them the Assembly's thanks.

40. — QUESTION OF THE DESIRABILITY OF NUMBERING THE PARAGRAPHS OF THE ARTICLES OF THE COVENANT : REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE ON THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — I have just received the report of the Agenda Committee, which met at the conclusion of yesterday's meeting of the Assembly.

The text of the report is as follows :

"The Agenda Committee met on September 15th under the Presidency of His Excellency M. Urrutia and examined the draft resolution moved by the Honourable J.G. Latham, delegate of Australia, on September 10th, 1926, in regard to the question of the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the Articles of the Covenant. This draft resolution was referred to the Agenda Committee by a decision of the Assembly of September 14th, 1926.

"After a preliminary study, it was decided unanimously to propose to the Assembly that the following draft resolution should be referred to the First Committee :

"That the First Committee be requested to consider and to report to the Assembly upon the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the Articles of the Covenant published by the League."

If no one has any objection to make, I declare the report adopted and the question referred to the First Committee. (*Agreed.*)

The Assembly rose at 1 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THIRTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21st, 1926, AT 10.30 a.m.

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40. — INCLUSION OF THE QUESTION OF ALCOHOLISM IN THE PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS ; REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE ; REFERENCE TO THE EIGHTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE PROPOSAL OF THE DELEGATIONS OF FINLAND, POLAND AND SWEDEN.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the reading of the Agenda Committee's reports on two proposals submitted by members of the Assembly.

The Assembly will recollect that, at the meeting on September 15th, 1926, it decided to refer to the Agenda Committee the draft resolution on the question of alcoholism, submitted by M. Setälä, first delegate of Finland, M. Zaleski, first delegate of Poland, and M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden. As the draft resolution has been communicated to all delegations, it is unnecessary, I think, for me to read it. Accordingly, I will simply read the Agenda Committee's report.

"The Agenda Committee met on September 15th, 1926, at the Salle de la Réformation, under the chairmanship of M. Urrutia, and

made a preliminary examination of the draft resolution on alcoholism which was submitted by M. Setälä, first delegate of Finland, M. Zaleski, first delegate of Poland, and M. Löfgren, first delegate of Sweden, on September 14th, 1926, and referred to the Committee by a decision of the Assembly dated September 15th, 1926.

"The Committee, after examining the proposal, did not fail to appreciate the extreme importance of the question, which had not previously been placed before the Assembly, but considered that the problem, in the terms in which it was raised, did not appear on a first examination to be sufficiently clearly defined. For these reasons, and in view of the very recent date at which the proposal was submitted, the Committee thought it would be preferable to place it on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

"It was unanimously decided, therefore, to propose to the Assembly that, if the originators of the proposal agreed, the draft resolution should be placed on the agenda of the next session. In any case, the Committee feels bound to say that, in its opinion, the draft resolution could not be dealt with at the present session of the Assembly."

If no one has any observation to make, I shall take it that the Assembly is in favour of placing the question of alcoholism on the agenda of the next ordinary session of the Assembly. (*Agreed.*)

41. — QUESTION OF THE APPOINTMENT BY THE COUNCIL OF A COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE CERTAIN QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL: REPORT OF THE AGENDA COMMITTEE: REFERENCE TO THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE NORWEGIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : It will be recollected that, at the meeting on September 15th, 1926, M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, submitted a draft resolution to the Assembly. As it has not been possible for me to ask the Assembly to take a decision concerning the action to be taken on this proposal, I thought I should be complying with the Assembly's wishes if, with the consent of the General Committee, I requested the Agenda Committee to make a preliminary examination of the draft resolution so that it might be able to submit its report at the earliest possible moment.

In consequence of the expeditious procedure adopted, I am to-day able to communicate the Agenda Committee's report on this matter to the Assembly.

The text reads as follows :

"The Agenda Committee met on September 18th, 1926, under the Chairmanship of M. Urrutia. It has examined the draft resolution submitted by M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, on the subject of the appointment by the Council of a Committee to examine certain matters connected with the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

"After this preliminary study, it was unanimously decided to propose that the Assembly should refer to the First Committee the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee :

"1. To study the question of the single transferable vote and the principle of proportional representation in general, as regards the problem of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

"2. To report on the method of election of the non-permanent Members in sufficient time to lay the question before the next session of the Assembly."¹

If no one has any observation to make, I shall take it that the General Committee's proposal is adopted and that the draft resolution under consideration is referred to the First Committee, which is requested to take it into consideration as early as possible. (*Agreed.*)

42. — INCLUSION IN THE AGENDA OF THE PRESENT SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF THE QUESTION OF THE SETTLEMENT OF ARMENIAN REFUGEES: LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TRANSMITTING A REPORT OF THE COUNCIL.

The President :

Translation : As you will have seen from the agenda, I have received from the Secretary-General a letter covering a report of the Council dated September 16th, 1926, on the settlement of the Armenian refugees. The letter reads as follows :

"I have the honour to communicate herewith the report adopted by the Council at its meeting on September 16th, 1926, concerning the settlement of the Armenian refugees.

"As you will note, the last paragraph of this report reads as follows :

"The Council decides that this question shall be placed on the agenda of the present session of the Assembly."

"I should be very grateful if you would communicate the contents of this report to the Assembly at one of its next meetings."

The report of the Council mentioned in this letter has been distributed to the delegations in document A.70. 1926.II.

In order to save time, I propose that the Assembly should decide without further formality whether it is prepared to include this question in the agenda of the present session.

If nobody has any observation to make I shall regard the proposal as adopted. (*Adopted.*)

I suggest that the Assembly should refer this question directly to the Fifth Committee. It is similar in character to those with which the Fifth Committee is dealing and with which it dealt last year.

If no one has any observation to make, I take it that my proposal is adopted, and I will ask the Chairman of the Fifth Committee to submit the question to the Committee as soon as possible. (*Assent.*)

¹ See document C.299.M.139.V, page 143.

43. — WORK OF THE GREEK REFUGEE SETTLEMENT COMMISSION: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Greek Refugee Settlement Commission* (Annex 3, document A.71.1926.II).

I will ask the Rapporteur, M. van Cauwelaert, delegate of Belgium, and Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman of the Second Committee, to take their places on the platform.

(Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman, and M. van Cauwelaert, Rapporteur, of the Second Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. van Cauwelaert, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. van Cauwelaert, Rapporteur, read his report.

The President :

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

M. Caclamanos (Greece) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The documents communicated to the Assembly by the Rapporteur of the Second Committee on the subject of the settlement of the refugees in Greece place upon the representative of Greece the duty of saying a few words, first, in order to take note of the report of the Second Committee and, secondly, in order to request you to adopt the resolution proposed by the Committee.

First, in taking note of M. van Cauwelaert's report, I wish to offer him my deepest thanks for this very notable document, which gives so complete, so lucid and moving an account of the work accomplished in Greece for the settlement of 1,500,000 refugees (I venture to make a slight correction in the figures given in the report) under the auspices and with the aid of the League of Nations. To the aid afforded by the League I desire to pay yet another public tribute of gratitude.

May I make one observation on a passage in the report, which states that no restriction has been placed on the districts in which the refugees may be lodged? If this observation is to be taken as registering a fact or as a matter of purely historical record, we are in entire agreement. If, however, it was the Rapporteur's intention to introduce an allusion of any kind, will he permit me to submit one simple remark, of the accuracy of which his insight and sound judgment will convince him. If no restrictions of any kind have been placed on the settlement of the Greek refugees, this is because no demand for restrictions has been put forward; and the fact that no such demand has been put forward from any quarter proves that there was no ground for it to be put forward.

The explanatory account which the Rapporteur has just given you renders it unnecessary for me to detain you on the subject of the settlement of the refugees. The work involved, which was the legacy of an overwhelming tragedy, appeared at the outset to offer an insoluble problem, a problem likely to cause far-reaching unrest in South-Eastern Europe.

In July 1923 the Council of the League approved in principle and placed under its own auspices an international loan for £10,000,000 for the settlement of Greek refugees. The scheme only began to be carried into effect, however, towards the end of 1924, at the time of the session of the Assembly in that year. It was, moreover, unanimously recognised that the sum of £8,000,000, the amount remaining after deduction of the costs of the financial operations involved (the difference between the net yield of the loan and the nominal capital, bankers' commissions and publicity expenses) was inadequate. The nominal capital of the loan was finally increased to £12,000,000, from which a net sum of £10,000,000 was placed at the disposal of the Commission entrusted by the League with the work of carrying out the settlement scheme.

Meanwhile, Greece had expended more than £4,000,000, or one milliard drachmas, from her own funds to keep the refugees alive, to lodge and feed them — in brief, to preserve the human material which the League's Commission was finally to save from total destruction.

According to the moving report recently communicated to the League by Mr. Howland, the distinguished Chairman of the Refugee Commission, 750,000 refugees have already been settled by the Commission. Greek Macedonia has been completely transformed. In places where once there was uncultivated or waste land, field after field of rich crops can now be seen, stretching farther than the eye can reach. Smiling villages are arising everywhere among the fields, and rugged and contented workers till the earth and make it rich and fruitful. Whole towns are rising around Athens as by the wave of a magic wand. New industries are being founded and are developing all over the country. In a few years the sacrifices made by our nation, which has afforded the world an ennobling example of fellow-feeling with its kindred, will bring their reward in the increased wealth of the country thanks to the toil and labour of her newly acquired sons.

The League of Nations may be proud of having, by its kindly care, preserved and endowed with prosperity a population of one and a-half million souls. It has erected a barrier against the rising tide of resentment engendered in men's minds by poverty, hunger and privation.

Beyond all question, the League will desire to finish the work that is now in full swing, and will continue to give it its moral assistance and support. According to Mr. Howland, five million pounds will be sufficient to complete this work, which only requires the finishing touches. It will survive as yet another memorial to prove that the League is not a vain Utopian conception, but that, side by side with its task of international conciliation, pacification and collaboration, it is engaged upon a task which may perhaps be more modest and less spectacular, but is no less useful — namely, the material reconstruction and consolidation of countries which have been sorely tried by fate. So may the poverty and discontent which give birth to social and political unrest be gradually eliminated from the world and mankind may continue its onward march in peace, rejoicing in the work before it.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

(1) Has learnt with satisfaction that the work of settlement effected in collaboration between the

Greek authorities and the Settlement Commission set up under the auspices of the League has made continuous and satisfactory progress during the past year, within the limits of the available funds, which are now nearly exhausted ;

(2) Observes that this piece of work is attaining the results expected of it. More than one-half of the 1,400,000 destitute refugees who have entered Greece have been assisted to establish themselves and have become productive citizens. Apart from the humanitarian significance of the scheme, it is having permanent beneficial results in strengthening the economic life of the country and in promoting social stability ;

(3) Expresses the hope that conditions may be such that the money required may become available in due course for the completion of this work, which has progressed successfully under the League's auspices and the results of which have amply justified the association of the League with it.

The resolution was adopted.

44. — NUMBERING OF THE PARAGRAPHS OF THE ARTICLES OF THE COVENANT : REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : We now have to discuss the report by the First Committee on the question of numbering the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant.

(On the invitation of the President, the Hon. J. G. Latham, Rapporteur, and M. Motta, Chairman, of the First Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The Hon. J. G. Latham (Australia), Rapporteur read the following report and resolution¹ :

"On September 16th, 1926, the Assembly adopted the following proposal made by the Hon. J. G. Latham, delegate of Australia :

"That the First Committee be requested to consider and to report to the Assembly upon the desirability of numbering the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant published by the League."

"The First Committee unanimously approves Mr. Latham's suggestion and accordingly recommends the Assembly to adopt the following resolution :

"The Assembly instructs the Secretary-General to cause the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant to be numbered in all future editions published by the Secretariat."

He continued as follows :

The effect of adopting this resolution, if the Assembly sees fit to do so, will be that each of the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant will be numbered, and, accordingly, it will not be necessary, when referring to the Covenant, to count the paragraphs in the separate articles in order to discover any particular one. For example, the paragraphs of Article 22 (let us say) will be numbered 1, 2, 3, and so on and this will apply to each of the articles of the Covenant.

The Committee considers that this is a small but very desirable improvement and that its

¹ Document A.69.1926.V.

adoption will facilitate the work of the League itself, and will also facilitate the work of those who are interested in the League.

I, therefore, submit to the Assembly for its approval the resolution which I have read to you.

The President :

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

M Scialoja (Italy) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I do not propose to make a speech. The question before us is not of vital importance, and what I have to say is even less important.

While it would be an excellent thing for the convenience of those desirous of referring to the Covenant to number the paragraphs of the articles, we should, I think, make provision for future amendments and take into account the amendments already adopted.

If, then, the Secretariat confined itself to writing in the numbers in their correct order, so that paragraph 3, for example, did not come before paragraph 1, there would not be much point in the operation. It would be quite useless if every fresh amendment necessitated a new edition of the Covenant containing no references to the acts of a previous Assembly.

I would therefore urge the Secretariat, which, under the terms of the resolution, is to be responsible for this numbering, to adopt an elastic system, so that the fundamental part of the Covenant may always bear the same numbers.

I am not going to submit a proposal, but will give an example to show exactly what I mean : amendments constituting fresh paragraphs would bear the original number followed by (a) or (b), etc., so that the numbering would always remain the same and the reader could see at a glance that he was dealing with an amendment and not with the original text.

I think this suggestion might make the Secretariat's work more useful than a mere arithmetical operation.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution proposed by the First Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly instructs the Secretary-General to cause the paragraphs of the articles of the Covenant to be numbered in all future editions published by the Secretariat.

The resolution was adopted.

45. — WORK OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report on the work of the Preparatory Committee for the International Economic Conference (Annex 4, document A.76.1926.II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Loucheur, Rapporteur, and Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman, of the Second Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Loucheur, Rapporteur of the Second Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Loucheur (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Second Committee's report has been distributed to all delegations. It simply remains for me to explain as briefly as possible the proceedings in the Second Committee and the conclusions it has reached.

You will remember that, on September 24th, 1925, the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly unanimously passed a resolution inviting the Council to consider the expediency of constituting a Preparatory Committee with a view to the subsequent convening of an International Economic Conference.

In response to the Assembly's suggestion, the Council constituted this Committee, which has already held its first session at Geneva. The session, presided over by M. Theunis in the absence, through illness, of M. Gustave Ador, resulted in the compilation of lists of questions which constitute, as it were, the basis of the Preparatory Committee's present investigations.

The length of these lists and the number of questions included in them appeared somewhat alarming to certain delegations, which imagined that the Preparatory Committee was engaged in drawing up a long and involved programme which would obviously have doomed the Economic Conference to certain failure.

You may perhaps remember that, last year, when I explained the French delegation's proposal from this platform, I ventured to direct your attention to the danger of drawing up a programme which was not confined to a few essential questions. I also pointed out that the difficulty lay in determining the questions to be omitted from the programme rather than those to be included in it.

M. Theunis was requested by the Second Committee to report on the Preparatory Committee's work. He succeeded in completely reassuring those delegations which were somewhat alarmed by the contents of the documents distributed. He explained that, at the next session, to be held at Geneva on November 15th, the Preparatory Committee would proceed to eliminate questions which might later handicap the work of the Conference and would endeavour to fix the main lines of its discussions.

The Second Committee concurred in M. Theunis' views, and unanimous agreement was reached in regard to the chief points of the programme for the Economic Conference.

A second question, however, arose in the Second Committee, namely, the actual composition of the Economic Conference. This point was raised by Mr. Latham, delegate of Australia, and by the representative of the British Empire. Two suggestions were put forward.

Certain speakers thought that the Conference should consist exclusively of experts who would be free to express their personal views, without instructions from their Governments, so as to afford the Assembly of the League insight into the deep-rooted causes of present evils and the remedies to be adopted.

The British delegate urged that a Conference composed of representatives who had, as it were, received a mandate from their Governments would be apt to deal with certain delicate problems less frankly and boldly, and that it was accordingly essential that the members of the Conference should in no case be bound by instructions from their Governments.

Another view was advanced in opposition to the foregoing argument: it was suggested that it might be preferable to convene a Conference somewhat diplomatic in character, and consisting of representatives holding a mandate from their Governments with the possible ultimate object of concluding international conventions.

The Committee was from the outset unanimous in rejecting this second proposal. Accordingly, the forthcoming International Economic Conference will in no sense be a diplomatic Conference and will not be expected to frame international conventions.

Certain delegates, however — in particular M. Jouhaux, the delegate of France — pointed out that there was a risk that the importance of the Conference might be lessened and that it was possible, to put it frankly, that it might be deprived of all authority, if it were composed entirely of experts chosen or nominated by the League itself.

The Committee agreed on the adoption not of a hybrid system but of a system already sanctioned by experience. You will all remember the Brussels Financial Conference, which consisted of representatives who were appointed by the Governments, but were given absolute liberty to express their views with complete frankness and were not bound by formal Government instructions.

The Brussels Conference, it was pointed out, was composed of experts, and the usual pleasantries at the expense of Ministers of Finance, who may be described as greater or lesser experts, found an echo in our Committee. We thought that the definition of the word "expert" might give rise to controversy and difficulties. "Expert" does not bear quite the same meaning in English as in French. We thought, and we still think, that the Governments will show their wisdom by sending to the Conference only representatives possessing the twofold qualification of experience and knowledge.

The formula which we adopted was, therefore, that employed for the Brussels Financial Conference, namely, representatives appointed by the Governments, without formal instructions from the latter so that they might be perfectly free to study the important problems submitted to them.

A more heated, more lengthy and, in my opinion, more important discussion occurred as regards the date for the convening of the Conference. We had occasion — yesterday morning, in particular — to explain our views clearly on this point.

The world is awaiting with growing interest the results of the work upon which we are now engaged. It is a year — over a year now — since the Assembly decided upon the convening of an International Economic Conference. I do not say that the time since then has been ill-spent, for the Preparatory Committee has collected, and is still collecting, documents which will be of great use to the future Conference. But we must not run the risk of wasting our time in protracted preparation. In this connection there was placed before the Committee a line of argument which found an energetic advocate in the person of the delegate of Sweden. The suggestion was that you should be invited at this meeting to specify in the resolution on which you are about to vote a definite and final date for the coming meeting of the International Economic Conference.

I, personally, would be glad if it were possible to insert a clause convening the Conference for next spring. The representative of Sweden, less ambitious, proposed that it should meet before the next session of the Assembly of the League. Finally, by way of a compromise, he suggested that the Conference should be held in 1927.

The resolution now before you, however, mentions no date at all. It contains one of those

facile expressions which are sometimes found in recommendations of this kind. It says that the Conference shall be convened as soon as possible. I want to explain what we mean by the words "as soon as possible".

We adopted this text with the idea of compromising, in order to obtain general agreement, and this desire for general agreement has at all events led to some result.

I am convinced that the Committee was unanimous in its desire that the Conference should be held at an early date. We were reluctant, from motives of courtesy which you will readily appreciate, to interfere in the work upon which the Preparatory Committee is at present engaged.

Last year, you showed your confidence in the Council when you invited it to constitute this Committee. There is no reason for withdrawing that confidence now, and, since a Committee of the Council is following the work of the Preparatory Committee, we propose to renew our confidence by asking the Council at its December session to decide to convene the Conference at the earliest possible date.

The resolution now before you is, if I may say so once again, a declaration of our confidence in the Council and in the Preparatory Committee.

May I be allowed to add a few words, not in my capacity as Rapporteur, but on my own behalf? I wish briefly to explain why, in my opinion, we can no longer postpone convening the Conference.

Last year, when stating the grounds which led the French delegation to propose this important decision to the Assembly, I drew attention to the gravity of the financial and economic position in all parts of the world, and I said that the thought of what might happen within the next few years filled me with apprehension.

There has, as you are all aware, been no improvement in the economic situation since last year. I even believe that we are on the verge of serious crises in different countries. Some of those countries are making an energetic attempt to emerge from a position which, it is claimed, is the result of the war, but which, I assure you, may rather be the consequence of economic mistakes committed before the war.

The war, it is true, did not improve matters, but I question whether even before the war those responsible for the conduct of affairs of State understood quite what was happening in the world or realised that, as a consequence of over-industrialisation in certain countries, the food supplies of the inhabitants were being jeopardised by the failure to maintain a proper balance between agricultural and industrial production. This state of affairs, which arose out of pre-war conditions, was intensified by the war, and no measures, so far as I am aware, have since been taken to remedy this most alarming situation.

Every day, however, it becomes necessary to provide sustenance for increasing numbers, while new frontiers have to be taken into account as well as the circumstances in which certain countries find themselves as a result of the erection of Customs barriers hitherto non-existent between them and the countries with which they formerly traded. We must, therefore, come together and find a remedy for this problem without delay; otherwise it may become so acute as to pass beyond any possibility of solution.

Thus, while we are examining the problem in all its aspects in Preparatory Committees, the usefulness of which I fully recognise, timid attempts are being made in various quarters to remedy the situation, but the remedies found are not always properly thought out, and some

may even lead to further difficulties. To take just one example: You are all aware of the effort now being made to unite steel interests in Germany, Belgium, France and Luxemburg. I am among those who approve and heartily commend such efforts, but, unless they form part of a general plan and include as many countries as possible, they will immediately give rise to alarm. One of our colleagues, whose name I shall not mention, but who does not belong to any of the countries to which I have just referred, confided his fears to me. He said: "Are we to be left out of this steel ring?"

If, on the other hand, the Economic Conference had been convened, if it had formulated rules which would have made it possible to include more countries in rings of this description, if at the same time it had framed protective regulations ensuring State supervision, it would assuredly have done useful work and made a solid contribution towards the solution of the great problem of economic reconstruction.

There is a danger that, while we are still talking, timid and inadequate solutions, if I may repeat the term I used just now, may be attempted which will only serve to aggravate the situation which we desire to remedy.

There is another point. We were witnesses here very recently of an unforgettable event. But the peace for which we are working rests, we fully realise, upon insecure foundations. We have among us many valiant workers who are determined to consolidate that peace, but the Economic Conference would prove a most valuable adjunct in our task.

I pointed out last year that, if you are looking for the causes of past wars, their true origin will be found in the economic field; and, as M. Scialoja said, legal formulas alone are not sufficient to banish the spectre of war. We must seek out its causes, strike at the very root of the evil and endeavour to discover a permanent remedy.

In his eloquent speech a few days ago, M. Stresemann sketched out a general plan. He said: "We see how economic life is overleaping the old national boundaries and creating new forms of international co-operation." And he added: "We shall not obtain that end by erecting barriers between the countries."

I need not say that I agree with M. Stresemann and yet, in the midst of these discussions, we are daily raising up fresh barriers against one another. Is this logical?

I therefore ask you — if I may revert to the view that a solution of our present economic difficulties will promote the cause of peace — whether it will be possible to break down the barriers between nation and nation until a feeling of greater security has been created between them?

We are faced, then, with the conclusion that the solution of economic problems must promote security, and that security, if established, would prove an invaluable factor in the solution of economic problems.

At our next meeting — in all probability tomorrow — the Assembly will be asked to discuss the question of disarmament and to reconsider the great problem of security, so that this is a most appropriate moment for urging that the Assembly should also take steps to solve the economic problem; otherwise, all our efforts are doomed to failure.

I ask you, therefore, to approve, in the spirit in which it is intended, the very moderate resolution now submitted to you by the Second Committee. I would ask you, above all, not to lose sight of the great aim which we have in view. We are all agreed, as M. Briand said, that the time for bloodshed is

past — you all applauded him. There must be no drawing back. We must have courage to engage frankly, resolutely, loyally and confidently in combating the dangers which now beset the world. That is the great task to which you are called. The nations are looking to you for courage and determination.

The President :

Translation : Baron von Rheinbaden, delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

Baron von Rheinbaden (Germany) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before proceeding, as delegate of Germany, to explain our views on the International Economic Conference, which we have already discussed in Committee, I will venture, with your permission, to make a few observations of a general character.

When, last autumn, the Assembly adopted the suggestion put forward by M. Loucheur, delegate of France (who is to-day acting as Rapporteur), and decided to convene an International Economic Conference, Germany was not a Member of the League and, in consequence, could not give her co-operation in regard to that decision.

Even at that time, however, the Rapporteur made it clear that an International Economic Conference without the participation of Germany could only achieve partial success. To-day, for the first time, Germany can put before this Assembly her views on the Conference, and I will take this occasion to say that my country fully appreciates the noble principles and lofty ideals invoked by the Rapporteur when submitting his resolution.

The world-war gave a rude shock to the economic relationships which previously existed between the different States. In a number of countries it has called into being industries which in ordinary times would never have seen the light and, indeed, may not survive the restoration of normal conditions. Throughout a large part of the world the war has destroyed the purchasing-power of the masses. Export and import prohibitions and State intervention have diverted the normal current of economic life. Further, the increase in the number of frontiers and the re-establishment of great Customs barriers have led to a critical situation in the economic field and, as regards social conditions, have resulted in unemployment on an unprecedented scale.

Those countries in which the situation I have briefly outlined is still obscured by exchange fluctuations are endeavouring to reconstruct their economic life and to stabilise their exchanges ; but they again are faced with the problem of stabilisation and its social consequences. The only escape from the disastrous effects of the war, from the endeavour to apply the old principles to a situation to which they are no longer suited, is to educate international public opinion in the ways and means of bringing order out of the present chaos. Everywhere there are signs that this fact is beginning to be realised. An improvement in the means of communication and in modern technical methods for which mass distribution is essential has resulted in a general demand for the formation of large economic territorial units, undivided by Customs or other State-erected barriers.

On the other hand, it is sometimes said that such a territorial reorganisation and, in general, any international redistribution of labour would result in the collapse of existing undertakings and would increase unemployment.

A clear understanding of the special character of the age is an essential pre-condition of any epoch-

making change, and the Economic Conference is intended to bring about a more speedy realisation of the facts.

Allow me to say a few words on various matters of detail with which the Second Committee dealt. We, too, think that the Preparatory Committee should make certain questions of principle the main pivot of the Conference. I have already indicated the line we intend to take in this matter.

We also think that the Conference should not be confined to general principles. We must learn how to progress from one stage to another with a minimum of loss to the economic life of the various nations. As an example of this method, international agreements might be concluded covering the various aspects of international economics with reference to production and consumption. These agreements might pave the way for, and place on a practical footing, some kind of international distribution of labour. In this connection I would mention that, in the past few weeks, an agreement has been reached between the metallurgical industries of Germany, France and Luxemburg. It is hoped, too, that the Belgian industry will also shortly become a party to this agreement. Such agreements are not directed against the general interest ; this is clear from the fact that they were not concluded until the engineering industries had first been consulted.

The question of the composition of the Economic Conference was considered at length by the Committee. We agree that the Governments should have a considerable say in this matter, and should be given the task of selecting experts of world-wide repute. There is no doubt that public opinion in the various countries will ensure that only the best qualified persons will be selected. But these experts should also be free to express their opinions without being bound by the instructions of their Governments. Only in this way can their abilities be utilised to the full.

The actual date of the Conference necessarily depends on the progress made in the preparatory work, and should, therefore, be left to the Preparatory Committee, which enjoys our full confidence, and in whose work we have already had the opportunity of co-operating. The economic situation of the world, as I have just described it, requires that we should expedite not only the holding of the Conference itself and the decisions which it will take, but also, and more especially, the practical effect to be given to those decisions. The question of the best method of putting these decisions into practice will be one of the most important matters which the Conference will have to study.

The profound attention which this august Assembly is devoting to the matter of the Economic Conference and the very lucid account which the Rapporteur has given of the task before it will certainly do much to strengthen the confidence of the world, on which the outcome of the Conference will ultimately depend, and will also give public opinion in the various countries the weight which is the *sine qua non* of success.

The President :

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

M. Adelswärd (Sweden) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — During the Second Committee's discussion of this subject, which lasted for more than two days, I objected to the proposal, but this was not because I was opposed to the report which has just been

read. On the contrary, I congratulate M. Loucheur on his admirable work. My objection does not apply to the actual resolution now before you or its contents but rather to what it does not contain.

Of the three questions discussed by the Committee — the composition, the programme and the date of the Economic Conference — only one — the date — is dealt with in the resolution, and even on that subject all that has been done is to propose a recommendation by the Assembly that the Economic Conference should be convened as soon as possible. You are not even asked to recommend that the Conference should be held during the coming year. That proposal might perhaps have been dangerous, though for my part I cannot conceive why. Whatever the reason may be, I was very pleased to hear M. Loucheur himself express a wish that the Conference should be called as early as next spring.

As regards the programme of the Conference, the resolution has nothing to say on the matter, but the report proposes that only a small number of essential questions should be examined. Now, I believe that economists, big financiers and captains of industry throughout practically the whole world are all beginning to realise that the economic disease from which Europe is suffering is largely due to the existence of frontier barriers, and they seem to agree that the best remedy would be gradually to throw open these frontiers to free intercourse. That being so, I think the report should have contained some reference to this great truth; in this way the subject would have been brought to the notice of the whole world, which ought to have its eyes opened to the facts as soon as possible.

Is it not true of this question, as of all others, that public opinion is supreme? We have often said, and we all believe, that no great problem can be solved unless public interest has first been aroused and public opinion won over. That is one reason why I could have wished that the proposed resolution had been more definite and explicit. We must maintain and, above all, we must strengthen the prestige and authority of the League, but we shall never succeed in doing so by means of resolutions such as that now before us.

The President :

Translation : If nobody else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly notes that the Council has given effect to its decision of December 15th, 1925, by constituting a Preparatory Committee for the Economic Conference.

It realises that the general economic situation of the world calls more imperiously than ever for an effort towards international co-operation and makes it yet more necessary that the Economic Conference should be held.

The Assembly therefore hopes that the Committee will actively push forward its work, so as to enable the Economic Conference to be convened as soon as possible.

The resolution was adopted.

46. — TRAFFIC IN OPIUM AND OTHER DANGEROUS DRUGS: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the Fifth Committee on the Traffic

in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs (Annex 5, document A.74.1926.XI).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Veverka, Rapporteur, and M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, Chairman, of the Fifth Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Veverka, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Veverka (Czechoslovakia), Rapporteur :

Translation : In submitting to the Assembly the report on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs adopted as the outcome of the work done by the Advisory Committee during the current year, I have perhaps little to add to what I said last year, but I shall certainly have to repeat many of the points to which I drew attention then. The only method by which we can pave the way for the solution of questions so important as these is to build up a solid body of public opinion, a *communis opinio* of the nations.

The steady output of literature on the subjects, the associations that are being formed in all parts of the world, the work of the Churches, and so forth, are proof of the close attention with which our work is being followed. We must bring the utmost zeal and devotion to our task if we are to cope with the grave and alarming situation existing to-day.

The Fifth Committee fully realised the seriousness of the position, and it is with great pleasure that I draw your attention to the unanimity with which it approved, in particular, the measures to counteract the illicit traffic, and strongly recommended the early ratification of the Geneva Convention, which still further strengthens the engagements entered into under the Hague Convention.

The same unanimity was shown as regards the continuance of the struggle against this ever-growing danger.

In this connection I would once more dwell on the immense responsibility we should incur if the remedies applied proved inadequate, or if we failed to erect in time the barriers that are needed to save mankind from the destructive flood of opium and drugs.

There is one fact which, to my mind, increases that responsibility. Both the man engaged in mass-work under primitive labour conditions and the highly strung product of our times are so constituted mentally that they unhappily supply only too ready a market for the balance of the world's surplus production.

So much for the social side of the question. The man who lives by primitive daily labour takes opium; and the modern man, enervated and driven towards an exaggerated suggestive individualism — the sociological phenomenon of the age — craves for drugs.

The duty of the rulers of this world is to watch over suffering humanity until the day when the economic reformation of the one and the moral reformation of the other have been achieved.

It is in this spirit that I submit to the Assembly the resolution you have before you. It is my firm conviction and hope that the campaign against the scourge of opium and drugs will be carried on with ever-increasing energy and that this is the only war in which the League will never urge disarmament.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows :

1. The Assembly adopts the report of the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs, together with the resolutions contained therein.

2. The Assembly, impressed by the report of the Advisory Committee as to the gravity of the present situation in regard to the illicit traffic and by the resolution of the Committee that it was extremely difficult to secure an effective control of the international traffic in opium and drugs until the Geneva Convention has been brought into operation, urges on the Governments of all States Members of the League to proceed to ratify or adhere to the Geneva Convention so that, if possible, the ratifications necessary to bring that Convention into force may be deposited with the Secretariat before the end of the year.

The resolution was adopted.

7. — SUPERVISION OF THE PRIVATE MANUFACTURE OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION AND OF IMPLEMENTS OF WAR : REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Third Committee on the Supervision of the Private Manufacture of Arms and Ammunition and of Implements of War. (Annex 6, document A. 73. 1926. IX.)

(On the invitation of the President, M. Guerrero, Rapporteur, and M. Villegas, Chairman, of the Third Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur, read his report.

The President :

Translation : M. Escalante, delegate of Venezuela, will address the Assembly.

M. Escalante (Venezuela) :

Translation : Mr. President — I have asked leave to speak in order to propose a slight amendment to the draft resolution submitted to you by the Third Committee. Our delegation has just been officially informed that the Government of Venezuela has ratified the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms and Ammunition and in Implements of War. The instruments of ratification will be deposited shortly with the Secretariat of the League. This means that two ratifications have now been registered, those of France and Venezuela.

The second paragraph of the draft resolution now before us states that up to the present this Convention has been ratified by only one signatory country. May I propose to the Rapporteur, M. Guerrero, that the paragraph in question should be amended as follows :

"It notes that, up to the present, the Convention on the Supervision of the International Trade has been ratified by only two signatory countries, and hopes that the efforts which are being made to obtain the ratification of the principal producing countries will soon be successful."

I regret that I was unable to submit this proposal during the discussion of the report in the Third Committee, as our delegation had not then received the official communication from the Venezuelan Government.

The President :

Translation : M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, first delegate of Austria, will address the Assembly.

M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein (Austria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Austria has consistently followed with the greatest interest the efforts of the League to bring about a general reduction of armaments.

My country, firmly convinced of the very special importance of the task entrusted to the League under the first paragraph of Article 8 of the Covenant, in the interests of world peace, and having itself adopted a consistently pacific policy, hails with profound satisfaction every step taken towards the aim so ardently desired by thousands of mankind.

M. Guerrero's very remarkable report brings out the conditions in which, in the Third Committee's opinion, the League should endeavour to settle the difficult question of the supervision of the private manufacture of arms.

The delegation of Austria — a country which is now disarmed and is particularly anxious to bring to an end a state of affairs that is a greater menace to us than to other countries, but is assuredly a menace to the peace of the world — confidently welcomes in this report certain indications which appear favourable to the accomplishment of the task we have so much at heart.

The first of these is the fact that the resolution for the convening of the Conference on the supervision of the private manufacture of arms, proposed by the French delegation — France being as yet the only country which with Venezuela has seen its way to ratify the Convention — is based upon the hope that the valuable work achieved by the Preparatory Committee of the Disarmament Conference will result in the convening of that Conference during the coming year.

Secondly, the information given in the Third Committee as regards the efforts made by Great Britain to bring about an agreement between producing States with a view to making it easier for them to ratify the Convention on the Supervision of the Trade in Arms justifies the hope that the General Conference will produce a solution for the question of the ratification of this Convention, together with that of the reduction of armaments, and will result in the adoption of a Convention for the supervision of private manufacture. It is this hope which reconciles us somewhat to the provisional postponement of the Conference for the supervision of private manufacture, a Conference which should, in the opinion of many, be held at an early date. We bow to the considerations which led the French delegate to look for a solution of this question to the general Disarmament Conference rather than to the special Conference hitherto contemplated, and which take into account the views expressed by the Council on September 4th and unanimously endorsed by the Third Committee.

I would venture, however, on behalf of Austria to draw special attention to the very definite alternative laid down in the last paragraph of the proposal now before us, namely, the convening of the general Disarmament Conference before the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly, or, alternatively, the convening by the Council, without further delay, of a special Conference for the supervision of private manufacture. In the event of its proving impossible again this year for the general Conference to engage upon its general task, the resulting disappointment would inevitably be increased by the failure of the League to make at least an attempt to arrive at partial solutions, which might still serve to pave the way for and facilitate the general reduction of armaments.

The President :

Translation : M. Guerrero, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Guerrero (Salvador), Rapporteur :

Translation : When drafting the report which I have just read, I was not aware that Venezuela had ratified the Convention for the Supervision of the International Trade in Arms.

The Venezuelan delegate's statement has been duly noted and my report will be amended accordingly.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Third Committee, which will be amended to read as follows :

The Assembly,

Once again draws attention to the close connection which exists between the question of the supervision of the private manufacture of arms and ammunition and of implements of war and the international trade in these articles ;

Notes that, up to the present, the Convention on the Supervision of the International Trade has been ratified by only two signatory countries, and hopes that the efforts which are being made to obtain the ratification of the principal producing countries will soon be successful ;

Notes the work which has been carried out under the direction of the Council with regard to the supervision of private manufacture ;

Declares that it is in agreement with the Council as regards the connection which exists between this question and the whole problem now being examined by the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference ;

Lays stress upon the necessity of concluding a Convention as soon as possible, though it recognises that priority must be accorded to work in connection with the Convention on Disarmament ;

And proposes that the Council should continue its enquiries regarding private manufacture, in order that these questions may be included in the programme of the Disarmament Conference, if this Conference can be convened before the eighth ordinary session of the Assembly, or, if that is impossible, in order that a special Conference may be convened as soon as possible to deal with the matter.

The resolution was adopted.

48. — TRAFFIC IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION :

The President :

Translation : We will now pass to the last question on the agenda : the report on the Traffic in Women and Children (Annex 7, document A.75.1926.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Nagai, Rapporteur, and M. Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, Chairman, of the Fifth Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Nagai, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Nagai (Japan), Rapporteur :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The report which I am directed by the Fifth Committee to place before you this morning deals with the traffic in women and children. It is lamentable to reflect that this traffic has been left to take its course in the past. But no longer can such a blot, such an evil, be permitted to continue. It is a crime which is revolting to the conscience of the age in which we live and every strong and useful measure must be taken to eradicate it. In view, however, of its complex and delicate nature, it is necessary that we should go carefully to work in studying it and in considering what steps can be taken towards the end we have in view.

This august Assembly will note with satisfaction the progress that has been already made in that direction by the Advisory Committee; an account of that progress is given in the report of the Fifth Committee, which I will now read.

M. Nagai read his report.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Fifth Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly approves the report of the Traffic in Women and Children Committee and the resolutions contained in that report.

The resolution was adopted.

49. — COST OF LIVING AT GENEVA : REFERENCE TO THE FOURTH COMMITTEE OF THE REPORT OF THE SALARIES ADJUSTMENT COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — The Secretary-General of the League has communicated to me a report adopted by the Council at its meeting yesterday regarding the report submitted by the Salaries Adjustment Committee on the cost of living in Geneva (document A.78.1926.X).

The Council's report, which has already been laid before the Assembly, states that the Salaries Adjustment Committee's report should be communicated direct to the Assembly.

I think that, in order to avoid loss of time, the Assembly will agree that the report of the Salaries Adjustment Committee should be referred without

*further formality to the Fourth Committee, since the Assembly itself cannot take any decision on the conclusions of the report until the latter has first been studied by the proper Committee.

If there are no observations, I shall regard my suggestion as adopted, and the report will at once be communicated to the Fourth Committee. (Agreed.)

50. — QUESTION OF THE EXTENSION TO OTHER GROUPS OF REFUGEES OF THE MEASURES OF ASSISTANCE TAKEN FOR RUSSIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES : REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE BELGIAN DELEGATION.

The President :

Translation : The Belgian delegation has submitted to to-day's meeting of the Assembly the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly invites the Council to request the High Commissioner for Refugees and the

International Labour Organisation to consider how far the measures taken to give protection to, to provide employment for and to afford relief to Russian and Armenian refugees can be extended to other categories of refugees."

In order to avoid loss of time I will ask the Assembly to authorise me to communicate this draft resolution direct to the Agenda Committee. If the latter considers that it should be sent to a Committee, I would ask to be permitted to take this action without further delay.

If there is no objection, I shall regard this proposal as adopted. (Adopted.)

The President :

Translation : The next meeting of the Assembly will take place on Thursday, September 23rd, at 10.15 a.m.

Does anyone else wish to speak ?

The meeting is adjourned.

The Assembly rose at 1.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FOURTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23rd, 1926, AT 10.15 A.M.

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51. — FACILITIES FOR JOURNALISTS WHO ATTEND THE MEETINGS OF THE LEAGUE AT GENEVA: DRAFT RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE CHILIAN DELEGATION: REFERENCE TO THE AGENDA COMMITTEE.

The President:

Translation: M. Quezada, delegate of Chile, will address the Assembly.

M. Quezada (Chile):

Translation: Mr President, ladies and gentlemen — The Chilean delegation had the honour at the last ordinary session of the Assembly to propose and secure the adoption of a resolution recommending the convening of an International Press Conference to consider how it might be possible to assist in the transmission of news, thereby helping to reduce the risks of international misunderstanding by improving international relations, in view of the fact that this is one of the most effective means of directing the public opinion of the world towards moral disarmament. Useful preparatory work has already been done in improving the facilities granted to the Press.

A Committee of News Agencies met last month at Geneva, and very important and encouraging results were obtained.

We have no doubt that this work will be continued and that a meeting of Press experts might be held later on, as contemplated in the resolutions of the Council and of the Assembly.

The International Committee of Journalists accredited to Geneva might form the nucleus of the future committee of experts proposed in the Chilean scheme. If we begin by granting its members special facilities, the success of the scheme will be materially promoted.

Our idea of these formalities would be a kind of official recognition of journalists' cards. These would bear the holder's name and photograph and a recommendation, signed by the Secretary-General, which would enable the holder to obtain all assistance from Secretariat officials.

These cards have been of great utility to journalists, particularly in assisting them to cross frontiers. We know that the Association is most careful only to admit as members journalists of established reputation who are actually engaged in their profession. It has to-day 160 members representing the Press of twenty-five different countries; these representatives come regularly to Geneva to attend meetings of the League. Most of them have to cross a number of frontiers several times a year.

Supervision would be necessary, of course, and for this purpose the Association would have to forward copies of these cards to the various Foreign Ministries. I understand that it would be prepared to do this.

In view of the considerations which I have briefly stated, I venture to submit to the Assembly the following draft resolution:

"The Assembly of the League of Nations, with a view to facilitating the work of journalists who attend the meetings of the League at Geneva, recommends the Governments to consider the possibility of granting to bearers of identity cards issued by the International Association

of Journalists accredited to the League of Nations all possible facilities which will assist them to cross frontiers in the fulfilment of their professional duties."

The President :

Translation : M. de Jouvenel, delegate of France, will address the Assembly.

M. de Jouvenel (France) :

Translation : The French delegation strongly supports the resolution submitted by the Chilean delegate.

The President :

Translation : The Assembly is asked to consider a draft resolution, which has just been read and which will be printed and distributed to the delegations.

To avoid loss of time, I propose that the Assembly should at once decide to refer this draft resolution to the Agenda Committee. Should the Agenda Committee decide to refer the proposal to one of the Committees, I will ask for the Assembly's authority to forward it to the Committee in question without further formality, in order that it may proceed with its discussion of the proposal. (*A greed.*)

52. — RATIFICATION OF AGREEMENTS AND CONVENTIONS CONCLUDED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee concerning the ratification of Agreements and Conventions concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations.

(*On the invitation of the President, Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, and M. de Brouckère, Chairman, of the Sixth Committee, took their places on the platform.*)

The President :

Translation : Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire), Rapporteur :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Assembly will remember that I had the honour of laying before it a proposal the purpose of which was to secure, or to attempt to secure, the more rapid ratification of Conventions concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations. I proposed that the Council should be asked to appoint a Committee to see what could be done on the matter. My proposal was, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, referred to the Sixth Committee, and was very carefully considered, first by that Committee as a whole and afterwards by a small Sub-Committee.

In the circumstances, the Sub-Committee did not consider it worth while to ask for a fresh examination of the question by a Committee of the Council. It took some trouble to ascertain the actual state of affairs at the present time, and also to compare our procedure with that of the International Labour Organisation.

I do not know that we found out anything very new about the state of affairs here. I had already laid before the Assembly the facts which, indeed, are to be found in documents distributed to the Assembly. Everyone was agreed, both in the Sub-Committee and in the Committee itself, that some effort should be made to expedite the ratification of Conventions. The representative of the International Labour Office told us of the procedure adopted there. I need not recount it to this Assembly. In many respects that organisation is able to proceed more rapidly, or perhaps at any rate with fewer formalities, than we are. Its representative also showed us a very interesting form of diagrammatic report indicating the progress made in the ratification of the various Conventions concluded under its auspices, a report which is issued by the Office every month. One single page shows exactly the state of affairs. I think that all the members of the Sub-Committee were impressed with the technical nature of that report.

The representative of the International Labour Office also described to us the more elastic procedure which it was possible for that organisation to adopt in view of the provisions of the Treaty under which it exists. We felt that it was not possible for us to recommend that any drastic alteration should be made in our procedure. Such action could only be taken after a very careful discussion, and with the assistance and support of all the Members of the Assembly. Nor were we quite satisfied that even if such changes were made we should effect a material improvement in the rapidity of the procedure.

Nor did we think, for the reasons which I have already given, that it was well, at any rate at present, to ask the Council to appoint a Standing Committee to deal with this matter. We considered that it would be better at first merely to suggest that the Council should consider, at least every six months, the situation as regards the various Conventions signed or concluded under the auspices of the League, and should consider carefully every six months what steps, if any, ought to be taken to hasten the ratification of those Conventions. It is evident that the Council might decide to communicate directly with the Governments, asking for information concerning the difficulty in the way of ratification, or to take other steps which it might think fit in respect of each Convention.

The Sub-Committee — and the Sixth Committee agreed with it — thought that it would be better to leave a great deal of liberty of action to the Council in this matter, and all that we propose at present is that the Council of the League should be invited to ask for a report every six months on the progress of ratification and to consider methods for securing the more rapid bringing into force of the agreements and conventions.

I was particularly authorised to say that this must be regarded as an experimental measure; I hope that the Assembly will keep very careful watch over this matter, and if next year it is found that there has been no improvement, it will be for the Assembly to consider what further action could be taken. Meanwhile, I may perhaps be allowed to make an appeal to my colleagues to use their influence with their respective Governments — as I certainly will do with mine — to secure more rapid ratification of the agreements which the League has either authorised or supervised in connection with these very important international matters.

I beg to ask the Assembly to adopt the resolution proposed by the Sixth Committee.

The President :

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

M. Bastid (France) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have the honour to state that the French delegation fully concurs in the proposal which Viscount Cecil originated, and for which he has acted as Rapporteur. We do so, firstly, out of deference to the eminent delegate of the British Empire and, secondly, on grounds of principle.

We all know Viscount Cecil's chivalrous, almost religious, devotion to the League. We can all recall to mind his generous and efficacious initiative in countless circumstances, and we should be loth to let him feel himself a solitary champion of the League's cause.

There is, however, another aspect of the matter to be considered. France has always deplored the fact — and her actions have been consistent with her words — that the decisions passed at Geneva in matters of minor importance, and still more in matters of major importance, have not invariably been followed by tangible results. This city must not be allowed to stand as an oasis of faith in the midst of a desert of hesitation and doubt. The effect and influence of our acts here must, if necessary, overcome Governmental inertia. We can no longer tolerate two diplomacies pursuing a parallel course: the new diplomacy of Geneva, which works in a new spirit and a purer atmosphere, and the old diplomacy which, it would seem, has survived by some inexplicable paradox of history.

The facts, moreover, are arguments in themselves. The continual progress made by the League, the services it has rendered and the services it has endeavoured to render are eloquent pleas in its favour.

The measures agreed to by the Governments here, in an atmosphere in which the aspirations of the world converge, in which we hear the full and splendid harmony of the voices of the nations, must not be subsequently exposed to the risks of obstruction or delay. We are convinced that it will not be so, and France desires, in supporting Viscount Cecil's proposal, to reaffirm the unity and consistent purpose of her foreign policy.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Sixth Committee, which reads as follows¹:

The Assembly,

Observing with regret that many conventions and agreements concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations have remained ineffective, or have only come into force after undue delay owing to the difficulty experienced in securing a sufficient number of ratifications by the signatories:

Desires to call the attention of the Governments of all States Members of the League to the necessity for taking all measures in their power to facilitate and expedite the ratification in all cases of conventions and agreements signed in their name;

And decides to invite the Council of the League to call for a report every six months on the progress of ratification and to consider methods for securing the more rapid bringing into force of these agreements and conventions.

The resolution was adopted.

¹ Document A.83.1926.

53. — WORK OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE: REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Third Committee on the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Disarmament Conference. (Annex 8. Document A. 93. 1926. IX.)

(On the invitation of the President, M. Paul-Boncour, Rapporteur, and M. Villegas, Chairman, of the Third Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Paul-Boncour will address the Assembly.

M. Paul-Boncour (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Deep emotions, legitimate emotions, have swept over this Assembly, but the League would be neglectful of its duty and the objects for which it was created if it remained content with outbursts of this kind, which, however far-reaching in their effects, are merely illustrative — though supremely illustrative — of its progress, if, strengthened by the addition to its numbers and buoyed up by these very emotions, it failed to benefit thereby, to further that practical work which constitutes its *raison d'être* and is, as it were, the true condition of its permanence. By a fortunate chance we have had to deal at two consecutive meetings with the two great tasks to which the League, fortified by the advent of its new Member, must henceforth devote itself unsparingly, until it has succeeded in concluding the international conventions which should be the practical outcome of its efforts. One of those tasks is to convene the Economic Conference, which is destined to mark a further stage in the League's progress, its purpose being to seek out the deep-rooted causes and possibilities of war, to discover international regulations for the production and distribution of wealth, for the allocation of raw materials, and for the whole question of migration, so as to ensure that what are sometimes vital necessities shall be obtained here by common consent and not by victory in the field. The other task is the task summed up by the hopes of mankind in one comprehensive word — disarmament, but more cautiously defined by the Covenant as the limitation and reduction of armaments.

This is not merely one of the objects of the League; it is, as it were, the woof that supports the whole fabric. It has its origin and its basis which are laid down by the terms of the Covenant. Compare Article 8 of the Covenant and the Preamble to Part V of the Peace Treaties and you will see that it forms part of these Treaties themselves. None of you will be surprised that the representative of France should appeal to these Treaties, for he is in duty bound to refer to them. This matter, I repeat, forms the very basis of the League. The special limitations imposed on certain countries are prescribed solely as the pre-condition of the reduction of armaments that is to follow.

If at each successive stage on the way towards this goal the road has seemed to stop, has seemed longer than we thought, these apparent and temporary checks should not serve as a test of the success of our best work. Our best work has been achieved solely by the measure of our anxiety

for the limitation and general reduction of armaments, by the sustained effort, in strict adherence to the Covenant, to combine the limitation and general reduction of armaments with the general conditions of security. The Treaty of Mutual Assistance and the Protocol were discussed solely in the light of this final goal.

I will not refer again to these various stages on the road: I will begin at the stage on which you are asked to give your opinion to-day in the light of the results which have been reached and which the Third Committee asks you to note as a starting-point for the next stage. The extent of that next stage the Committee has endeavoured to define. You will remember the feeling of perplexity, uncertainty and discouragement which marked the opening of the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly last year. Our path was, if I may say so, strewn with wreckage. The Protocol, which had been so conscientiously debated by the representatives of every nation during the fifth ordinary session of the Assembly, and had raised so many hopes, had not been ratified by certain of the Powers. The number of these Powers and, in particular, their legitimate importance in the world made it impossible, without their ratification, to bring the Protocol into force.

With the failure of the Protocol the chancelleries appeared to be bending their thoughts once again towards the idea of separate agreements, but this reminder of memories too recent to be buried aroused anxiety among many members of the Assembly.

First the Third Committee and then the Assembly performed an act which is the basis of all that is great in man: namely, an act of faith. We perform this act when, by a spiritual effort, we transcend, without forgetting, the realities of the moment.

On the assurance given by the representative of the British Empire, Sir Austen Chamberlain, and by myself on behalf of France, the Assembly performed this act of faith. It undertook to believe that these agreements would not be a contravention of the principles which it had so long debated, and which were simply a development of the Covenant. It undertook to believe that they would signify the full application to a particularly susceptible spot in Europe of the principles discussed by the Assembly.

As it was realised that the work would be protracted, that the consideration of technical matters, however irksome at times, would be the indispensable prelude to discussions among statesmen, the Third Committee and the Assembly proposed that this work should be put in hand at once, without even waiting to learn the results of the conversations which the diplomats of Europe were going to hold in a certain town not far from Geneva.

Events have justified this act of faith. The Locarno Agreements, as you know, are not a revival of the old diplomacy, of those old arrangements which, always defensive in appearance, always bore, as it were, a sharp point of offence directed against one or other of the groups concerned.

The Locarno Agreements are a reaffirmation and not a denial of the principles of the Protocol. This fact the Third Committee, in agreement with the First, will — in a very notable report, to be expounded, I believe, by M. Markovitch — ask you to note. The Agreements recognise the arrangement whereby the organisation of peace will henceforth depend, not on special conventions between two or more States, but on agreements based on arbitration. Sanctioned by this guarantee, the Locarno Agreements appear in their true light as a part of the Protocol which has been employed

to meet certain risks that seemed particularly threatening.

They justify the arguments I adduced last year. They even prove the truth of the simile I used when I likened the stream of life to the stream of a river, the river may refuse to follow the ideal course prescribed by the mind of man, and the reflection may be broken by the passing waves of the river, but in the end its outlines are recomposed intact and meet to form again the perfect picture.

Other agreements have been made and old agreements remodelled in the light of these principles. Doubtless M. Markovitch will tell you to-morrow that the Third Committee is almost perturbed by the multiplicity of these agreements. He will probably propose to the Assembly to consider ways and means of examining the contents of these treaties, which are submitted each year under different titles to the League for registration. I will not detain you with this part of our work — it will be expounded to-morrow.

I may affirm that those States which stood aside from the Locarno Agreements have endeavoured to solve the problem of security on the basis of arbitration sanctioned by the guarantee on which the Protocol is founded. In relation, therefore, to some of the more acute problems of Europe, if not, alas! to all, the Covenant has been amplified by these special agreements in a manner determining the essential objects of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and of the Protocol, and hence the Third Committee notes that the political conditions laid down in Article 8 of the Covenant for the Reduction and General Limitation of Armaments have, in part at any rate, been fulfilled. Consequently, as soon as the technical work to which I have referred has been completed, it will be possible, on the decision of the Council — for this, of course, is our constitutional practice — to convene the Conference on the reduction and limitation of armaments.

As a result of the action taken by the Council, as a result of the decision of the Assembly, the Conference will no longer find it necessary to undertake certain work. The broad lines for a questionnaire have been worked out and the questionnaire has been submitted to the Preparatory Commission and modified and developed by it. This Committee subsequently referred these questions in their entirety to the technical, military and economic organisations. When, in the Third Committee, the delegate of the Netherlands, who is also Chairman of the Preparatory Commission, expounded and amplified the written report supplied to us by the Secretariat, we thought — with the caution required by any prediction — that the work was so far advanced that its final completion might be expected in the months following the present session of the Assembly.

The zeal with which this work has been consistently conducted justifies me in paying a public tribute to the body of experts who for some months past have exerted their best endeavours here, in order to furnish you with the material without which a Conference for the limitation and reduction of armaments would be impossible or would be doomed to certain failure. If we pursue the prudent course of allowing this work to be completed, within a relatively short time, as we are assured it will be by the members of the Committee of experts — or those who have remained at Geneva and whose heart and soul are in their work — and if the Governments, whose experts have, I understand, kept them in touch with their proceedings, are notified in time for a Preparatory Commission to be convened at the beginning of next year, then there is every reason to hope that the Conference for the limitation

and reduction of armaments may be able to meet before the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

In this connection—I am not now speaking as Rapporteur, for the question has not yet been discussed by the Assembly; I am stating my personal opinion, or rather the opinion of my country—the interval which must elapse between the meeting of the Preparatory Commission and the convening of the Conference will obviously depend upon the view adopted as to the work of the Committee and of the Conference itself.

I personally do not think that the Preparatory Commission can conceivably take the place of the future Conference, as regards the actual work to be done. In my view, its duty is simply to draw up and define a programme, whereas the Conference, and the Conference alone, will be entitled to enlarge that programme and frame a Convention.

My reasons for this view are twofold. In the first place, certain nations are not represented on the Preparatory Commission, and, considering the vital interests involved, I doubt whether they would agree to any hard-and-fast arrangement being made before they themselves had had ample opportunity of expressing their opinions.

In the second place, let us try to imagine what will actually happen; let us try to picture the Conference actually seated round the Conference table. What will the Conference be? Will it be a Conference at which the League, acting on its own authority, is to determine the armaments of every nation? That is a sheer impossibility. It might have been possible, if we had taken our stand on a different plane, if we had conformed to the conception which M. Léon Bourgeois threw upon the Conference table at the Hôtel Crillon during the actual framing of the Covenant, the conception by which the League itself would be the sole depository of the international forces of the world.

It would have been possible under the Treaty of Mutual Assistance or the Protocol. These were based on the same conceptions as those I have mentioned—only each was more elastic than the last whereby the States would of course have kept their respective forces; but the League, in virtue of a general system of security designed to permit of rapid action to prevent or intervene in disputes, would be responsible for general security—and would assure it—since it would have at its disposal the land, sea and air forces determined beforehand by whichever of the two Conventions we had adopted—the Treaty of Mutual Assistance or the Protocol. The League would in that case have been justified in inverting the problem, as it were, and in laying down what armed forces should be allowed for each country, since the aggregate of these armed forces would constitute the instrument of security it was endeavouring to create. I am accusing no one; nothing is more futile than recrimination. I simply wish to put the balance-sheet in all its truth before you.

You will not misunderstand me when I say that the Covenant does undoubtedly constitute a very real guarantee of security; through the instrumentality of conciliation and arbitration it brings into the world a spirit hitherto unknown.

At the same time, without those precise definitions of which we have been in search, there is no sure, no immediate guardian of international security, and each State must first decide what is needful to ensure security for itself.

A Conference for the limitation and general reduction of armaments, which, for the reasons I have indicated, would be perfectly feasible,

must therefore be regarded not as a Conference at which the international organisation will lay down the limitations and reductions to be imposed, but as one at which each country will propose such limitations and reductions as it thinks fit. The delegates will not merely sit round the Conference table and discuss general problems. Each one must state, with reference to the requirements of general security and any special conditions resulting from separate agreements, what he regards—in the well-chosen terms of Article 8 of the Covenant—as the lowest point consistent with national safety.

Each country will state its case and submit its proposals, and since, in my view, the first serious act of the Conference will be to receive these different contributions, matters cannot proceed very far until the Conference actually meets.

It is obvious that the States will not entrust confidential information of this nature to a Preparatory Commission the outcome of whose proceedings no one can yet foresee. Neither will they assume the grave responsibility of committing themselves until the Conference has met to discuss that information.

But there could be no Conference, there could be nothing but a registration of views, if these concrete proposals on which the success of the Conference depends were left in their original form. The whole value of the Conference will consist in an exchange of views and in the observations which the different countries will present as a result of the comparison of the various proposals with one another, a comparison which may, nay must, involve the amendment and, let us hope, the reduction of the proposals themselves. Friendly and courteous discussions will be held between the delegates, for they will be men who have agreed to meet together in the cause of peace.

But if these discussions are to be of any value, if they are to bear fruit, the subject must be clearly defined beforehand.

Suppose some countries cited, in support of their claims, their population, or the fact that they had no natural physical frontiers, or the difficulties of mobilisation, or any other factor. Consider the position in which the Conference would be placed if, in order to assess these conflicting claims, it were obliged to start the technical investigations on which our special Committees are now engaged. Now do you realise the importance of those investigations? Their value lies first and foremost in the fact that they are a means of testing those general arguments which may be advanced in support of the proposals which will make a Conference on the reduction and limitation of armaments a necessity.

Now do you realise why, despite the inevitable delays so often misunderstood by an ill-informed public, the work which is being done by the committees of experts is the *sine qua non* of what I might call—to use an expression which is somewhat feeble in comparison with the enormous interests at stake—a useful and profitable conversation between the States taking part in the Conference?

If we adopt this view of the matter—and I for my part can adopt no other—I cannot conceive of a conference for the limitation and reduction of armaments resulting in a simple enunciation of general principles or—to take the opposite view—a mathematical scale to be uniformly applied irrespective of differences of situation.

If you view the Conference as I do, what will be its result? And why are we so emphatic

If these countries are to come to the Conference with the freedom of mind and loyalty of heart that are the essential condition for the success of a congress of this kind, they must be certain that the problem has been considered in all its aspects — and not in order to make it yet more complex, but in order to head straight for those points that are susceptible of solution.

We, gentlemen, are not living in times when war is waged with the lives of others, as in the paintings of those old Dutch masters — those artists of the country which we asked to preside over our work for disarmament, because her proud warriors exist now only in her glorious history and in the genius of her painters. War is no longer waged as in the pictures of Van der Meulen, in which fashionably dressed gentlemen look on at the manoeuvres of armies of the strength of a modern division. If that were so, the question of a Disarmament Conference would probably never have arisen. It was the sense of immense suffering forced on public opinion in every country by the size of modern armies that induced the peoples to bring pressure to bear on their statesmen and to ponder the problem in search of a solution. Public opinion is our judge, public opinion will listen to no excuse for unpardonable delay.

To-day the position is changed. Countries now stake the whole of their existence in a war. They throw their entire resources into the scales. In the blood and mire of the trenches the men of three generations from every country stood shoulder to shoulder. Old men and young boys alike entered the fray. To maintain these enormous armies supplies and raw materials are required, and ships and railways to transport them. Battles that were won of old by the marching power of soldiers are now won by motor-cars and railway trains. Further, there would seem to be a law though we refuse to accept it as inevitable — whereby even the triumphs of man's genius, things that should be devoted solely to the purposes of life, are immediately usurped for the work of death. There is now not a single chemist working in his laboratory whose discoveries may not be utilised in the event of war. Even those who have, so to speak, endowed man with wings — man who seemed to have been created to walk the earth — have, when all is said and done, simply provided new instruments of destruction. How great, but how infinitely tragic, the gesture with which, but a few years before the war, an aged, white-robed man, with hand uplifted to Heaven, made the sign of benediction on the first aeroplane to fly above the gardens of the Vatican.

Well, since this is so, since in modern warfare a country's real power of aggression lies in the genius of its sons, the number of its railways, its economic products, factories and ships, this potential war strength — a term which it was my good or evil fortune to coin for it has earned for me much hostility in certain quarters — this potential war strength is a self-evident reality, a reality which cannot be disregarded when we study the problem of disarmament. When, therefore, we regard the question in all its component parts, are we forced in despair to the conclusion that the problem is insoluble? No, never!

The analysis carried out by our technical Commissions signifies two things. It signifies, first, that a Conference on the limitation and reduction of armaments would be impracticable without a League of Nations — a League resolved to achieve its task, a League consisting of nations determined to meet each and every undertaking to which they subscribed in signing the Covenant. The question of potential war strength, the analysis of all the different factors that at the present time go to

make up a country's power of aggression, will assuredly not complicate the problem so greatly as to render it insoluble. On the contrary, they will show that there is only one method of eliminating inequality as regards war resources, thereby enabling the nations to come to the Conference determined to make it a success. That method is to apply Article 16 of the Covenant, and nothing more. Article 16 in itself constitutes a definition of potential war strength. What is this obligation — for an obligation it is — that bids each and every Contracting State withhold all means of aid from the State guilty of aggression, that bids each and every Contracting State place the whole of its resources at the disposal of the State attacked, that requires all States whatsoever, if they are Members of the League, even though in no way engaged in the struggle, to enable the State attacked to obtain all it requires for its defence against the aggressor?

Although the international spirit is still, I am afraid, somewhat weak, because we do not yet quite realise that there is no justification at all for armed forces unless they are intended to be used some day against some State declared by the Court of Arbitration and the Council of the League to be an aggressor; although, too, the Covenant very wisely makes no provision for military, air and naval assistance except in the form of a recommendation, yet an obligation does exist: there is the obligation — and it is a very real one — to make recommendations in the event of a contingency actually arising.

Let it be clearly understood that we are going on as we began, that at each stage of disarmament we shall have to make fresh adjustments to improve the working of the Covenant and, more particularly, to increase the speed with which its provisions can be put into operation.

Yet another lesson emerges. It is the second important point in this analysis, which some have found over-complex, though this complexity and consequent slowness were unavoidable. This very complexity teaches us that if we really desire to arrive at a practical and at any rate partial solution of the problem we must attack all the elements of it that are capable of settlement. We must try to effect reductions wherever they are obviously needed, in whatever constitutes a permanent feature or can be definitely measured, or in whatever, by good fortune, can be shown to be a most serious menace to peace or to be most likely to prevent the League from playing its proper part.

Public opinion is not deceived. The public, with its common-sense view of things, sees eye to eye with the experts. The armaments we chiefly need to reduce are those which constitute national burdens; I refer to the armaments permanently maintained in peace-time — soldiers in barracks, warships in port or at sea, aeroplanes ready to pounce upon neighbouring countries. It is in connection with this burden of permanent peace-time armaments that the race in armaments exists.

These are the burdens which the public has in mind when it waits with impatience, but with hope, for the conclusion of our work. And it is not wrong, for with its common sense it sees clearly that these are the burdens which are crushing down the peoples, swelling budgets, sapping national vitality, using up labour and raw material for the work of death instead of for the work of life, which is so vital a necessity after all the suffering and death with which the world has been visited. These armaments, too, constitute the gravest danger to peace. Not that I accept the mistaken idea that disarmament is in itself an essential condition of peace. The essential condition of peace is security.

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But it is equally certain that insecurity, with the competition in armaments which it entails, creates a situation which will eventually lead some nation to yield to temptation and fly to arms in an attempt to recover its expenditure and lighten its burdens. By throwing its peace-time forces into a neighbouring country within the space of a few hours there is a very real danger that that nation may forestall the League's action and so render it inoperative.

The Covenant exists. The moral obligations it involves cannot be denied, and neither can its political obligations. When we consider the safeguards it contains, the indispensable conditions it lays down, the rule of unanimity it enjoins, the serious nature of the action necessary to decide the grave question whether a given country shall be adjudged the aggressor, thereby calling down upon itself the reprobation of the whole world—when we consider all this, we cannot but realise that the operation of the Covenant is necessarily slow.

Let us be frank. Let us look facts in the face and so come to a better understanding of them. The *sine qua non*, the essential outcome of any Conference, is this: no nation in the world shall be permanently in a position to attack either on land, on sea or in the air, and so prevent the League from taking conciliatory action and carrying out its mission of arbitration and active intervention.

Such is in broad outline—though I apologise sincerely for having spoken at somewhat undue length—of my own conception of what a Conference on the limitation and reduction of armaments should be, and such, in my view, will be the outcome of its deliberations.

I think a picture such as that which I have delineated, though it may not perhaps be entirely accurate, was necessary, now that you are about to ratify—as I have no doubt you will do—the Third Committee's proposals; now that the hour of the Conference is drawing nigh, so that you may be able to obtain in advance some idea at any rate of what its nature will be. So will you see your hopes fulfilled, and you will also be spared disappointment.

Yet we must take heed. The hour is sounding, the time is ripe for us to take the first step, but I still emphasise—and public opinion must be made to realise the fact—that it is no more than a first step.

I repeat, the time is ripe to take this step, now that the League has happily been enlarged by the entry of Germany. It is ripe also because we have created the right moral atmosphere, which only those who were not here can deride. The time is ripe, because certain of the nations which are most deeply concerned in this question have now concluded special agreements defining the essential conditions of security.

We must not let this hour pass unheeded. I am confident that a Convention of some kind, however small its scope, will definitely be concluded to stop the race in armaments. I am sure of this, because I am equally apprehensive that, but for such a Convention, we shall quickly see the resumption of that race in armaments which has so grievously afflicted both Europe and the generation to which we belong, and which was once the nightmare of a whole continent for nearly fifty years.

When we have obtained fresh resources through the financial recovery for which we are striving, and towards which the Economic Conference will afford so valuable a contribution; when the vision of war, which still remains to blind even the closed eyes of those who have once seen it, begins to fade; when our generation has been

succeeded by a generation which has never experienced war, then the horrors of the battlefield will be no longer even a memory, and all that will be known of war will be its beauty and its heroism, recorded on the page of history and by the hand of art.

In conclusion, then, I repeat: the hour which is sounding to-day would have sounded in vain had we not firmly resolved to follow the way which has been opened to us, and we should see once again that which all of us here, I am firmly convinced, never wish to see again.

The President:

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

M. Villegas (Chile):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen—On behalf of Chile I give my full support to the report before you and to the resolution submitted to the Assembly. I should be very glad to see the preparatory work for the Disarmament Conference hastened on, so that our hope that the Conference may meet before the next session of the Assembly may be realised.

We do not wish this because the question of the reduction of armaments is of direct or urgent importance to my country. It has often been said from this platform that the problem has not for us either the same aspects or the same acuteness as it has for Europe, and that we are not threatened with the perils of armed peace, since our armaments are not even sufficient for our own national security. The only question, therefore, that affects Chile and the other countries of our continent is the prevention of any possible race in armaments.

These different standards, due to the political, economic and geographical conditions of our country, which are so unlike those of Europe, point to the need for regional agreements as the medium for the solution of our own particular problems; this, indeed, was pointed out in the Preparatory Commission alike by the representatives of the Argentine, Brazil and Chile.

It would be quite wrong to suppose that these characteristics in any way lessen our interest in the solution of the general problem of disarmament, which is an indispensable condition for the maintenance of peace. Materially, the last war proved to us that an armed conflict brings disastrous consequences even to the most distant countries. Morally, the only reason for our presence here and for our sincere adherence to the League of Nations is our fervent desire to collaborate in the organisation of world peace.

My country has already given proof of this desire; in America, by submitting to arbitration all its international problems that have arisen in the last quarter of a century; here, by its co-operation in all the steps taken in the cause of peace, by the signature of the Protocol of 1924, and by its constant efforts to promote the universality of the League, for Chile is convinced that the increase of the League's power constitutes a guarantee for the future of international relations, of which it is the safeguard and should become the ideal embodiment.

During this seventh ordinary session of the Assembly the League has made an important step forward towards universality. Chile welcomed with enthusiasm the admission of Germany, which had been awaited so long, and she has no doubt of happy and beneficent consequences of this event. We are also watching attentively and, I venture to say, with optimism, the collaboration of the United States of America in the Preparatory Commission on Disarmament.

Though we harbour no illusions as to the complete co-operation of the United States of America in the League's work in the near future, we hope that a satisfactory solution will be found in respect of the reservations attaching to her signature of the Statute of the Court. They ear 1926 will then have been marked by two events of outstanding importance — the entrance of Germany into the League of Nations and the adhesion of the United States of America to the Permanent Court of International Justice.

We welcome with great satisfaction the increasing co-operation of the Argentine Republic with the League, for we attach great value to the assistance of this great nation, which is both a sister and a friend. At the International Labour Office, on its Governing Body, on the Preparatory Commission, and on the important Committee on the reorganisation of the Council, everywhere the Argentine has given evidence of its enlightened collaboration and the high qualifications of its representatives. All this encourages the hope that, when constitutional difficulties have been overcome, the Argentine will take the place belonging to a country which is one of the most progressive of our continent.

These happy events and hopes are, it is true, darkened by one poignant regret. No one can hide the loss we have sustained through the absence of two countries which have afforded us their generous and loyal collaboration since the birth of our institution. We deplore the absence of Spain — a European Power bound to us by ties of blood, culture and sincere affection. We dare to hope, so great is our desire, that she will once again take her seat among us.

My country has special reasons for giving particular expression on this occasion to the regret we feel at Brazil's decision. We respect her motives, but we are deprived of the valued collaboration of a great sister nation of our continent, united to my own country by a friendship that, throughout our history, has never failed.

I trust the Assembly will forgive me if I take this opportunity to express the very sincere wish of the Chilean delegation that the Council will be able to find means — in supervising the general interests of the League, and at a suitable moment — to satisfy Brazil's needs and enable her to resume her place in the League.

Chile, which is loyally attached to the ideals of the League and its work of peace, and has always fervently desired its universality, will feel profound joy when all the sister nations which are not represented or which have left us return and work with us again.

The President :

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

M. Connène (Roumania) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The work already done by the experts of Sub-Committee A of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference, on which I have the honour to represent my country, constitutes a remarkable achievement. I might even say that the whole of military science has been passed in review, that every theory, every doctrine has been examined.

As the result of approximately one hundred and fifty meetings, an enormous wealth of knowledge has been acquired. Never, I believe, has a more scientific study been undertaken with

this ultimate object in view than the one the results of which will shortly be submitted to you.

I feel deeply distressed, therefore, when I hear criticisms levelled against this Sub-Committee or detect a sceptical and superior smile on the lips of many. We hear on every side that we are not progressing as quickly as we should.

Just imagine: for ten, for twenty thousand years, ever since the first ape-man made war on the second ape-man, who came to rob him of his prey, man has made war on man. We have behind us centuries upon centuries of what may be called the "increasing momentum" of war, ruins, death and suffering — and we expect in the course of a few weeks to find a solution for a problem of such vast dimensions! This cannot be.

Does this mean that we are authorised by the very immensity and complexity of the task before us to stand idle, to sign an open confession of failure? Do not misunderstand me.

No, gentlemen. When we signed the Covenant of the League, after those hours of terror through which we lived, we entered into solemn undertakings towards our own nations, towards our dead, towards our children. The nations are crying out for peace, they are waiting only for peace, and they realise that there can be no peace unless the first step, at all events, is taken to bring about disarmament.

Complete disarmament? No. They know that for generations yet this cannot come to pass; but they realise that something at least can and must be done. What that something is we must endeavour to determine in the Preparatory Commission. A vague, nebulous, faint and fugitive possibility is emerging to-day from the shadows, is assuming a definite outline and beginning to take shape, and soon, we are convinced, we shall be able to place it before you, tentatively, perhaps, but with the certainty that we have done all that mere human effort could achieve, and, as M. Paul-Boncour said just now, we have accomplished one stage in the onward movement.

This exhaustive work, the fruit of deep reflection and days of laborious endeavour on the part of indefatigable enthusiasts and idealists, will soon be in your hands. It constitutes a tangible, an incontestable achievement.

Away then with this paralysing scepticism! Away with this feverish impatience, this anxiety for haste even at the expense of thoroughness!

I venture to think that it would be wiser, as indeed the Roumanian delegation suggested in the Third Committee, to give no undertaking to finish our work by a definite date.

We know from experience that Conferences prepared with undue haste invariably end in failure. Failure may be permissible in any other matter, but failure in the matter of disarmament might have effects so tremendous as to jeopardise the very future of this great institution. We dare not run such a risk. We have no right to do so. Let us pursue our work unwearyingly, concentrating on the glorious ideal before us and inspired by our common belief in and devotion to the cause of peace.

The President :

Translation : The discussion on the report of the Third Committee will be continued to-morrow at 5 p.m.

The Assembly rose at 12.55 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

FIFTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24th, 1926, AT 5 P.M.

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54. — GIFT OF THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO THE LIBRARY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS. INTERNATIONAL INCIDENT IN CHINA.

The President :

Translation : M. Chao-Hsin Chu, first delegate of China, will make a declaration to the Assembly.

M. Chao-Hsin Chu (China) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Acting under instructions received from Peking, and in the name of the Chinese delegation, I make the following declaration to the Assembly.

In the first place, I have pleasure in declaring that, on my recommendation and in conformity with the statement I made last May in the Committee on the Composition of the Council, the Chinese Government will present to the Library of the League of Nations a complete set of the Chinese Encyclopædia as soon as its reprinting is finished. We Chinese claim that this Encyclopædia is the largest of its kind in the world, and we are making this appropriate gift to the League for the purpose of international intellectual co-operation.

In the second place, I desire to state the facts with regard to an international incident which has just occurred in my country. According to the information received by the Chinese delegation, those facts can be summarised as follows.

On July 8th, August 2nd and 29th, several British merchant ships sailing under the names of *Tyenkong*, *Wanliu*, *Chaili*, sailed up the Yangtse at full speed. A number of native wooden ships and small boats were wrecked by these British merchant ships and over one hundred passengers, military officers and soldiers were drowned; goods and silver were also lost. When the Chinese authorities sent soldiers to make enquiry on board these British merchant ships, they were interfered with by a British cruiser which happened to be on the spot. Moreover, the British cruiser threatened

the villagers on both shores of the river with the points of its cannons. The Chinese authorities were obliged to detain the British merchant ships and took up the matter with the British Consul in Chungking.

Unfortunately, before this case was settled, a much more serious incident occurred. It was reported that a British gunboat arrived at Wanhsien on September 5th and opened fire on the gendarmerie in the town, killing over a hundred of them. Following this, other British cruisers used their big guns to bombard the town of Wanhsien. Over one thousand houses were destroyed and thousands of civilian lives were lost as the result of the bombardment. The Chinese soldiers were obliged to return the fire in self-defence.

My Government has also informed the Chinese delegation that instructions have been given to the local authorities to settle the matter peacefully if possible. Since this is such an extraordinarily serious incident of international importance which, if developed, would endanger the peace of the Far East, the Chinese delegation is instructed to make known these facts to the Assembly as a matter of record.

The President :

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

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have heard with some astonishment the statement which the Chinese delegate has thought it right to make from this tribune. He did not give me or my Government any kind of notice or intimation that he was going to raise this matter, or was going to make any such statement to the Assembly. I cannot but regret that this very strange method of procedure prevents me from replying in any detailed way to his remarks. I happen, however, to know sufficient about the facts, as reported to the British Government, to say at once that we do not in any way agree with the statement that the Chinese delegate has made, and that our view of the incident is entirely different from that which he has laid before the Assembly.

I am able to agree that the matter is the subject of negotiation in China, and it is to be hoped that a peaceful and friendly settlement will be reached. I cannot pretend to think that such a statement as that just made by the Chinese delegate is in any way likely to assist in obtaining a peaceful and friendly settlement of the question.

The President :

Translation : It is impossible to open a discussion on a question which is not on the agenda. I therefore close the present discussion.

55. — WORK OF THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION FOR THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE : CONCLUSION OF THE DISCUSSION ON THE REPORT OF THE THIRD COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the continuation of the discussion of the report of the Third Committee regarding the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference.

(On the invitation of the President, M. Paul-Boncour, Rapporteur of the Third Committee, took his place on the platform.)

M. Quezada (Chile) :

Translation : Mr. President — M. Villegas, Chairman of the Third Committee, cannot be present at the meeting, as he has been obliged to leave Geneva. He therefore begs you to excuse him.

The President : Viscount Cecil, delegate of the British Empire, will address the meeting.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — We were privileged yesterday to hear a very remarkable speech by M. Paul-Boncour on the subject of disarmament. It was a speech such as we have become accustomed to expect from that speaker; that is to say, it was a finished and admirable oration, setting forth with great force the point of view which he holds.

Broadly speaking, it is a great satisfaction to me to know that I am in full agreement with what our Rapporteur has said. I could not help feeling that there were two of his auditors who must have heard that speech with great satisfaction. One was M. de Jouvenel, and the other myself. Some three or four years have passed since we were able to arrive at an agreement, which was sanctioned by this Assembly on certain broad principles, upon which it might be hoped successfully to base a policy of disarmament, and it is certainly a very great satisfaction to know that those broad principles, adhered to by M. Paul-Boncour, are now regarded as fundamental to any policy of disarmament which can hope to secure the approval of the nations.

It is now generally admitted that the limitation and reduction of armaments, as M. Paul-Boncour very properly preferred to put it, must go hand in hand with security; that disarmament, if it is to be effective, must be general, that security may be reached either regionally or by general agreement and that, as our Rapporteur very truly said, many advantages would accrue if only a general scheme of security could be attained. All those considerations have become the commonplaces of the question, and I cannot help hoping that other matters, which at present are to some extent controversial, will also become matters on which general agreement may be assumed.

M. Paul-Boncour mentioned a matter which has been a subject of great discussion, both inside and outside the League, namely, the question of what is called a "potentiel de guerre". I have always believed that there is no substantial difference of opinion on that question and that very soon the controversy will be wholly historical. So it is, I hope, with other questions. M. Paul-Boncour referred to the question of control, a matter about which I am not very perturbed. I believe very strongly that when we reach an agreement on the broad general question of disarmament, such differences of opinion as may still exist on the question of control will, as it were, automatically disappear.

Let me tell you a story that is current in my country. If two men have a question between them concerning which they are in agreement on ninety-nine points out of a hundred, while they disagree on one point, it is said that if they are Scotch they will talk only about the one point, that if they are Irish they will talk only about the ninety-nine points on which they are agreed, and if they are English they will avoid the subject altogether. I do not know whether that is a true appreciation of the national characteristics of the people that dwell in the British Isles, but I do know that the procedure attributed to the English in that story has a great many advantages to recommend it,

since, if the parties are agreed on ninety-nine points out of one hundred they will usually find that if they do not discuss unduly the one point on which they were disagreed, the progress of events will show that the importance of that point has been very much exaggerated. I venture to hope that, in connection with the question of control, we shall find that general maxim of human controversy to be as true as it is in other cases.

I welcome the immense progress which the problem before us has made, — progress which was demonstrated not only by the speech of M. Paul-Boncour itself, but by the underlying assumptions on which it was based — because I have always held, and I have ventured to express that opinion more than once from this tribune, that the question of disarmament is absolutely vital to the League of Nations. It is what our American friend called the acid test of the whole procedure and conception on which the League rests. It must succeed. We cannot even contemplate the possible failure of this movement.

I say this not only because of the manifest danger which threatens peace so long as armaments continue to exist on a war scale in the various countries, the continual threat of aggression which they must represent, not only because the maintenance of these armaments is a tremendous strain on the finances and on the prosperity of every country, but even more because of their psychological effect on the nations of the world. So long as these armaments exist, so long as you are to conduct your public affairs with the sub-stratum, the underlying understanding that sooner or later war may come upon you, so long as that is your condition, the cause of peace has immense difficulties with which to contend. The whole education of the people must be coloured by that fact. The people must be continually reminded of the sacrifice which they may be called upon to make. They must continually be trained to contemplate war as a duty and as an end which may at any moment be forced upon them by their love of their country. The whole education, the whole psychology, the whole training of the people will be coloured by this conception, and, therefore, until you can really cut at its roots, until you can remove this conception, until you can divert the minds of the people from war and battles and armies and direct them towards peace, prosperity and industry, so long will the danger to peace continue and so long will the work of this League be hampered and impeded.

I say, therefore, that we must succeed. And what is the condition of success? The condition of success is this: that the Conference on Disarmament shall only take place, the countries shall only be summoned to it when full and complete preparation for it has been made. I believe it to be a maxim, with scarcely any exception, that international conferences succeed in direct proportion to the completeness of the preparation which has been made beforehand for their work. That is the reason which makes preparation so vital. Unless it is complete, success will be far more difficult; indeed, it may be impossible. There are some people who say: "Call your Conference immediately. Let it begin now. Let the nations begin to discuss disarmament straight away". I believe that no counsel is more fatal for the success of disarmament than that. I have always been a strenuous supporter of the full preparation for that Conference.

I welcome the great zeal, the great energy, the great skill, the great knowledge that have been displayed in the technical Commission which has been considering this matter. I noticed that one

of the speakers yesterday suggested that the merits of those technicians had not been adequately acknowledged. That idea would certainly be very remote from any thought of mine. I believe, on the contrary, that they have done admirable work, and that they have shown a zeal and a devotion to the cause which is worthy of the highest appreciation and commendation.

In this great matter, however, the questions which, in the end, will really determine the failure or success of the Conference are not only the technical military, naval and air questions, or even the technical economic questions, but the broad political question which underlies the whole problem. What is that question? It is simple enough. What, broadly speaking, is to be the attribution, the allocation, of armaments to the various nations? What proportion is each nation to be content to accept as sufficient to meet its own essential interests? That is primarily a political question — that is to say, it is a question which goes to the very root of the existence of each State, to the very foundation on which the whole political system of Europe, and indeed of the world, is built.

This is the question on which the Governments of the various countries will have ultimately to give a lead and take a decision, and no one who is not blind can fail to see the enormous responsibility and difficulty which will rest upon the Governments when they have to take that decision. It means that they have to take upon themselves to say: "What armaments can we accept? What armaments can we put forward? How low can we strike the balance of armaments between ourselves and our neighbours consistently with the safety of the country and the great trust which has been placed upon us by the populations which we represent?" That will be a tremendous decision to take. But I personally do not doubt that, difficult as such a decision must necessarily be, the solution of the problem is perfectly possible, perfectly easy, in a way, provided that the peoples of the world are really willing and are really in earnest in the pursuit of disarmament, provided that they really recognise that this is the great political change of the future, the great international political change on which the whole peace of the world may ultimately depend.

The question then arises: "Are the peoples in earnest? Are the Governments which represent them really in earnest?" I know that everybody is in favour of disarmament — as long as it is confined to all the nations except the one to which the speaker belongs! It is said in my country — this is a very well-known story, and I apologise to my fellow-countrymen for repeating it — that a body of elderly judges once met to draw up the terms of an address of congratulation to their sovereign. The draft of the address began as follows: "Conscious as we are of our own infirmities", whereupon objections came from several different parts of the room, and one of the judges suggested a small change in the drafting which satisfied everybody. He said, "We had better begin 'Conscious as we are of one another's infirmities' ". That is the attitude which, perhaps, in some cases is too often assumed with regard to disarmament. We are all conscious of the danger of other people's armaments. Yet, in spite of this, I am convinced myself that there is a profound desire for disarmament amongst the people. I am convinced not only that M. Paul-Boncour was sincere, as he obviously was, in his speech yesterday on this subject, not only that his Government is sincere, which I do not doubt, but that, broadly speaking, all the Governments meeting together in the Preparatory Commission are equally sincere.

To my mind, it is a great achievement on the part of the Preparatory Commission — even if they accomplish nothing else it would be a great achievement — to make it clear to any impartial observer that the countries represented on the Commission really do desire disarmament, whatever may be the opinion of individuals, and no one can look into the individual mind. The members of the Commission came to Geneva conscious that they dared not, in the face of their people, say anything except that they were in favour of disarmament and ready to take all reasonable measures to effect it. I believe that this has already been accomplished, but there remains, as I have said, the great problem of the figure for disarmament, and I am quite confident that the Disarmament Conference will meet in vain unless the most careful preparation has been made in order to promote the possibility of success as regards that point.

That is why I confess to having had some doubts whether the Third Committee was really right in trying to fix even a remote date for the meeting of the Conference. I myself would do nothing which could possibly indicate to those entrusted with the preparatory work that they would be justified in accepting anything less than complete results for their work. It is vital that their work should be complete, and though I earnestly hope that the Conference may meet at the earliest possible date — and I should rejoice as much as anyone here if it were possible for it to meet before the next Assembly — I, personally, would far rather postpone it for six months or even for twelve months if by so doing we could secure a more complete preparation, and greater prospects of ultimate success. I am convinced that a meeting of the Conference which failed to achieve any result would be the greatest possible disaster to the cause of peace since the foundation of the League of Nations.

I do not doubt that this is a difficult matter. I do not doubt that the preparatory work will call for courage, insight and prudence, that it will call for courage also from the Governments concerned. I know that this work is going to be a great test for all Governments and all peoples, but I believe that they can accomplish it; but they can only accomplish it if the Governments feel that they have behind them the convinced support of public opinion in their respective countries and the public opinion of the world. This seems to me to be almost the most important step that any of us can take during the coming months. We must spare no effort to bring to bear behind this great cause the public opinion of our own country. A great responsibility rests upon all of us who are here as delegates. We shall be looked to by our people to tell them what it is that is really essential for the peace of the world and of Europe, and the attitude of the populations who are looking to us for guidance will depend very largely upon the conviction and the vigour of our answer in this matter.

I will venture to add one more word. It is not on us only that the responsibility rests; perhaps it rests still more on the gentlemen and ladies of the Press. They have here a great responsibility, as they always have. I know that it is dull to say that things are going well, that, on the whole, the cause of disarmament is advancing smoothly and peacefully, that it is much more amusing and much more readable to write some interesting story of combinations and intrigues and desires for domination and duplicity displayed by various individuals and countries.

I read only the other day a most interesting and vivid account of some transaction in which my country and another were engaged, in which we

were held up as desiring to obtain some obscure domination for ourselves and some equally obscure destruction for others. The story, I need not say, was totally and absolutely destitute of foundation. It made, I dare say, good reading, but I doubt whether it served the cause of peace. I know it must be difficult, very difficult even, for the most conscientious writer not to say sometimes what he, no doubt, genuinely thinks about the conduct of foreign nations and foreign statesmen; but I beg you in this case to remember the vast issues and the vast moment of the question which we are discussing.

There are enormous difficulties in our way — difficulties of prejudice, difficulties of tradition, difficulties of fear, difficulties of long-ingrained opinion and education. We are trying to do something which has never yet been successfully accomplished. We are trying to do something without which peace can never be secured. This is a tremendously difficult task. We have, indeed, two great assets in the righteousness of our cause and in the fundamental and convinced, yea, the passionate support of the populations of the world. They desire disarmament, whatever other people, their rulers or other guides, may think. I venture to ask the Press to make clear beyond dispute the righteousness of our cause and to make the support of the people so vocal that no Government, however timid or however unwilling, can fail to carry out to the best of its power this great, this vital cause for peace, for prosperity and for happiness.

The President:

Translation: Dr. von Schubert, delegate of Germany, will address the Assembly.

Dr. von Schubert (Germany):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — You will hardly expect me, at the end of a long session, to rehearse in full the question of the reduction of armaments, or Germany's attitude towards it.

The German point of view, which is in keeping with the interests of the League, is, moreover, a matter of common knowledge. Even before her entry into the League, Germany eagerly welcomed the opportunity of assisting in the work of the Preparatory Commission. Her representatives on that Commission and on the Sub-Commissions have co-operated actively in framing the various draft replies to the questionnaire prepared by the Council. You are familiar with the differences of opinion manifested in this connection. They are sufficiently clear from the Minutes, as are the difficulties arising out of every attempt to find a common formula. Throughout the course of the proceedings, the German representatives have kept the general interest before them. They believe that, in the present circumstances, the reduction of armaments must be regarded as the supreme task of the League, and that, in seeking to accomplish that task, the League is working not only for its own consolidation but also for the benefit of all mankind.

It would be easy to pass in review the various obstacles that have arisen or that may yet arise to prevent the conclusion of any agreement for general disarmament worthy of the name, and we might readily formulate definite criticisms or express our disappointment in regard to certain points. The meetings of the Preparatory Commission will afford our delegates an opportunity of discussing all these questions in detail. The only things that matter here and now in this Assembly are the principles to be applied and the aim to be pursued.

M. Paul-Boncour, yesterday, in an eloquent speech, stated clearly the principles upon which

any attempt at disarmament must be based. He referred to Article 8 of the Covenant. These principles, as the French delegate pointed out, are also to be found in the Preamble to Part V of the Treaty of Versailles.

Special limitations, he said, had been imposed on certain nations, but only as a preliminary to the general reduction of armaments that is to follow.

As regards the object of our endeavours, we are all assuredly agreed we wish to put an end to the insecurity to which the different countries are exposed, as the result not only of the race in armaments, but of the inequality of armaments, as it exists at present.

It was stated, however — merely, it is true, as a supposition and in order to avoid possible disappointment — that an international convention for the reduction of armaments would in itself constitute a considerable advance, even if it amounted merely to the fixing and acceptance of the *status quo*.

We too feel that it is essential to proceed by easy stages, but consider that the fixing of the *status quo* cannot be regarded as a genuine advance, for we contend that the preparatory work should be directed from this moment towards the final object, which is to reduce the existing disproportion between the armaments of the States Members of the League, and thereby fit the League more perfectly for the accomplishment of its mission.

No one can fail to be aware of the enormous difficulties which still obstruct the realisation of any general plan for the reduction of armaments. No one can be blind to the political and technical obstacles that must still be overcome.

The German delegation does not in any way overlook realities to be taken into account in a matter so delicate as that now before the Assembly. We realise that nothing but perfect loyalty and that desire for mutual understanding of which the Assembly, at this session, has given such conspicuous proof, can serve to clear the path which leads to our common ideal.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will read the draft resolution submitted by the Third Committee :

The Assembly takes note of the report submitted to it by the Secretariat and the very full information furnished to the Third Committee by the President of the Preparatory Commission on the work of that Commission, its technical Sub-Commissions A and B, and the Joint Commission.

It expresses its complete satisfaction with the work performed and thanks those who have contributed to it.

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

If no one else wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolution as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

56. — WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTELLECTUAL CO-OPERATION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : We will now pass to Item 3 of the agenda : Report by the Second Committee on the Work of the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation (Annex 9. Document A.80.1926. XII).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Munch, Rapporteur, and Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman, of the Second Committee, took their places on the platform).

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. Munch (Denmark), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — You have before you the report of the Second Committee. I need not therefore read it, but will confine myself to emphasising the most important points.

When the Assembly during its second ordinary session, on the proposal of M. Léon Bourgeois, passed a resolution creating the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, there were sceptics who doubted whether it would be possible to achieve any thing in this direction within the organisation of the League.

The necessity was recognised, it is true, of reviving the intellectual co-operation which had come into being prior to 1914 and which was interrupted by the war. It was not quite clear, however, how the League could succeed in organising intellectual co-operation.

Nevertheless, the Committee was instituted, and eminent savants from various countries were appointed to serve on it. No member of this Assembly will, I am sure, fail to agree that the Committee has accomplished a most important work. It has facilitated the resumption of relations between savants in former enemy countries. It has even set up new organisations and promoted intellectual contact in directions not thought of before the war. Every year its work has grown and become more concrete. The Committee on Intellectual Co-operation is now a permanent organisation, and its work constitutes a most important part of the League's activities.

The Second Committee was gratified to note that during the past year the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation has again made very considerable progress.

It has not only continued and carried further the work already undertaken before the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly, but has also begun valuable new work.

The scheme for the establishment of the International Institute in Paris which was under discussion last year has since been put into effect and all doubts as to its character and utility are now dispelled. The Second Committee was unanimous in recognising the impartial character of the Institute from the very outset. It was happy to note that the Institute, by its collaboration with the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation and the Secretariat, has already been of great assistance in further defining and widening the basis of this particular work.

The Second Committee expressed its grateful thanks to the Polish and Czechoslovak Governments, which have offered subsidies to support the Institute so generously established by France. It urges the other States to follow this example, if possible.

The Committee noted with satisfaction that there has been a rapid increase in the number of National Committees, whose activities are proceeding in a most satisfactory manner. It also noted that international meetings have been held between the Directors of the National University Information Bureaux and between representatives of International Student Associations.

Three Governments represented on the Committee have offered the hospitality of their countries to international conferences on this work. Roumania and Switzerland have both extended offers of hospitality to the International Conference on the Popular Arts. Great Britain has offered to make arrangements for a Conference of Teachers to study the best means of instructing young people in the organisation and objects of the League and inculcating the spirit of international co-operation.

This latter question was raised at the last ordinary session of the Assembly, and during the past year the first steps were taken to find a practical solution. One of the chief results of the year's work is the creation of a Sub-Committee of experts, which has already formulated two series of proposals and suggestions: these, as you have no doubt seen, are to be found among the documents submitted to the Assembly and communicated to the Governments of the States Members of the League.

Nearly all the speakers in the Second Committee showed special interest in the education of young people in the ideals of international co-operation. This interest is, in my opinion, fully justified, for the future of the League depends upon the evolution of the minds of the coming generation. The present generation, which began its work during the progressive period preceding the Great War and upon whose minds the horrors of war have been vividly impressed, resumed its task of international co-operation after a period of transition, after the passions of war had subsided, and so was able to resume the work already begun. The men who lived through the war have made a beginning with the new world organisation which is to ensure a happier future for the coming generations. But that organisation will collapse unless the generation into whose hands it will pass a few years hence understands how to employ it.

Our chief task must therefore be to win over the young to the cause of peace, peace between the different nations and peace between the different classes, and to make them realise the necessity of international co-operation on a basis of peace and justice. It thus becomes imperative that they should be instructed in the objects and organisation of the League.

But, while engaged in organising such instruction and in carrying on a vigorous propaganda, we must never lose sight of the fact that the coming generation, which never knew pre-war conditions and will soon have but a vague idea of the horrors of the Great War, will judge us mainly by our actions. Its respect for and interest in the League will depend primarily on the League's activities. If we can make real progress towards the attainment of our object, if we can bring about moral disarmament, effect a radical reduction in armaments and promote economic co-operation between the different countries and classes, then the younger generation will assuredly be converted to our cause.

The Second Committee, having examined the reports on the work of the League's organs in this field, recommends that the Assembly should express its satisfaction at the progress achieved by passing the resolution submitted to it.

The President :

Translation: Dame Edith Lyttelton, delegate of the British Empire, will address the Assembly.

Dame Edith Lyttelton (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I am not going to keep you more than a few moments, but I wish to say a few words about the work of the Sub-Committee of Experts mentioned in the report which you have just heard.

I believe, as we all must, that the future of the world depends upon the babies. To-day, as I walk in the park and see the children playing on the grass or sitting in the perambulators with that curious unconsciousness which is one of their greatest charms, I say to myself, "Here is the new barbarian race coming to the gates of Rome", or, to use Ibsen's phrase, "Here are the people who are knocking at the door". The question is: When they open that door, what are they going to find? I feel that it is not enough to make the world a better place; we have also to make the children to understand what the League of Nations is trying to do.

The problem of the method to be adopted in order to teach the children about the League of Nations is difficult. It is not easy to make the League of Nations an exciting subject. It is not easy to use the League for propaganda purposes. Someone has told me that they were looking through a series of pamphlets issued by some organisation — I do not know what the organisation was — which was trying to do propaganda work for the League of Nations. One of the pamphlets bore on the back of it two pictures. The first picture was of a number of glorious young men leaping over a trench, guns in their hands and bombs bursting all around them, and on the top was written "The Old Way". The second picture showed a number of gentlemen just like yourselves sitting round a table talking, and on the top of this was written "The New Way". I do not think that anybody can say that that is very good propaganda, and, of course, it was dismissed at once. I only tell the story with a view to showing how difficult it is to put the ideas of the League of Nations into a shape that children can understand.

I am not one of those who believe that you can teach internationalism without teaching nationalism. It is necessary to give children first of all a pride in their home and their nation and after that a pride in the part which their nation can play in world affairs. The child spirit pours itself into a multitude of moulds, and it is vital that none of those moulds should be broken, but that all of them should contribute to the beauty and richness of the human race. The child must be made to take a pride and glory in its own nation, and it is very difficult to teach children that pride and that glory unless you deal with the question of battles and fighting. It is inevitable also that we should make them proud of the heroisms which have characterised their past history and the sacrifices which have been endured. We have then, I think, to take a different attitude, not to gloss over the brutalities and horrors and cruelties of the past, but to let the children understand that past history contains a great deal which should be done away with now and that in the future it is necessary to build in a different spirit.

We are not very far forward with our history yet. Every nation has to look back upon a history stained with blood. The roots of every nation are fixed in a past which is full of the worst sides of human nature as well as of the best. Of course, we have all the glory of thought and all the power of idealism to teach and inspire us. It seems to me that the world is governed by thought and ideas.

That is why the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation has, I think, found the right line to take when it deals with the teaching of children and young persons. If anybody is in doubt as to the method by which this is to be done, let me recommend a study of the report of the Sub-Committee of Experts on this matter. That Sub-Committee has translated into practical details the wish which we all share that the children should be made to understand towards what future the world is moving.

The series of recommendations which the Sub-Committee has drawn up is full of common sense and full of possibilities for good. I should like to mention two or three things — without entering into details. There is, first, the suggestion that teachers should be helped to inculcate a new spirit, and I would like to say that my own Government is making a reference to this matter in the new edition of a book of suggestions for teachers. It is also suggested that national Conferences be called to deal with the subject, and my Government proposes to convene a Conference of local education authorities to deal with the matter.

But our aim is not only to obtain a new attitude in the schools, but a new attitude in the homes. If we must draw pictures for children, let us show them the horrors of the past as well as the possibilities of the future. Let the first picture for propaganda purposes to which I have referred show, not young men leaping over trenches, but what happens to those men after they have left the trenches; let us show the horrors and cruelties of the old way, and, as for the new way, let us depict a future with young men and young women walking arm-in-arm in the freedom of fellowship, and about to climb the mountains that even now we see are gilded at the top with the new dawn. To get at the children is to get at the future. I commend to you the report of the Sub-Committee.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Second Committee, which read as follows :

The Assembly approves the Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, as at present constituted — with the International Committee and its sub-committees, the National Committees and the International Institute. It considers that this organisation now provides a mechanism capable of strengthening the intellectual relations between nations and of improving the conditions of intellectual work in the world. It notes with satisfaction the assurance given by the Governing Board of the International Institute to the effect that that institution is so conducted as to ensure perfect equality of treatment between all nations. It draws the attention of all the Members of the Assembly to the felicitous step taken by Poland and by Czechoslovakia, which, following France's generous action, have granted a subsidy to the International Institute.

Further, the Assembly wishes to emphasise the practical character and the expediency of the plans for international intellectual co-operation which the Committee and the Institute are, at the present moment, proceeding to carry out. It lays particular stress on the importance of the following plans — the convening of a Congress of Popular Art, the creation of an International Museums Office, the union of libraries of all countries in order to facilitate research by the public, the co-ordination, by means of international collaboration, of the analytical bibliographies of the various sciences.

• *The Assembly, having considered in its Second*

Committee the report of the Sub-Committee of Experts on the instruction of children and youth in the aims and objects of the League of Nations, urges the Governments of the States Members of the League to give this report their sympathetic consideration and to take the measures necessary to give effect to all or any of its recommendations which may be found suitable for adoption in their respective countries.

The Assembly invites the various States to consider, and asks the competent institutions to examine, the possibility of establishing scholarships for university students, whereby they would be enabled to visit Geneva both before and during the annual Assemblies, in order to obtain first-hand knowledge of the work of the League of Nations.

The resolutions were adopted.

57. — FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF HUNGARY : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on the Financial Reconstruction of Hungary. (Annex 10. Document A. 81. 1926. II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Suvich, Rapporteur, took his place by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Suvich, delegate of Italy and Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Suvich (Italy), Rapporteur :

Translation : The report of the Second Committee on the financial reconstruction of Hungary has been distributed, so I shall confine myself to a summary.

Two years have passed since the coming into force of the scheme for the financial reconstruction of Hungary. The Assembly is now asked to agree that the supervision exercised by the High Commissioner should come to an end. During these two years the scheme has been put into effect in accordance with the programme and has succeeded beyond all expectations. This is proved by the fact that it has been possible to utilise for productive investments the greater part of the loan which was raised to meet the deficit in the budget.

The scheme of reconstruction included : an international loan secured by certain State revenues ; the creation of a Central Bank of Issue enjoying the monopoly of issue ; the fixing for twenty years of the reparations payments at an average rate of 10 million gold crowns per annum ; the establishment of a Committee of Control appointed by the Reparation Commission ; the appointment of a Commissioner-General to supervise the execution of the whole programme and control the use of the loan ; administrative reforms.

Actual facts have proved that the scheme was wonderfully well conceived. By good fortune its execution was entrusted to Mr. Jeremiah Smith, a man who possessed all the qualifications necessary to ensure its execution, and he has devoted himself to this work with genuine enthusiasm and an extraordinary tact and sense of proportion.

There has been no deficit in the budget since 1924. The loan, although assigned to a large extent for works of a permanent and productive character, still shows an available surplus.

The secured revenue is to-day nearly eight times in excess of the annual sum required for the service of the loan.

Economic conditions in Hungary are vastly improved. Agricultural production is again approximating to the pre-war level and, in the case of certain crops, even exceeds it. The adverse trade balance is also steadily decreasing.

One point to which I desire to direct your special attention concerns commercial treaties. During the past year two new treaties came into force, one with Austria and a provisional agreement with Czechoslovakia.

In the circumstances which I have briefly outlined, and which are set out at length in my report, Hungary has been able to embark upon the most important reform, that of her currency. The fact that the paper crown, the currency previously in circulation, had been stable for a fairly long period constituted the necessary basis for the complete conversion and reform of the monetary system. This stability of the currency is confirmed by an examination of the wholesale and retail index numbers, which have not risen since 1924 but, on the contrary, have shown a downward tendency. During the same period the increase in the deposits in savings banks and other banks has continued.

This reform has undoubtedly been made possible solely by the success of the scheme for the reconstruction of Hungary and by the resulting economic recovery of the country.

It is generally admitted that there can be no question of the stabilisation or conversion of the currency until two essential conditions have been fulfilled, these being the balancing of the budget and the approximate establishment of equilibrium in the balance of payments.

The other circumstances, such as the amount of currency in circulation, the proportion of reserves, etc., are of importance rather in determining the relation to be fixed between the old and new forms of currency.

As regards the Hungarian budget, the deficit, as already stated, had disappeared in the accounts for the year ending June 30th, 1924. The balance of payments, judging by the principal factors, that is to say, the trade balance, is approximately even. The policy of inflation had already been brought to an end by the creation of a National Bank of Issue independent of the State and governed by a Statute which prohibits it from making advances to the State.

Having thus been withdrawn from Government influence, the new Bank was in a position to exercise an effective influence on the monetary policy of the country. A foreign Adviser was attached to the Board of Directors, in order to assist the new Bank in accomplishing its task, which constituted the pivot of the whole reconstruction programme.

The Bank's policy has been extremely cautious and conservative. On June 30th last, the reserve amounted to 55 per cent of the circulation, and one-half of the reserve consisted of minted gold or bullion. The discount rate has been reduced and fixed at 6 per cent.

Towards the end of 1925, a law was passed in Hungary providing for the introduction, as from January 1st, 1927, of a new currency, which can, however, be used for purposes of reckoning before that date. The value of this new currency, the "pengő", has been fixed at 1 pengő per 12,500 old paper crowns.

The balance-sheet of the National Bank is already expressed in "pengős", and measures have been taken for all private concerns to draw up their balance-sheets in terms of gold in accordance with the principles laid down. The form and value

of the new currency have been exhaustively studied, and care has been taken that proper attention should be given to the psychological factors which might have had a dangerous effect on the cost of living in the country at the moment of its introduction.

The considerations which I have just explained and the fact that the whole economic life of the country is gradually becoming accustomed to the "pengő" justify the hope that it may be possible to reach the gold standard without undue disturbance.

The programme of the financial reconstruction of Hungary, conceived and applied in the manner I have indicated, constitutes an achievement of which the League can justly be proud. The problem submitted to the League has been solved with brilliant success alike from the technical, social and political points of view.

In expressing its appreciation of the results obtained, the Council approved the Hungarian Government's proposal — which had received the support of the Commissioner-General and of the Financial Committee — that the supervision exercised by the Commissioner-General should cease on June 30th, 1926. The duties of the foreign Adviser attached to the Bank of Issue also ended on that date.

The service of the secured revenues will in future be ensured by the Trustees. The balance of the loan — in regard to which no decision has yet been taken — will be kept available in a separate account in the name of M. ter Meulen, who has been appointed for the purpose by the Financial Committee. The Committee of Control will remain in office and will communicate directly with the Hungarian Government.

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

The Assembly :

(1) Notes that, the Council having ascertained that the financial stability of Hungary is assured, the functions of the Commissioner-General were brought to an end on June 30th, 1926, and that with this step the work of reconstruction has been brought to a successful close within the minimum period contemplated under the original plan ;

(2) Congratulates on this result the Hungarian Government and people, the Commissioner-General and the Financial Committee, who prepared the original plan. It confidently hopes that, by a prudent financial policy, the Hungarian Government will in the future maintain and consolidate the satisfactory position now attained ;

(3) Observes with satisfaction the conclusion of commercial agreements between Hungary and the neighbouring States with whom about half of her total foreign trade is transacted ; and repeats the hope expressed at the last ordinary session of the Assembly that the further progress of such commercial agreements may tend to bring about a progressive reduction of the tariffs in Central Europe and will thus contribute to establishing closer economic relations.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I will consider the resolution of the Second Committee adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

58. — FINANCIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRIA: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Second Committee on the Financial Reconstruction of Austria (Annex 11. Document A.82.1926.II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Strasburger, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee.)

The President:

Translation: The Rapporteur, M. Strasburger, delegate of Poland, will address the Assembly.

M. Strasburger (Poland), Rapporteur:

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen

As the hour is now late, and in deference to the wishes of the President, I will not detain you long. The report on the financial reconstruction of Austria is already in your hands. I will confine myself to drawing your attention to certain salient points.

It was agreed to abolish the office of the Commissioner-General for Austria on June 30th, 1926, upon two conditions, which the Austrian Government accepted: first, the retention of a foreign Adviser to the National Bank, and, secondly, the retention of the right of the Council, during a period of ten years, to re-establish control if, contrary to all expectations, the budgetary equilibrium were seriously endangered. The Austrian Government has therefore assumed full responsibility for its finances.

The following results have been obtained from the loan. The net yield amounted to 568.7 million gold crowns, of which only 13 per cent was used to cover deficits. The remainder went towards repaying credits previously granted to the Austrian Government or spent on productive investments.

The closed accounts for 1924 showed a deficit of 9,000,000 gold crowns; the closed accounts for 1925 gave a surplus of 28.4 millions.

It should be remarked that Austria first passed through a very severe financial crisis, which was followed later by an economic crisis.

The Council instructed Mr. Layton and Professor Rist to examine the economic situation in Austria to see how far this economic crisis might affect the financial situation. These two gentlemen went to Austria, and their investigations there clearly showed that the economic crisis was directly connected with reconstruction, but that there was no ground for anxiety concerning the country's power of ultimate recovery.

Recovery is certain if the Austrian people and the Austrian Government strive energetically, as the League of Nations is sure they will, to maintain budgetary equilibrium and exploit to the full Austria's natural advantages.

By thus justifying the confidence which the Council has placed in her, Austria will complete the work of financial recovery which she was the first to begin. In this way she will contribute towards the economic stability of the whole of Central Europe.

I venture to recall the words spoken two years ago in this Assembly by the distinguished representative of France, M. Georges Bonnet, who said:

"We sincerely desire the removal of the control as soon as possible. We hope and trust that it will be removed; we are convinced of it, because that would be the best possible proof that Austria had at last recovered financial stability and economic prosperity."

What was then foreseen has now been realised. The Austrian Government has been able to resume full responsibility for its finances.

The great work undertaken by the League has been crowned with success, and I am particularly gratified that the honour of presenting to the Assembly the report on the financial reconstruction of Austria should fall to my country, which is also in the throes of serious financial difficulties.

As Rapporteur, and at the same time as representative of the Polish Government, I wish to express to the organisations of the League our great admiration for the notable work of international co-operation which they have just achieved. I also wish to congratulate the Austrian people and Government and to express the hope that they will be able by their own efforts to ensure the prosperity and economic stability of their country.

On behalf of the Second Committee, I have the honour to propose to the Assembly the adoption of the following resolution:

The Assembly:

Has taken note of the Council resolution of June 9th, 1926, whereby the functions of the Commissioner-General for Austria were brought to an end on June 30th, 1926;

Is gratified that Austria has been able to reassume full responsibility for her budgetary and financial policy;

Does not doubt that the Austrian people, and the Austrian Government will by their own efforts be able finally to ensure the results of the work of reconstruction;

And expresses its thanks to the countries which have helped Austria with their credit and thus made possible a great act of international co-operation."

The President:

Translation: If no one wishes to speak, I will consider as adopted the draft resolution proposed by the Rapporteur.

The resolution was adopted.

59. — SETTLEMENT OF BULGARIAN REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Second Committee on the Settlement of Bulgarian Refugees (Annex 12. Document A. 84. 1926. II).

(On the invitation of the President, Commander Hilton Young, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee.)

The President:

Translation: The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

Commander Hilton Young (British Empire), Rapporteur:

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have the honour to present to the Assembly the report of the Second Committee on the subject of the Settlement of Bulgarian Refugees. As the Assembly knows, this is a new scheme for the relief of refugees in Bulgaria. It will not be necessary for me now to do more than underline the principal features of the report.

The scheme which has just been adopted by the Council for the settlement of refugees in Bulgaria is the second of its kind undertaken under the auspices of the League. The first, which has now been in operation for two years in Greece, is well known.

The two problems are similar in certain respects, and so are their solutions. In each case the finances of the country have been examined by the Financial Committee, which has drawn up a plan containing, amongst other things, a statement of the securities which could suitably be given for a foreign loan to pay for the work of settlement. In both cases the Government has agreed to provide for settlement purposes a minimum quantity of suitable land and to accept the control of an authority responsible to the Council to ensure the expenditure of the money on the specified objects. Greece is the easier problem because many suitable houses were made available by the return of peasants to Turkey under the system of exchange and enough cultivable land was available. In Bulgaria, on the other hand, there are not nearly enough houses or land, and a part of the proposed loan will have to be spent on re-claiming land and making it fit for cultivation. In general, the preparation of the Bulgarian plan required long negotiations — which were not needed for the Greek plan — with the neighbouring countries and with the reparation authorities, whose consent was necessary in order to provide securities for the new loan. It has been provided that the work of settlement shall be done under the supervision of a single Commissioner appointed by, and responsible to, the Council of the League, with power to investigate and approve all plans for the work of settlement and with sole control over the proceeds of the proposed loan.

It is not necessary to detain the Assembly with any further details at the present time. I am confident that if the Members of the Assembly will study the results of the prolonged and careful work of the Financial Committee and of the Second Committee they will come to the conclusion that this is a most important and valuable work which must be done in the cause of humanity, work which will enable Bulgaria to be released from a burden which is too heavy for it to bear alone and for which it was not itself responsible.

I am confident also that the Assembly will come to the conclusion that the plan will not only alleviate the sufferings of the unfortunate refugees but will promote the external and internal stability of the Bulgarian State. It is too early to speak of it at length at present, but I trust that next year or the year after a Rapporteur may stand here and give a report to the Assembly of the successful conclusion of this work.

The President :

Translation : M. Molloff, delegate of Bulgaria, will address the Assembly.

M. Molloff (Bulgaria) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — On behalf of my Government, I have the pleasant duty of expressing once more the gratitude of Bulgaria to the League and its various organisations for their invaluable assistance in the work of the settlement of the Bulgarian refugees. I wish also to express our high appreciation of the very succinct and felicitous report submitted by Commander Hilton Young.

In recent years, Bulgaria has made a great effort punctually to carry out with the aid of her own resources the different stipulations of the Treaties of Peace. She has honoured her financial obligations, which are becoming an increasing strain

on the budgetary resources of the country. While pursuing indefatigably her policy of peace, international collaboration and national reconstruction, she has succeeded in balancing the budget and stabilising the currency during the past three years. But the increasing influx of refugees, due mostly to the exchange of population brought about by the treaties, created a situation of indescribable distress for the families involved, a heartrending situation in itself, but one which also endangered the internal stability of the country and was liable to provoke serious disturbances that might have affected international relations.

The funds required for the settlement of this horde of refugees far exceeded the country's resources. This state of affairs, the true facts of which were recognised and described by the organisations of the League, called for immediate international intervention, and there was no body qualified to handle the situation so effectively as the League.

Bulgaria confidently applied to the League for aid, and has since complied with every recommendation made by its competent organisations, for we were convinced that this was the only way of reaching a satisfactory solution. May I venture to point out that, as a corollary, the stabilisation of our currency has been assured for the future by a decision of the Reparation Commission, setting up a Transfer Committee to regulate our external payments.

In conformity with another recommendation, we have settled in a satisfactory manner our relations with pre-war bondholders. The Financial Committee has sanctioned an additional loan to repay a Paris bank for advances made to Bulgaria in 1912-13.

From another point of view, it is important to point out that the National Bank of Bulgaria has been transformed into a central Bank of Issue. This will enable us to participate in the system of central banks proposed by the Genoa Conference and recommended by the Financial Committee.

The utilisation of the funds of the loan to be issued is placed under the strict and effective control of the League.

We have already received advances from the Bank of England, to which I express our deep gratitude. The Bank of England has such complete confidence in our determination to reconstruct our finances that it has been good enough to assist us, thereby making an effective contribution to the work begun by the League.

We have therefore complied with all your recommendations and have thus afforded every requisite guarantee for the flotation of the proposed loan, which will, we trust, be offered in the near future. This event will mark the final consummation of this mission of charity and peace, which will assuredly enhance the high authority and growing prestige of the League.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Second Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

(1) Has learnt with great satisfaction that the negotiations of the last six months have resulted in the adoption by the Council of a scheme for the settlement of some 120,000 refugees in Bulgaria;

(2) Observes with satisfaction that, by means of an advance of £400,000, this work has already been begun;

(3) Expresses the hope that the total sum estimated for this work, namely, £2,250,000, may be successfully subscribed in the near future;

(4) *Desires to express its appreciation of the valuable work once more done by the Financial Committee, on whose advice the plan was adopted by the Council, and whose long and unique experience in such work of reconstruction has borne fruit in Austria, Hungary and Greece ;*

(5) *Expresses the belief that the execution of this plan will not only alleviate widespread suffering but will also benefit economic and social order within Bulgaria and consolidate and improve the political relations of Bulgaria with neighbouring countries.*

The resolution was adopted.

60. — WORK OF THE FINANCIAL COMMITTEE : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Financial Committee (Annex 13. Document A. 85. 1926. II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Avramovitch, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee.)

The President :

Translation : M. Avramovitch, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Avramovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), Rapporteur :

Translation : I have the honour, on behalf of the Second Committee, to submit to you the report of the Financial Committee. This involves an examination of questions which are perhaps of the same nature at those already dealt with, but which nevertheless have an importance of their own. I should like to mention in particular the Danzig question.

At the request of the Free City, the Council, which guarantees its Constitution, authorised M. Janssen, a member of the Financial Committee, to go to Danzig to study the financial situation and to consider what measures it might be necessary to take in that connection.

M. Janssen submitted his report to the Financial Committee at its July session in London, and the Committee in its turn submitted a report to the Council. The Committee recommended that the Free City should be given assistance in view of special difficulties arising out of unemployment and certain deficits due to the reduction in the Customs revenues.

The Financial Committee also urged in this connection that the Free City should cut down its general expenditure by at least 10 per cent. It then recommended the conclusion of an economic agreement between Danzig and Poland and the issuing of a loan of approximately thirty million gulden with the twofold object of (1) covering the deficits arising out of exceptional circumstances in the budget for 1926-27 and repaying the floating debt, and (2) meeting certain productive expenditure.

Your Second Committee was gratified to note that this agreement between the Free City and Poland was concluded on the very day on which the present report was being examined.

If, as is hoped, the Free City succeeds in reducing its expenditure and increasing its production and resources, the Council will perhaps be able in the near future — not later than next December —

to recommend, on the proposal of the Financial Committee, that the loan in question should be authorised under the auspices of the League. As a conclusion to this first question, for which I have the honour to be Rapporteur, I propose that the Assembly should adopt the following draft resolution :

“The Assembly has taken note of the Financial Committee’s two reports on the restoration of the public finances of the Free City of Danzig.

“It trusts that, in accordance with the conclusions of these reports, it may be possible for the Financial Committee, when the Free City has effected the necessary administrative and budgetary economies, to recommend the issuing of a loan designed to consolidate the financial and economic situation of Danzig.”

I now come to the second question, which concerns the suppression of counterfeiting.

The Council had to consider an application from the French Government requesting an examination of this matter, which disturbs the course of international relations, more particularly in those countries whose currency is counterfeited.

The question was referred for examination to the Financial Committee, which requested certain information. It drew up a questionnaire and asked, as the matter was in its opinion a most important one, that it might be given proper time to go into the question exhaustively and without incurring the risk of precipitate action.

It is hoped that the Committee, which has already given such tangible proof of its value in theoretical and practical matters and which has done such fruitful work in the past, will succeed in finding a satisfactory solution of the problem.

As a conclusion to this second question, I propose, on behalf of the Second Committee, that the Assembly should adopt the following resolution :

“The Assembly has noted that, at the request of the Council, the Financial Committee has undertaken a study of the methods whereby the Governments and Banks of Issue might collaborate to prevent the issuing of counterfeit currency. It trusts that the Financial Committee’s work will be actively pursued, so that practical proposals may be submitted to the Council for consideration at the earliest possible date.”

The third question is that of double taxation and fiscal evasion, a problem which has occupied the League’s attention for some years. It was first studied by four eminent economists and was then referred to the Financial Committee, which examined it in its turn. The Committee’s report was submitted to exhaustive examination by experts of the countries concerned, namely : Germany, the Argentine, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland Switzerland and Venezuela. They had been so chosen as to ensure that the Committee should be composed of nationals of countries whose interest and outlook in fiscal questions were as different as possible ; countries which exported capital and new countries partially financed by foreign capital.

The similarity of views displayed by these experts made it possible to draw up three preliminary draft conventions regarding : (1) double taxation, (2) judicial assistance with regard to the recovery of taxes, and (3) fiscal evasion and administrative assistance.

These proposals were not definitive, the experts being undecided whether a general international convention or bilateral conventions would prove the most satisfactory solution. The Financial

Committee decided, as the question called for more exhaustive examination, to deal with it at its next session, which will probably be held in December.

I have the honour, therefore, on behalf of the Second Committee, to propose the following draft resolution :

"The Assembly has taken note, according to the Financial Committee's reports, of the results of the work of the last meeting of experts on double taxation and tax evasion.

"It trusts that their work will be continued and will serve as a useful preparation for the development and progressive unification of international law in the matter, by means of general conventions or of partial conventions based upon common principles."

In conclusion, I should like to draw your attention to the economic and financial publications of the Economic Intelligence Service of the Secretariat. Apart from the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics*, which appears on the last Saturday of the first fortnight of each month, the *Memorandum on Currency and Central Banks* for the period 1913-25 has already been published. This Memorandum has aroused great interest in the business world, especially in financial circles. A new edition of the *Memorandum on Public Finance* is now in course of preparation.

In view of the importance of these questions, I would urge you to adopt the draft resolutions which I have just submitted on behalf of the Second Committee.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the second Committee, which read as follows :

I. The Assembly has taken note of the Financial Committee's two reports on the restoration of the public finances of the Free City of Danzig.

It trusts that, in accordance with the conclusions of these reports, it may be possible for the Financial Committee, when the Free City has effected the necessary administrative and budgetary economies, to recommend the issuing of a loan designed to consolidate the financial and economic situation of Danzig.

II. The Assembly has noted that, at the request of the Council, the Financial Committee has undertaken a study of the methods whereby the Governments and Banks of Issue might collaborate to prevent the issuing of counterfeit currency.

It trusts that the Financial Committee's work will be actively pursued, so that practical proposals may be submitted to the Council for consideration at the earliest possible date.

III. The Assembly has taken note, according to the Financial Committee's reports, of the results of the work of the last meeting of experts on double taxation and tax evasion.

It trusts that their work will be continued and will serve as a useful preparation for the development and progressive unification of international law in the matter, by means of general conventions or of partial conventions based upon common principles.

The resolutions were adopted.

61.— WORK OF THE ECONOMIC COMMITTEE : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Economic Committee (Annex 14. Document A. 94. 1926. II).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Nagai, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee.)

The President :

Translation : M. Nagai, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Nagai (Japan) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The report which I have to make, at the request of the Second Committee, concerns the work done by the Economic Committee during the past year.

As you will see, the report covers three pages containing a summary of the work done by the Economic Committee. On account of the diversity and the technical nature of the problems involved, the statement is naturally quite lengthy. But in view of the late hour, I shall refrain from reading it.

There is one point, however, which I must emphasise and which is dealt with in the following passage of the report :

"The Economic Committee is systematically pursuing the study of the various problems set before it, and is ascertaining in each case, by comprehensive and exhaustive enquiry, how far the proposals which it is considering are of practical value and capable of realisation in the international sphere."

I have now to submit for your approval the following resolutions :

The Assembly :

(1) Again states its conviction that commercial relations would be greatly improved by the conclusion of an international convention for the abolition of import and export prohibitions and restrictions.

It notes with satisfaction the progress which has been made, thanks to the efforts of the Economic Committee, towards the realisation of the recommendation made by the ordinary session of the Assembly in 1924.

It notes the Council's resolution to convene, for this purpose, at as early a date as possible, a Conference of Representatives of the Governments of States Members and non-Members of the League of Nations, and expresses a most earnest hope that this Conference's work will be crowned with success.

(2) It notes with satisfaction that the Protocol established in 1923 is still making its influence felt in the direction of a wider recognition of commercial arbitration, and that the Economic Committee has recently begun to consider the possibility of preparing an additional act, the object of which will be to ensure the execution of arbitral awards given abroad.

(3) It records the fact that the number of ratifications of the International Convention for the Simplification of Customs Formalities is increasing and notes that this international act has had a beneficial influence on the conclusion of certain treaties of commerce.

(4) It observes with satisfaction that most of the methods suggested by the Economic Committee to ensure more effective protection against unfair competition have, in most cases, been embodied in the new provisions of the Convention of the Union for the Protection of Industrial Property revised at The Hague in November 1925.

(5) It follows with interest the enquiries being conducted by the Economic Committee with regard to measures for the repression of false Customs declarations; the standardisation of legislation with regards to bills of exchange and cheques; the unification of economic statistical methods; the protection of the buyer against worthless goods, and the Committee's research work regarding the causes of excessive fluctuations in economic activity.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolutions of the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

32. — WORK OF THE HEALTH ORGANISATION : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Second Committee on the work of the Health Organisation (Annex 15. Document A. 63. 1926. III).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Fernandez y Medina, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Second Committee).

The President :

Translation : M. Fernandez y Medina, delegate of Uruguay, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Fernandez y Medina (Uruguay), Rapporteur, read his report and the following draft resolutions :

I. The Assembly :

Having taken note of the reports dealing with the work of the Health Organisation (documents A.6. 1926, A.6(a).1926 and A.17.1926), notes with satisfaction the growth and increasing usefulness of that work with its tendency to universality;

Expresses its gratification at the work undertaken and the results obtained by the Health Committee and its organs as well as by the various experts entrusted with special missions, and wishes to express its sympathetic interest with the scientists of the International Commission on Sleeping-Sickness who are conducting their sometimes dangerous enquiry in Equatorial Africa.

II. The Assembly notes with satisfaction the close collaboration established with the sanitary and medical authorities of Japan as a result of the interchange and the conferences held in that country; and with the sanitary administrations of other Far-Eastern countries, through the intermediary of the Advisory Council of the Epidemiological Intelligence Bureau of the League at Singapore;

Notes, in particular, the plan of research work and special enquiries into health problems of the Far East in which the administrations of British India, China, the Dutch Indies, French Indo-China, Japan, the Philippine Islands and Siam have promised their assistance;

And requests the Council to refer the resolutions proposed by the Cuban¹, Czechoslovak² and Uruguayan³ delegations to the Health Committee for consideration.

III. The Assembly :

In view of the importance of the work of the Singapore Bureau of Epidemiological Intelligence as the first institution of the League of Nations in the Far East, and in view of the utility of its work not only for the Far-Eastern countries but also for other States Members of the League;

Decides that provision for the expenses of the Bureau should be made in the budget of the League for 1927.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the resolutions of the Second Committee as adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

63. — CHILD WELFARE : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion on the report of the Fifth Committee on Child Welfare (Annex 16. Document A.77.1926.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, Count Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Dr. Riddell, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Dr. Riddell, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Riddell (Canada) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have been requested by the Fifth Committee to present to the Assembly its report on child welfare, and I have accepted that honour realising that it is a tribute to the great interest taken in my country on this subject.

¹ The Second Committee, in conformity with the resolutions adopted by the Assembly at its fifth and sixth ordinary sessions on the subject of infant mortality and the protection of children, requests the Council to ask the Health Committee to consider to what extent it could, at a suitable time, enlarge its scheme of international enquiry to include other problems of eugenics.

² The Second Committee, considering the importance of physical culture as a means for preventing disease and in view of the interest which numerous countries take in that question, asks the Council to instruct the Health Committee to consider the inclusion in the programme of its work of the international investigation of physical culture, including scholastic hygiene, and to decide what special problems may necessitate a comparative study and a co-ordination of national research work and national enquiries.

³ The Second Committee, having taken note that the International Economic Conference's plan of enquiry is to include an examination of the problem of nutrition (document A. 24. 1926. II), points out the interest which would attach to the supplementing of this enquiry by a study of the problem from the standpoint of race improvement. This study should take into account the work of the Health Organisation regarding infant mortality, as well as the reports by the Japanese Institute of Research into Nutrition Problems comprised in the publications of the Health Committee.

The Rapporteur then read his report and continued as follows :

It has been a matter of great satisfaction to the child welfare organisations and multitudes of laymen throughout the world that this subject of child welfare has been included in the work of the League by the unanimous consent of all its Members. There are, in fact, few questions with which the League deals which appeal to a wider constituency, or are more suitable for comparative study and research.

During the last two or three decades, great progress has been made in certain countries through organised effort to promote the welfare of children; and surely it is an object worthy of the League that this experience and knowledge should be made available to all its Members. It is possible that the study of child welfare may not prove as fruitful of international agreement as some other questions before this Assembly, but the results will be none the less valuable for the prestige of the League and for the well-being of generations yet unborn.

I hope you will give this report your most careful consideration and your approval.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Fifth Committee, which read as follows :

The Assembly :

1. Takes note of the report presented by the Child Welfare Committee and desires to express its thanks for the work done by the Committee ;

2. Approves the proposals contained in Resolutions III, V and VIII adopted by the Committee for pursuing the enquiries into the protection of infant life, the age of consent and of marriage and the subject of family allowances ;

3. Approves Resolution XIV, subject to the conclusions it contains being confirmed by subsequent investigations into the general problem of alcoholism ;

4. Expresses its concurrence with Resolution VI relating to child labour ;

5. Considers that the enquiry into children's courts can most suitably be undertaken by the Child Welfare Committee, but, in the circumstances, agrees with the course proposed to be taken by the Council in regard to Resolution XIII ;

6. Expresses the wish that the Committee should actively pursue the enquiry into the effect of the cinema on children with a view to the presentation of a report for the information of the Governments ;

7. (a) Recognises the importance of recreation in the life of children and young persons as expressed in Resolution XI, but, as doubts have been expressed how far the subject is one which is suitable for action by the League of Nations, the Assembly, in view of the sanction of the study of this subject given last year by the Council and Assembly, approves its continued study by the Advisory Committee, but considers that it should be confined, as indicated in the resolution adopted by the Assembly at its fifth ordinary session, to the comparative study of those aspects of the subject on which "the comparison of the methods and experiences of different countries . . . and international co-operation" may be likely to assist the Governments in dealing with these problems ;

(b) Recommends that the subject of biological education, regarding which similar doubts have been expressed, should be postponed for the present ;

8. Agrees generally with the resolutions adopted by the Council on June 9th and September 2nd, 1926.

The resolutions were adopted.

The Assembly rose at 8.10 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SIXTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1926, AT 10 a.m.

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64. — COMMUNICATIONS NOT CONNECTED WITH QUESTIONS ON THE AGENDA : INTERPRETATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE.

The President :

Translation : I wish to draw the attention of the Assembly to the proper interpretation of certain provisions of the Rules of Procedure, which lay down that delegations may ask the President's consent to make communications not connected with questions on the agenda of the meeting.

Rule 13 of the Rules of Procedure reads as follows :

“At the beginning of each meeting the President shall present to the Assembly all communications addressed to the Assembly or to the League the importance of which appears to him to warrant such action.”

Further, paragraph 1 of Rule 15 lays down :

“No representative may address the Assembly without having previously obtained the permission of the President.”

While the President is bound to be liberal in giving leave to delegations to make communications to the Assembly, the delegations are under obligation to inform him in advance of the object and nature of such communications, so that he may have a full knowledge of the facts before giving his consent.

I believe that my remarks, which I felt it my duty to make, are in accordance with the intentions of those who drew up the Rules of Procedure.

I am sure that with this reminder all delegations will conform to the Rules.

65. — ARBITRATION, SECURITY AND THE
PACIFIC SETTLEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL
DISPUTES: REPORT OF THE THIRD
COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The first item on the agenda is the discussion of the report of the Third Committee on the progress in general security, brought about by the conclusion of Conventions and Treaties. (Annex 17. Document A. 79. 1926. IX.)

(On the invitation of the President, M. Villegas, Chairman of the Third Committee, M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee, and M. Marcovitch, Rapporteur of the Third Committee, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Marcovitch, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Marcovitch (Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), Rapporteur, read his report and continued as follows :

Translation : With your permission, I will add a few general remarks to the report of the Third Committee which I have just read.

If it were possible to solve once and for all the questions of arbitration and of the pacific settlement of international disputes, the face of the world would immediately be changed and a lasting peace would be ensured. The efforts of the Assemblies of the League and likewise of the Governments of the various countries have all been directed towards this ideal. In past years we have sometimes strayed from the straight path. But we have sought ways and means of solving the problem, and this in itself is evidence of a firm desire to obtain concrete and practical results.

I do not propose to recount the various steps taken by the League. It first adopted the celebrated Resolution XIV of 1922, next, in 1923, it drew up the Treaty of Mutual Assistance and, in 1924, went so far as the Protocol. The Protocol was intended by its authors to be an instrument of general scope for the permanent settlement of all international disputes by pacific or judicial methods.

Last year it was stated that the Protocol was far in advance of the realities of the international position. While the validity of the general principles laid down was admitted, it was nevertheless affirmed that the States were not in a position to adopt it as a general rule for the guidance of the foreign policy of their countries. But though last year we were, I regret to say, checked in our advance towards the pacific settlement of international disputes, we yet retained the hope that the negotiations being conducted between the Western Powers with a view to the conclusion of a pact of guarantee — and these negotiations were in no way secret — would yield favourable and concrete results.

In its report to the Assembly, the Council dwells on the fact that the Treaties of Locarno — which can be brought into force now that Germany has been admitted to the League — mark an appreciable advance towards pacification, the restoration of mutual confidence and the progression of Europe and the world generally towards peace. The Third Committee, examining these results, was struck by the capital, the vital importance of the general provisions of the Locarno Treaties.

Those Treaties contain certain principles which, if taken as a general rule for the foreign policy of all countries, would contribute largely to the maintenance of peace and the permanent restoration of international confidence. I venture to recall the fact that, in the Locarno Treaties, the signatory States, Germany and France, Germany and Belgium, and Germany, France, Belgium and Great Britain, guarantee jointly and severally to maintain the territorial *status quo* and the inviolability of their frontiers.

The same States give a mutual undertaking not to engage in any attack or invasion or to have recourse to war in any circumstances.

As a logical complement to the above undertaking, they agree to settle pacifically all disputes of whatever nature which may arise between them and which are not amenable to the normal diplomatic procedure.

Here, then, we have a very important step towards the pacific settlement of international disputes. Germany, France, Great Britain and Belgium solemnly undertake to settle all their disputes and all their quarrels, of whatever nature, by pacific methods. By signing arbitration conventions they have pointed out the way which we all — for we are equally concerned in the maintenance of peace — should follow and adopt as the practical policy of our country.

I must remind you that, in so far as they have been used as the basis of the Third Committee's resolution, the Locarno Treaties have been regarded solely from the political point of view. We considered this the best guide in laying down the direction to be followed in our future endeavours to establish peace.

The Third Committee did not go into details nor did it examine any particular clauses in the Locarno Treaties. It confined itself to a purely political examination, and the resolution it proposes to the Assembly is essentially a political resolution.

It considered that the Powers in question, whose antagonism dates back to the most distant historical times and covered very serious problems, showed both boldness and common sense when they signed the Locarno Treaties. They removed all danger of war and undertook publicly and in the sight of the whole world not to have recourse to war in any circumstances. The Third Committee believes that other countries in other parts of Europe might similarly be induced to wipe out a past that all desire to forget, and thereby to ensure peace and turn their eyes towards a brighter future.

In view of this fact, the Third Committee decided to recommend, as regards political matters, that all States should follow the road laid down by the Locarno Treaties.

I will not detain you on this subject. I have tried to give a brief explanation of the resolution proposed to the Assembly by the Committee. I wish to add only one word concerning a passage in the resolution which I consider essential; I refer to the passage in which the Council is requested to offer its good offices when it judges such action opportune.

The Council, of course, retains complete liberty of action in this matter, but we believe that, being an independent and impartial body, it should avail itself of the general atmosphere of confidence, reassurance and hope which now prevails, to complete the pacification of Europe and the revival of mutual trust, and so facilitate the great work of disarmament, which is of vital concern to all men and all nations.

I therefore ask the Assembly to adopt the resolution proposed by the Third Committee. I believe that the resolution marks a further

stage in the spiritual evolution leading to the permanent settlement of the problem of peace and the institution of stable and pacific methods, which will render war a futility and will prevent the nations from ever again having recourse to arms.

The President :

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

M. Motta (Switzerland), Chairman of the First Committee :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have no report to submit or speech to deliver. I have only one observation which the First Committee has instructed me to make.

The First Committee's task was a very simple one. The Third Committee had already, so to speak, prepared our work.

We studied the draft resolution drawn up by the Third Committee, and we were able to give it our unreserved support. Some delegations, however, were afraid that to accept the resolution would involve them in actual interpretations of the Covenant of the League. We do not think that this is the purport or scope of the resolution submitted to you. Moreover, Dr. Markovitch in his eloquent speech said that the resolution was not constitutional or judicial, but purely political in character. I am glad to state that the First Committee entirely concurs in this view.

We welcome the work done at Locarno. We approve the main idea underlying the Locarno treaties, the setting up of a procedure of conciliation, judicial settlement, arbitration and security through mutual guarantees against unprovoked aggression. That is the essence of the resolution. The Covenant is unaffected. We have no intention of laying down any interpretation of it on this occasion.

Another question was raised in the Committee, namely, whether the magnificent opportunity provided by Locarno should not be utilised to urge all States once again to reconsider the question of accepting the compulsory jurisdiction clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

However, we came to the conclusion that it was unnecessary to mention this aspect of the question in the draft resolution. We thought that this great, this vital question of the acceptance of the compulsory jurisdiction of the Court was, if I may say so, still on the "agenda" of mankind and was therefore one which concerned the Government of every country.

The President :

Translation : M. Marks von Wurtemberg, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

M. Marks von Wurtemberg (Sweden) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Swedish delegation supports the proposed resolution. The Third Committee and its distinguished Rapporteur have emphasised the importance of the Locarno Treaties and shown how desirable it is that the main ideas underlying these treaties regarding conciliation and judicial settlement, and the mutual guarantee of States against unprovoked aggression, should be put into wider practice by the conclusion of further international conventions.

The Swedish delegation fully shares the Committee's views on these points and sees in this development of international relations an effective means of ensuring peace and mutual

confidence between nations and of facilitating the general reduction of armaments, which is ardently desired by the Swedish nation.

In this connection, however, I should like to draw attention to two points in the Committee's report to which our delegation attaches special importance. The report shows that certain States are in a position to go further and to accept a more strictly judicial system than that of the Locarno Treaties. Sweden is one of those States. She is, in fact, one of those that have concluded conventions entailing a judicial settlement of all disputes without exception. This settlement applies, therefore, not only, as in the Locarno Treaties, to disputes of a legal character, but also to political disputes. Sweden has recently concluded such treaties with her neighbours, Denmark and Finland. Our Government and Parliament have further declared themselves in favour of concluding a similar treaty with Norway, and there is every reason to believe that they would be prepared to make similar agreements with other countries. We therefore think it desirable to point out that the stipulations of the Locarno Treaties concerning the judicial settlement of international disputes — although they certainly represent a very considerable advance — should not bar the way to the conclusion of treaties providing for an even wider application of the principle of judicial settlement.

The report points out, moreover, that certain States do not consider it necessary to identify themselves strictly with the system of mutual guarantee provided for in the Treaties of Locarno. Sweden has always sided with these States, and will probably continue to do so in the future.

The views I have just expressed are, it is true, embodied not only in the report but also in the resolution itself, which expressly recognises that there are certain countries whose interests do not require the conclusion of treaties on the same lines as those of Locarno.

Having drawn special attention to the above-mentioned passages in the report and the resolution, the Swedish delegation welcomes the proposed resolution and gives it its unreserved support.

The President :

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

M. Cassin (France) :

Translation : Gentlemen The French delegation gives its entire support to the resolution submitted to the Assembly by the Third Committee, and this not only because France is one of the signatories of the Locarno Agreements, but also for certain general and fundamental reasons to which special reference must be made.

This resolution contains the elements of the continuity necessary in the work of successive Assemblies. Since public opinion always feels a sense of disappointment at inconsistency, the confidence of the nations in the League is bound to be strengthened if it can be shown that the decisions and recommendations of the Assemblies are followed up by practical action.

The resolution reaffirms the continuity of the method selected in 1924, and, as in 1925, the Assembly will proclaim its continued adherence to the triple and indivisible formula: arbitration, security and reduction of armaments. The League of Nations and the States Members must rely on this for the maintenance of world peace.

These fundamental considerations justify the unanimous approval of the resolution submitted by the Third Committee.

The President :

Translation : If no one has anything further to say, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Third Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

Having examined the reports of the Council on Arbitration, Security and the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes ;

Records the fact that the resolution adopted by the Assembly at its sixth ordinary session to the effect that the most urgent need of the present time is the re-establishment of mutual confidence between nations has had definite results. It sees clear proof of this in the ever-increasing number of arbitration conventions and treaties of security conceived in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and in harmony with the principles of the Geneva Protocol (Arbitration, Security and Disarmament). It emphasises in particular the importance of the Treaties of Locarno, the coming into force of which has been rendered possible by the admission of Germany into the League of Nations and the principal object of which is to ensure peace in one of the most sensitive regions of Europe ;

Sees in the last-mentioned Treaties a definite step forward in the establishment of mutual confidence between nations ;

Considers that agreements of this kind need not necessarily be restricted to a limited area, but may be applied to different parts of the world ;

Asserts its conviction that the general ideas embodied in the clauses of the Treaties of Locarno, whereby provision is made for conciliation and arbitration and for security by the mutual guaranteeing of States against any unprovoked aggression, may well be accepted amongst the fundamental rules which should govern the foreign policy of every civilised nation ;

Expresses the hope that these principles will be recognised by all States and will be put into practice as soon as possible by all States in whose interest it is to contract such treaties ;

And requests the Council to recommend the States Members of the League of Nations to put into practice the above-mentioned principles and to offer, if necessary, its good offices for the conclusion of suitable agreements likely to establish confidence and security, the indispensable conditions of the maintenance of international peace and, as a result, to facilitate the reduction and limitation of the armaments of all States.

The resolution was adopted.

66. — EXAMINATION OF THE SECTION OF THE REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL DEALING WITH THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS FOR THE PROGRESSIVE CODIFICATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the section of the report on the work of the Council dealing with the work of the Committee of Experts for the Progressive Codification of International Law.

M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I rise once more to make a short announcement to the Assembly. There is no report on the question and I shall certainly not make a speech.

This section of the report on the work of the Council was referred to the First Committee on the proposal of the Netherlands delegation. The First Committee studied it with great care and came to the conclusion that a general discussion on the codification of international law would not be advisable for the moment.

The codification of international law is of course one of the most important of the League's activities. It is closely connected with two other major questions — the pacific settlement of international disputes and disarmament.

The question has been referred for examination to a Committee of Jurists, who are now engaged upon this work, so that a debate in the Assembly would be neither wise nor helpful.

The First Committee confined itself to an exchange of views. It decided that the Minutes of its discussions should be transmitted through the Secretary-General to the Committee of Jurists. We may rely upon the wisdom and experience of the Committee to make such use of them as may seem expedient in the circumstances.

The President :

Translation : If nobody has anything further to say, I shall consider that the Assembly has taken note of the statement made by M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee. (*Assent.*)

67. — EXAMINATION OF CERTAIN QUESTIONS REGARDING THE ELECTION OF THE NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the appointment by the Council of a Committee to examine certain questions regarding the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

(*On the invitation of the President, M. Zahle, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the First Committee.*)

The President :

Translation : M. Zahle, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Zahle (Denmark), Rapporteur :

Translation : In a memorandum dated May 12th, 1926, Viscount Cecil, delegate of the British Empire, drew the attention of the Committee on the Composition of the Council to the system of the single transferable vote in regard to the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council. As you know, the memorandum is annexed to the report of the Committee on the Composition of the Council, which Committee, as you are aware, did not examine the question, as it considered it to lie somewhat outside its scope.

The Norwegian delegation, in view of the advantages which the adoption of this system might entail, submitted the following resolution to the Assembly :

"The Assembly requests the Council to appoint a Committee :

"(1) To study the question of the single transferable vote and the principle of proportional representation in general, as regards the problem of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council.

"(2) To report on the method of election of the non-permanent Members in sufficient time to lay the question before the Assembly at its next ordinary session."

The First Committee examined the Norwegian delegation's resolution. On that occasion the Norwegian delegate drew attention to the great importance which the Norwegian Government attached to this question, on the ground that the Council should represent as completely as possible the different opinions and interests existing with the League. In the Norwegian Government's opinion the object in view cannot be attained under a system of elections by majority. The Norwegian delegate pointed out, moreover, that, in the present instance, it was not a question of ordinary political elections. The objections usually advanced against the system of proportional representation as applied to political elections were not valid here.

During the examination of the proposal by the First Committee, the Norwegian delegate submitted the following amended proposal :

The Assembly requests the Council to instruct the Secretariat to study the system of the single transferable vote and of the principle of proportional representation in general, in connection with the problem of the election of the non-permanent Members of the Council, in order that this question may be laid before the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

You will see that there is a substantial difference between the two draft resolutions. In the first, the Council is requested to appoint a Committee to study the question, whereas in the amended resolution the Council is only requested to instruct the Secretariat to study the system.

I would like to point out that the First Committee did not discuss the substance of the question. The Chairman of the Committee found that the resolution did not affect the question, but left it intact. Moreover, it did not entail any expenditure by the League.

The States Members of the League will be able, if they wish, to send memoranda on the subject to the Secretariat.

As Rapporteur of the First Committee, I have the honour to submit to the Assembly the amended resolution.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I shall consider the draft resolution submitted by the First Committee as adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

68. — WORK OF THE ORGANISATION FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSIT, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF FACILITIES TO BE ACCORDED TO JOURNALISTS WHO ATTEND THE MEETINGS OF THE LEAGUE AT GENEVA : REPORT OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE : RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Second Committee's report on the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit (Annex 18. Document A.96.1926.VIII.) and the proposal of the delegation of Chile concerning facilities to be accorded to journalists

who attend the meetings of the League of Nations at Geneva.

(On the invitation of the President, Mr. Fitzgerald, Chairman of the Second Committee, and M. Jaramillo, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Jaramillo will address the Assembly.

M. Jaramillo (Colombia), Rapporteur, read his report.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Second Committee, which are as follows :

The Assembly :

Notes the progress accomplished by the Organisation for Communications and Transit since the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly, and especially the success obtained by the European Conference on the Measurement of Vessels employed in Inland Navigation and the Conference on the Passports Regime ;

Trusts that the Third General Conference on Communications and Transit, which will be held in 1927 and which will examine in particular the general questions of organisation and documentation, will consider the question of improving, as far as possible, technical liaison between the work of the Organisation for Communications and Transit and the specialised administration and experts of non-European countries ; and

Notes, finally, the conclusion of the work of the Special Committee of Enquiry into the Reform of the Calendar, and associates itself with the findings and suggestions made by the Advisory and Technical Committee.

The Assembly of the League of Nations, desiring that all possible assistance should be given to journalists attending the meetings of the League at Geneva,

Takes note of the liberal statements made at the time of the Passports Conference with regard to the facilities for crossing frontiers to be granted to bearers of identity cards issued by the International Association of Journalists accredited to the League of Nations

The resolutions were adopted.

69. — INTERPRETATION OF THE PREAMBLE AND OF ARTICLES 3 AND 4 OF THE COVENANT : REPORT AND RESOLUTION PRESENTED BY THE FIRST COMMITTEE : MOTION OF ADJOURNMENT PROPOSED BY M. BENES (CZECHOSLOVAKIA).

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the report of the First Committee on the interpretation of the Preamble and of Articles 3 and 4 of the Covenant (Annex 19. Document A. 192.1926.V).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee, and M. Joseph Barthélemy, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : M. Joseph Barthélemy will address the Assembly.

M. Joseph Barthélemy (France), Rapporteur :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Viscount Cecil has submitted a proposal the object of which was to request the Council to appoint a special Committee to draw up a report defining the sphere of action of the League of Nations.

The British delegate withdrew the first part of his proposal, in which the Council was requested to appoint a special committee, and putting forward various considerations, more particularly the necessity for economy, he proposed simply that the First — the legal — Committee should appoint a Sub-Committee to draw up a report on this subject.

The First Committee rejected the proposal thus made, for reasons which I will explain. It refused to define the League's sphere of action; it merely recommended that the letter, and more especially the spirit, of the Covenant should be observed. It considered that the Covenant was sufficient in itself, and accordingly proposes the adoption of the following resolution :

"The Assembly :

"Having considered with the deepest interest Viscount Cecil's proposal and the memorandum of the British delegation annexed to the present resolution ;

"Shares the feelings which inspired these two documents ;

"Recognises that the League of Nations should avoid dissipating its activity upon subjects which might divert it from its lofty mission of promoting the peace of the world and facilitating co-operation between nations for the peaceful progress of mankind ;

"Recommends that each body forming part of the League, before taking into consideration any proposal submitted to it, should satisfy itself that the proposal is in accordance with the objects of the League as indicated by the Covenant and possesses real importance from the point of view of the attainment of those objects ;

"Decides that in case of doubt, and if so requested by a member of the body, the question shall be submitted to the Council, in the interval between the sessions of the Assembly, and, during those sessions, to the Committee appointed by the Assembly for legal and constitutional questions.

"The present resolution shall be brought by the Secretary-General to the knowledge of the various bodies forming part of the League."

I must first submit to the Assembly certain observations on the text which has just been read. In the first place, Viscount Cecil's proposal and the memorandum submitted by the British delegation in support of this proposal are annexed to the resolution. This does not mean that the proposal was adopted or that the Committee agreed absolutely, and to the letter, with the conclusions set forth in the memorandum. It only means that the high standing of the authors, the importance of the great country they represent and the importance of the question raised in these two documents — the proposal and the memorandum — deserve the fullest consideration.

You will doubtless have noticed, too, that the Assembly, which is happy, on occasion, to assert its sovereignty, uses in paragraph 4 the timid word

"recommends". The reason is that the Committee did not wish to settle the extremely delicate question of the relations between the Council and the Assembly. These bodies have parallel powers, and there is no established hierarchy. For this reason the Assembly in addressing the Council "recommends".

The recommendation is addressed to the organs of the League. This point, however, had aroused the susceptibilities of the International Labour Office, and we were instructed to state that the International Labour Office is not an organ of the League. The only certain and incontestable right of the Assembly — and it is a right which we shall always defend — is the voting of the necessary credits for the International Labour Office.

I now pass to the fourth point to which I draw your attention. When a special and new subject is submitted to you for discussion there is no need to hold a special debate on it, terminating with a vote on the question whether action in the matter would be in order or desirable. In the words of the proverb of the sunny south, so appositely quoted by the distinguished representative of Italy : "Do not scratch the cicada to make it sing"; do not force the League to engage in superfluous discussions.

We simply wish to draw the particular attention of the organs of the League to this point — that they must not blindly accept any subject whatever and bring it within the League's sphere of action.

When submitting his proposal, Viscount Cecil undoubtedly had some retrospective purpose in mind, and as the League has now been in existence and at work for six years, it seems at first sight a little strange to say after all this time : "Well, we have been working for six whole years. It is time we decided what we ought to be doing !"

Doubtless Viscount Cecil has discovered that the League has exceeded its powers in some respects, or is in danger of doing so; but he has not thrown any light on this point, although it would have been of especial interest.

To define is to limit, and to limit is to restrain; but the Committee has shrunk from the difficulty of finding a definition. A definition must contain the whole *res definita*, and it must contain nothing else. Indeed, have not lawyers and theologians always throughout the ages said, *Omnis definitio periculosa* ("any definition is dangerous") ? A definition is doubly dangerous both because it is difficult to make and because, when once it is made, it may have very vexatious consequences.

The honourable delegate of Canada, Sir George Foster, whose warm and hearty eloquence we all so greatly appreciate, said : "No, all definitions are not dangerous. On the contrary, they are necessary, and in life no progress is possible without definite rules of conduct."

I trust the honourable delegate of Canada will believe that the French delegation also considers rules of conduct necessary both in private and public life. But we consider, too, that a hard-and-fast definition is not invariably a good thing. If, for example, we were asked to define the phrase "fully self-governing" which appears in the article of the Covenant providing that any State desiring to become a Member of the League must be fully self-governing. If I myself were asked to define this phrase, which covers such a multitude of things — and it has been my profession for thirty years to define what a free government is — I should refuse the task.

The British delegation had in mind a universal, abstract, sound and clear definition — a surprising fact, seeing that it is usually my country which is accused of an excessive fondness for universal definitions, a taste for abstractions, a superstitious

reverence for the written word; and we have always thought that one of the many great qualities of the British mind was its practical nature, its wariness in committing to paper, its trust in established custom and its preference for dealing with difficulties as and when they arise.

But, as M. Scialoja remarked, we owe some gratitude to the British delegation, since both the proposal and the memorandum might have been written by a professor of a Latin country — and there can be no derogatory implication in the term, seeing that it comes from the eminent delegate of Italy, who represents here the world-famous University of Rome, and from myself, who all too unworthily represent the great University of Paris.

Viscount Cecil's proposal is confined to a suggestion to nominate a Committee, but there is a memorandum attached to the resolution. This memorandum first sets out a certain method of interpreting the Covenant; secondly, it supplies the material for a definition of the League's sphere of action, and, thirdly, it lays down a certain procedure which the League's activities would have to follow.

The memorandum begins by laying down a method of interpreting the Covenant. There are two possible methods. When considering a document we can look at it with the eyes of a jurist, scrutinising every letter, twisting the text, studying its grammatical interpretation, giving it what some would call a judaical and others a jesuitical interpretation. The text may be subjected to an *interpretation strictissima*, as if the French *Cour de Cassation* were hearing a plea regarding a party wall or a criminal case, where the *interpretation strictissima* must be taken whenever it benefits the accused.

Is this the best method to apply when dealing with a document like the Covenant? My very eminent and eloquent friend, M. Paul-Boncour, who is now the head of the French delegation, said the other day that the more one studied the Covenant the more gratitude one was bound to feel towards those who, on the immediate morrow of the war, when the earth still reeked with the smoke of battles, raised this imperishable monument, conceived this precious and precise instrument for the organisation and maintenance of peace. No one has a greater admiration for it than I have; but for the very reason that the Covenant was drawn up at a time when deep emotion was everywhere prevalent, it is essential that we should make it a rule to distinguish, if we can, between what the authors of the Covenant said and what they intended to say.

Turn to the Preamble. Two of the League's objects are set out therein, namely, the promotion of international co-operation and the attainment of international peace and security.

The words used are: "In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve international peace and security".

Let us go further and, in a common-sense spirit, taking a somewhat higher view than the man in the street, let us read Article 23. "The Members of the League will endeavour to secure and maintain fair and humane conditions of labour for men, women and children." Article 25: "The mitigation of suffering throughout the world." Article 22: "The well-being and development of such people", that is, inhabitants of mandated territories. All these articles assert the sacred mission of civilisation and, since we have this text, which glows with the spirit of the Covenant, what right have we, in drawing up a list of the special missions of the League, to declare such a list to be limitative

instead of simply enumerative or, as the jurist would say, *ad exemplum constitutus*.

Personally I think that the spirit of the Covenant is sufficiently lucid and clear to justify all the activities of the League in the sphere of international co-operation and the maintenance of peace.

Secondly, the British delegation's memorandum provides material for a definition. The League may deal with (1) the object of a treaty; (2) whatever may become the object of a treaty; (3) a treaty dealing only with international questions (this idea, perhaps, is not very sharply defined). As regards national questions, the League may, if I understand the British memorandum aright, only collect information.

Before reverting to what I have already said, I would ask what would be the use of a science which produced no practical results, or of information not intended as a preliminary to action. To my mind, the League may legislate on anything that is likely to promote international co-operation and the maintenance of peace.

The disadvantage of a restrictive definition is that it would both add to the Covenant and limit it. There is the risk that it might reflect upon some of the past work of the Assembly, and even on some of the noble work in which Viscount Cecil has enthusiastically participated. I have in mind the restoration of Austria, the financial assistance rendered to Hungary, the assistance given to Greek and Bulgarian refugees, Armenians, Russians and others — in fact, all the works conducted by Dr. Nansen. There are certain evils so serious and deep-rooted that the countries suffering from them constitute a definite element of unrest in the world — evils so serious and deep-rooted, especially when resulting from the war, that peace cannot be regarded as secure until they have been eradicated.

To take another point: a restrictive definition would eventually become a handicap. Supposing that at some distant date, perhaps so distant that we shall not be here to see it, measures were contemplated to remedy the money market troubles which exist, as you know, both in countries with depreciated currencies and in those whose currencies are somewhat paradoxically described as favourable; supposing that we were one day asked to deal with some great humanitarian work, beyond the power and resources of a single State, should we declare such work outside our sphere of action?

If this proposal for the restrictive definition of the Covenant is designed to prevent the League from dealing with questions like children's baths or swimming pools for adults — to return to the examples already quoted to you — the fable would be reversed and instead of the mountain bringing forth a mouse, the mouse would bring forth a mountain. Or, to quote another fable, it would be like the bear which, in order to rid its master of the fly on his nose, proceeded to break his head.

The maintenance of peace is indisputably the chief, the primary object of the League. But does that mean that we shall ensure peace simply by meeting in this hall and making statements of doctrine. Is peace a matter of courts and magistrates, of public prosecutors or judges' robes and wigs? Can peace be manufactured by the machinery of the law?

No, if the triune godhead of the League, — arbitration, security and disarmament — is to come down on earth and live among us, preparing the way for peace, we must create the proper atmosphere for its reception. We must teach the nations that the interests which they have in common are more numerous than those which

divide them and are also more real, more profound and more permanent. Collaboration and co-operation between the peoples create an atmosphere favourable to the maintenance of peace.

In the British delegation's memorandum an attempt is made to establish a line of demarcation between national and international affairs. This is an intricate problem, one as difficult as the definition of public order, morality or decency which are by their very nature conceptions liable to change. One speaker in the Committee referred to the fact that it was formerly considered improper for a woman to show her feet. Well, standards of decency change. The bathing costume of to-day is not what our grandmothers would have worn. It does for seaside bars and restaurants, but is, so far, prohibited in city streets and restaurants. Everything is a question of latitude, of period, of the state of opinion at the moment. Questions are continually extending beyond the bounds of national affairs and coming within the international purview. Some questions which were once international are no longer even national, but simply matters for the individual.

Mr. Latham, delegate of Australia, spoke of a uniform religion for all Members of the League as a sheer absurdity. It would indeed be an absurdity at the present day, when religion has become a purely individual matter, but less than two hundred years have elapsed since the Holy Alliance. We have seen the evolution of religion from the international to the national plane and from the national to the individual plane, on which it finally stands.

Let me now turn to the question of the internal constitution of States.

Viscount Cecil, the eminent delegate of the British Empire, gave an excellent example of the national purview when he spoke of the reform of the House of Lords. That is obviously an essentially national question, but it is too forceful an illustration to provide us with a definition. It is as if we had hold of the two ends of the chain but could not find the intermediate links.

Does this mean that, from the international standpoint, the internal constitution of States is a matter of indifference? Parliamentary democracy is for some of us the most satisfactory constitution from the international point of view, and, in the view of some, the democratic control of diplomacy is calculated to prevent war.

Is it not, moreover, in keeping with the spirit of the Covenant, under which, as I have just said, none but States "*qui se gouvernent librement*", or, in the more explicit wording of the English text, "fully self-governing" States may become Members of the League? At the same time, nobody here would wish to raise in this hall these burning questions, which are so essentially legal in character, for the simple reason that the problem is not a legal one within the competence of the First Committee, but a matter of expediency and tact which concerns every organ of the League.

Hygiene was once unknown, hence the terrible epidemics of the Middle Ages. It became a national affair and fearful scourges still occurred, such as the Marseilles plague. At length it became an international question, and cholera and plague are shrinking day by day.

Social and labour legislation, which at one time did not exist, were first national affairs and are now tending more and more to become questions of international concern.

How is it possible to distinguish between the national and international aspects of such questions? Can we decide, for example, that an epidemic disease is international, that a non-

infectious and non-epidemic disease is essentially national and that an infectious but non-epidemic disease is a mixture of the two? Can cholera be included among international and arterio-sclerosis among national diseases? Can cancer be included in the national category because it is not considered to be transmissible, while tuberculosis would be considered as half and half?

Such hair-splitting would lead us into endless difficulties.

A third point: the British delegation's memorandum — and now I am dealing with an essentially technical matter, which is both intricate and difficult — suggests that a certain procedure should be adopted for action by the League.

This is a question which requires mature consideration. The British delegation's memorandum proposes to restrict action by the League not only to a certain sphere, but proposes to lay down certain rules for the exercise of the League's activities within that sphere itself. The League could only act by framing an international treaty or creating an international bureau. The Committee felt, however, that in each specific case the League should be left to decide whether the matter in question was of sufficiently general interest for it to take up, or whether it was preferable to leave the Powers most directly concerned to settle it.

Once this point is decided, it is for the Assembly to select the procedure which it considers most suitable. In particular, resolutions adopted by the Assembly in accordance with the Covenant and the Rules of Procedure may constitute a perfectly satisfactory basis for action by the League. The rule of unanimity imposed upon members of the Assembly is an adequate guarantee that they will not overstep the limit.

The Covenant is enough in itself and we have the necessary organs to interpret it, whenever a proposal is referred to them, namely, either the Council or the Assembly — on the report of the Legal Committee, that is to say, the First Committee — or the Hague Court when purely technical questions are involved.

Wherein, then, would the disadvantages of a legal definition lie? It would mean that the League would be shown the immensity of its domain, as when the Devil took Jesus upon a high mountain and offered him the kingdoms of the earth; and we should have to say: Take care, be cautious, be wise, do not attempt everything at once.

An old English jurist once said: "Parliament can do anything except change a man into a woman". That is an excellent legal definition, and I think it is a very good legal definition of the sphere of action of the League of Nations.

This legal definition does not mean that the British Parliament is bound to do everything short of changing a man into a woman, and the Assembly and its organisations should not take up every question *ad absurdum*. What I mean is that a distinction must be made between the question of legal competence and the question of expediency.

On the question of expediency we see eye to eye with the British delegation, and the Committee shares the feelings which inspired the British memorandum and draft resolution.

Are we to take up every question without a preliminary study of its constitutionality and expediency? Think how overburdened our agenda is, how the meetings of the Committees are crowded together and how the most important questions are rushed through in the charming intimacy and friendliness of the closing period of a session! Account must be taken of political contingencies, practical and financial possibilities.

In this latter connection I am particularly glad of the support of the eminent representative of Czechoslovakia on the First Committee, M. Osaský, who emphasised the importance of financial considerations.

What is the resolution now before us? It is a recommendation not to accept everything indiscriminately, not to admit all those who knock insistently at our doors. It is a recommendation to select. There are questions of major importance which fall within the legal competence of the Assembly but which cannot be taken up, either because we are incapable of settling them at the moment or because we do not possess the necessary funds, or because the matter is a very delicate one affecting the internal policy of States.

There are also minor questions which it is not for the League to examine. The League must not be made to appear an academy of cranks or the last refuge of a school of sentimental thought. The League must be wary in taking up the more or less ingenuous schemes of reform conceived in the brains of bachelors or old maids or of the childless, or even — I would add, lest I fail to carry the whole Assembly with me — of men with family cares. Questions such as heliotherapy, hydrotherapy, language reform, or rational food and clothing belong to a sentimental school of thought into which we cannot penetrate. The League's task is obviously not to provide children's baths or swimming-baths for adults. If the Assembly were asked to deal with a question which for some hours occupied the attention of the French Parliament, namely, the question of babies' dummies, and to recommend the international prohibition of their use, I should most certainly ask it to refrain.

There are certain problems which should only be dealt with when public opinion is ripe. I must confess that when, in a few days' time, I return to our farmers in the south of France and tell them of the great work the League is doing, I do not propose to mention the reform of the calendar, important as that question undoubtedly is.

It is essential, moreover, to realise that the importance of any question is purely relative and varies considerably according to latitude and country. For example, certain countries regard opium as a burning question; others attach capital importance to infectious diseases, while others again — and these constitute the majority — regard the maintenance of peace as the primary work of the League.

The meaning of our resolution is perfectly clear: no questions must be taken up without due reflection, for fear of damaging the League's prestige.

We maintain that certain unwritten rules are implicit in the Covenant: the sense of expediency, a comprehension of practical possibilities and respect for what Roosevelt once called "sublime common sense". I think the Assembly ought to be unanimous on all these points.

We have, however, refused to consider any rigid or restrictive legal definition which might one day hamper the League in the performance of its duties, in the attainment of its instinctive objects and in the realisation of those great hopes which the world looks to it to fulfil.

The President:

Translation: M. Beneš, first delegate of Czechoslovakia, will address the Assembly.

M. Beneš (Czechoslovakia):

Translation: Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I am not going to oppose the resolution submitted by the Committee, but simply to make a small observation.

You have heard the views of the First Committee and the Rapporteur's observations on the British proposal, and, since this proposal might have far-reaching consequences, I will ask the Assembly to consider the following suggestion.

I quite agree with Viscount Cecil that the League should not engage in work outside the sphere of international co-operation or work which is not in keeping with its other objects. Moreover, I regard the drafting of any resolution on the question as a very important matter; it concerns not only the First Committee, but also the other Committees whose work it can or might affect.

At the same time, I recognise and call special attention to the weight attaching to the Rapporteur's arguments and the large measure of truth which they contain.

For all these reasons and in view of the fact that the other Committees have had neither time nor opportunity to study the draft resolution and its possible effect on the work which concerns them more particularly, I venture to propose that the examination of the resolution should be postponed until the next session of the Assembly.

The President:

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

Viscount Cecil (British Empire):

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — It is probably one of the chief difficulties of the League of Nations that the mentality of the French race is so different from the mentality of the British race, so that, however clearly we try to express our thoughts, we find ourselves constantly misunderstood by our French friends; and it may be that the converse happens with equal frequency.

We have listened to a most interesting and a most versatile discourse by the distinguished representative of France. It was very elaborate and, in parts, very entertaining; but it was based on a complete misapprehension of the central topic with which he dealt, namely, the British memorandum on the question before us. He conceived — indeed, he asserted in the most emphatic way — that we desire to lay down a hard-and-fast definition of what is and what is not within the competence of the League of Nations. No conception could have been further from our thoughts, and I can only say that I do not think that any English person reading our memorandum could have arrived at so strange a conclusion.

The memorandum consists of an argument to show what perhaps it was not worth while so elaborately to show, namely, that the League is constituted to deal with international matters and not with national matters; it has not to take the place of organs of national opinion or of national constitution. When an attempt is made to draw a line between what is international and what is national there are obvious and immense difficulties to be encountered. As M. Barthélemy very truly said, not only is it very difficult to draw the line at any particular moment, but the line necessarily changes from time to time. This is all quite true and is all recognised or implied in the British memorandum. An endeavour has been made there to give examples of what may be thought to be clearly on one side of the line or clearly on the other side. I recognise, of course, that the statement is not a complete one, and that it could not be made complete unless it were a good deal longer. It was merely put forward as the basis for discussion and I hoped very much that the First Committee would have seen its way to elaborate it and to make it — I will not say quite complete, because I doubt whether it could ever

be made so — but more widely embracing so as to give a more useful indication of what was and what was not within the competence of the League.

I think that our French colleague pointed out very truly one subject which was entirely omitted — and it is a grave omission — from the British memorandum, namely, such spheres of activity as the assistance of refugees and the action which the League has taken — so happily and usefully from an international point of view — in Hungary, Austria, Greece, Bulgaria and other countries. It may be — I trust it will be — that such action is only the prelude to other action of the same kind. A man must indeed be a lunatic if he thinks that such action is not clearly international in character.

The whole basis, therefore, of that part of the French orator's speech which attacked and criticised with some severity the British memorandum because it sought to lay down a strict definition was based — I must say so quite plainly — upon a complete misunderstanding of what that memorandum essayed to do. I do not desire to withdraw anything which I said when I first laid this matter before the League. I do think it is important that the League should confine itself to matters of international concern, though I quite admit that any attempt rigidly to define what are international matters would be mistaken and impossible. I did not bring this question forward, as the French delegate appeared to think, merely because some Advisory Committee had recommended swimming-baths, or for any reason of that kind. I took that suggestion as an illustration, an obvious and a harmless illustration, of the kind of thing which seemed to me to be clearly outside the competence of the League.

This is not a trifling matter and it is a grave mistake to suppose that it is. There is a danger that our critics, the enemies of the League — and there are enemies of the League in every country, perhaps as many in France as in my own country — may be able to say that Geneva is the home of cranks and fanatics. It would be grossly untrue to say so, but it is very important that we should take care not only that it is untrue but that there is not even a scintilla of basis for such a charge.

It is for this reason and in order to reassure public opinion in certain countries and to make it quite certain that there is no intention of interfering with national sovereignty, no intention of utilising international machinery in order to accomplish a strictly national object, or, still less, to interfere with national independence and sovereignty, that I desire to bring this matter seriously to the consideration of the League, and I had hoped that we should have had a more helpful kind of speech than that to which we have just listened.

I personally greatly prefer the report of the Committee to the argument by which it has been recommended and I do not doubt that the essential paragraph, which suggests that "each body forming part of the League should satisfy itself that the proposal is in accordance with the objects of the League as indicated by the Covenant", does lay down a useful guide which might be considered carefully by those bodies. It does not amount to a definition, because it does not say what the objects of the League are or what exactly is meant or indicated by the Covenant. I think the authors of the definition were very wise not to attempt rigidity.

I believe that, broadly speaking, the objects of the League are, for the reasons given in the British memorandum, matters of international concern, and I agree with the very able argument of M. Barthélemy to the effect that in interpreting

the League it is necessary to take into consideration the whole League. It is necessary to take the preamble of the Covenant as indicating the object in view, and the articles as illustrating how that general object may, in particular cases, be accomplished. With all this I agree and, personally, I should have been quite satisfied to have adopted this report as it stands without further delay. My friend M. Beneš, however, has suggested that further consideration is desirable, and has pointed out with undeniable force that, owing to the great haste in which we have been conducting our business for the last week, we have not perhaps had an opportunity of considering as fully as we ought the exact wording which should be adopted in dealing with this very important matter. I personally should be the last to oppose his suggestion, and if he desires that this matter should be postponed to the next session of the Assembly, I am very ready to agree, particularly as my chief object was to draw the attention of the League to the dangers of unduly expanding its activities, rather than to lay down any rigid and unalterable rule as to what those activities should be.

I therefore accept the proposal of M. Beneš.

The President :

Translation : Sir George Foster, delegate of Canada, will address the Assembly.

Sir George Foster (Canada) :

Ladies and gentlemen — Do not be in the least afraid that I am going to impose a speech upon you. That would be altogether out of place, but I find myself in a certain difficulty.

All those who have listened to the speech made by M. Barthélemy, the honourable delegate of France, and who contrasted with that speech the very meagre and insufficient English interpretation which followed it, will appreciate my difficulty. I do not understand all the arguments brought forward by that distinguished orator, and I do not therefore know exactly what was the close connection between the arguments he used and the resolution which we are asked to pass. From my imperfect knowledge of French I judged, if I may be allowed to use my judgment, that he was combating something which had not been asserted.

We have a phrase in our country which we use when, for example, an advocate tries to get the better of an opponent before a popular audience; we say that he puts up a "man of straw". In the most valiant fashion he beats that "man of straw" and at last administers the final "knock-out blow". It is a great victory, for the advocate himself, and I was wondering, when my friend M. Barthélemy was speaking, whether or not, if he had been delivering such a speech in an assembly in my country, we should have classed him under the style of advocate I have just mentioned. But, of course, for sedate and cultured Europe to undertake that kind of advocacy is out of the question! I have not the least suspicion that it would ever be undertaken.

This is my difficulty. If I am asked to vote for this resolution I am asked also to admit the value of and to support the argument by which it was placed before this Assembly, and I do not know what that argument was. Consequently, I am in some doubt lest, in voting for a resolution which seems fairly reasonable, I shall be endorsing an argument which I should consider to be somewhat unreasonable. For that reason, I would suggest that it is of importance that this Assembly, in view of the duty which it owes to itself and the duty which it owes to the great public which is listening to it, should not regard this debate as ended, but

should give an opportunity for it to be continued at another session of the Assembly. It is not possible, at the present session of the Assembly for the other side of the argument to be adequately presented, and I think therefore that we should do well to resume this discussion at another time.

I want to endorse what Viscount Cecil said — that there is a very real and continuing danger ahead of the League. There is a suspicion on the part of a great many people in the different countries of the world, there is even an apprehension — I cannot think that it is well grounded — that the League of Nations is pursuing methods which make it liable to be regarded as entrenching upon the national rights and privileges of the countries of the world. That is considered in some quarters to be its object, or at all events one of its methods. I meet that criticism — I have to meet it and overcome it as best I can — when I am upholding the League.

I believe that the League must be very careful not to give any prominence or support to actions which could give rise to that suspicion. I believe it is perfectly possible to have the general scope of its action fairly well defined and understood and carried out, leaving each proposal as it arises to be judged by circumstances and to be brought to the test whether it is within the sphere of the League of Nations or not. I must not, however, run into argument or take up more of your time. I simply wish to approve and support very strongly the proposal made by Dr. Beneš that this debate be adjourned and that the subject be held over for further discussion by a future session of the Assembly.

The President :

Translation : M. Motta, Chairman of the First Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. Motta (Switzerland) Chairman of the First Committee :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I have no desire to presume upon your patience, but I think that as Chairman of the First Committee I ought to give you my views on the proposal for postponement submitted by Dr. Beneš, first delegate of Czechoslovakia.

In view of present circumstances and of the stage which the discussion has reached postponement is advisable. I trust, therefore, that in agreeing to the discussion being held over until next year I am faithfully interpreting the views of the delegations and their representatives on the First Committee.

I do not think that any harm can come of postponement. The question is a difficult one, involving serious issues, and may still require lengthy discussion. A long discussion hardly appears desirable at this late hour.

It is quite true that, owing to the large number of questions to be dealt with by the First Committee, we were perhaps unable to devote as long as we should have liked to the discussion of each one of them. Fortunately, however, we succeeded in arriving at a unanimous agreement on the basis of the resolution expounded by M. Barthélemy.

The essential feature of this resolution was a recommendation that each body forming part of the League, before taking into consideration any proposal submitted to it, should satisfy itself that it comes within the scope of the Covenant and is of real importance from the point of view of the League's activities.

We shall accordingly resume the discussion of the question under consideration next year, though we feel that, while postponement is desirable, the discussion this year has been equally so.

I trust no one will imagine that the resolution refers to action already undertaken or work already begun by the League. This was by no means the Committee's intention.

As regards any fresh activity subsequently suggested to the League, this discussion will, I feel sure, constitute a sufficient recommendation to proceed with caution, moderation and, best of all, common sense.

The President :

Translation : We have before us two proposals : first a resolution submitted by the First Committee and, second, a motion for postponement submitted by Dr. Beneš, delegate of Czechoslovakia. Under the Rules of Procedure the motion for adjournment must be taken first. I note that it has been agreed to by the Chairman of the First Committee and by all the previous speakers. I will ask the Assembly whether it is in favour of postponement.

As nobody has anything to say I declare the motion for postponement adopted. (*Agreed.*)

70. — MANDATES : RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Mandates question.

(*On the invitation of the President, M. de Brouckère, Chairman and Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, took his place on the platform.*)

The President :

Translation : M. de Brouckère, Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, will address the Assembly.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Sixth Committee has adopted and now submits to the Assembly the following resolution :

"The Assembly :

"Having taken cognisance of the report to the Council relating to the mandated territories and of the discussion on the subject which has taken place in the Council ;

"And having heard the Vice-Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission :

"Thanks the Permanent Mandates Commission for the devotion and the zeal with which it has carried out its delicate task ;

"Has confidence in the members of this Commission as well as in the Members of the Council to ensure the application of the principles of Article 22 of the Covenant in a cordial spirit of co-operation with the mandatory Powers."

Such is the very brief report drafted after somewhat lengthy proceedings which were marked at times by a certain animation but were inspired throughout by the loftiest sentiments.

I have already acquainted you with the conclusions reached by the Committee as the result of its proceedings. It is not for me as Rapporteur to give an official account of the various arguments advanced. Anyone interested in the question will find them in the Minutes. At the same time I shall not, I think, be exceeding my duty if, in a verbal report engaging only my personal responsibility, I endeavour briefly to set forth those ideas upon which I feel — indeed I am convinced — that the Sixth Committee was unanimous.

In the first place, we were all agreed in testifying most gratefully to the zeal and devotion displayed by the members of the Mandates Commission in the performance of a difficult task. Certain doubts on this point have been expressed, not in the League, but among the public. The proceedings of the Sixth Committee, following on the very clear and definite statements of the members of the Council, will serve to dispel these doubts once and for all.

The members of the Mandates Commission have a supremely difficult task to fulfil.

They have to obtain detailed information concerning the most varied kinds of peoples. That is a singularly thankless task, since they are never called upon for assistance when things are going well, but are nevertheless obliged to intervene whenever there is the menace of a dispute calling for settlement. Lastly, their duties are, I need hardly say, of a particularly delicate nature.

With the years of experience behind us we can testify that, no matter how difficult their task, they have always succeeded in performing it with credit to themselves.

There is a second point on which unanimous agreement was reached, and it calls for special mention. I refer to the importance universally attached to the work for which the Mandates Commission is responsible. No one dreams of under-estimating that work or of restricting the Commission's powers which are clearly defined in the last paragraph of Article 22 of the Covenant :

"A permanent Commission shall be constituted to receive and examine the annual reports of the Mandatories and to advise the Council on all matters relating to the observance of the mandates."

I might remind you that this general provision was further defined and elucidated by the famous report which we owe to one whose presence for many years shed a special lustre on the Belgian delegation : I refer to M. Paul Hymans.

As you are all aware, the League is directly involved in the administration of the mandates. It is specifically laid down in Article 22 that States entrusted with the duty of tutelage shall exercise such tutelage as Mandatories on behalf of the League. This means that the League can never divest itself of its responsibility in regard to the way in which the mandate is exercised.

Nor must it be forgotten that this task involves the application of an entirely novel principle and the regulation of the relations between the mandated territory and the mandatory Power on the one hand and between the League itself and the mandatory Powers on the other. It is obvious that the adjustment of relations of such recent growth cannot be brought to perfection in a day. Such a task calls for long experience, and until that experience has been acquired, the only means whereby the various interests can be reconciled and the necessary co-operation established is to continue to act with tact and circumspection, a rule, I repeat, to which the Mandates Commission has constantly adhered.

That body, it should be noted again, has clearly affirmed its intention to carry out its mission, but not as a body of magistrates examining persons lying under a charge, since the mere fact of giving a State a mandate and entrusting it with the execution of so high a mission constitutes a proof of confidence which must carry with it certain implications. No, the Mandates Commission has openly proclaimed its intention of collaborating with the mandatory Powers. Collaboration does not preclude advice or even criticism, provided

that the criticism is constructive and designed to help the Mandatory to do better.

One word more. Two definite questions occupied the special attention of the Sixth Committee, the first being that of the questionnaire. You know what that means. The Mandates Commission drew up a questionnaire a long time ago, in order to assist the mandatory Powers in drawing up the annual report to be submitted under Article 22 of the Covenant. It is now proposed to revise this questionnaire. Naturally, such a step cannot be taken until the mandatory States have been consulted. This is now being done and I have no doubt that the conciliatory attitude to which I have just referred will result in complete agreement being reached between the mandatory States and the Mandates Commission.

As regards the reorganisation of the right of petition, I would emphasise the Commission's very explicit declaration that it had never contemplated the establishment of a system conferring upon petitioners any unilateral right to be heard.

In this connection I desire to make the following statement, not in my capacity as Rapporteur, but as delegate of Belgium.

I desire to state that my Government maintains intact its original view as to the exercise of the right of petition. It cannot agree to any system whereby the mandatory Powers could be arraigned. It does not, however, reject *a priori* a procedure by which the Commission would be empowered, in certain strictly defined cases, to carry out investigations and to hear the statements of both parties.

I have no more to say. The word "crisis" has been used in connection with the meeting of the Council at which the report of the Mandates Commission was discussed. It has become the fashion to employ that word in connection with all the League's activities. It is perfectly true that discussions do sometimes take place in the League, and that these discussions are sometimes more heated than used to be the case. What is the reason ? It is that the League has grown into a more tangible reality, and that the concrete interests of the nations are more closely affected.

But this, as has often been pointed out, is simply a phenomenon of growth. When an organisation is in process of development, fresh problems crop up and old problems reappear in a different form. The overcoming of such obstacles and difficulties constitutes the very life-blood of any organisation. Progress will not be achieved simply by following the course of events peacefully and, if I may say so, apathetically, but by surmounting difficulties, just as the human body overcomes its physical disabilities. This organic determination to rise above difficulties and expand is perhaps the most vital factor both in physical and in moral well-being.

It was Anatole France, I think, who once defined the will by likening it to the persistent determination of the tree to burst into leaf in the springtime.

The League will triumph over difficulties, great and small alike, because mankind remains persistent in its determination to blossom forth in the coming springtime of peace and justice.

The President :

Translation : Dr. Nansen, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Nansen (Norway) :

I wish to say a few words in support of the formal report containing the very important resolution which has just been laid before the Assembly by the President of the Sixth Committee. I shall not detain you for more than a few moments, but I do

not feel able to leave without comment here this resolution and the debates from which it resulted.

In the first place, I should like to say that in my view the value of those debates was seriously reduced by the atmosphere of haste in which, from beginning to end, they were conducted. I desire on behalf of my delegation to add my protest to that which has been made by the British delegation against the practice of seeking to end the Assembly on a fixed day decided upon before the work of the Assembly has properly begun. I have to express our ardent hope that in future years it will be decided that adequate time shall be allowed for the full and satisfactory discussion of every subject which comes before the Assembly. It is for the Assembly to give the necessary impetus to the whole work of the League for the succeeding year in all its branches, and it is certain that it must often be very difficult for the Assembly to show the wisdom that is required if attempts are made to take the work too fast.

As regards the debates on Mandates questions in the Sixth Committee, I do not propose to raise again the issues with which we dealt. I only desire to say that those debates, curtailed though they were, had, in my opinion, the greatest possible value. The resolution to which we agreed is less comprehensive than other draft resolutions which were submitted, but none the less it carries out adequately the purpose which every member of the Sixth Committee had in view. That purpose was to express in the most solemn manner possible the full and unabated confidence of the whole League of Nations in the members of its Mandates Commission.

Resolutions similar to this have been passed in previous years, but I think that our resolution this year has more than the usual significance. Anyone who has studied the reports of the Mandates Commission knows that it had, between the sixth and seventh sessions of the Assembly, a year of extraordinary activity. It held ordinary and special sessions and issues of the greatest possible gravity were submitted for its consideration. Throughout, as the Sixth Committee has unanimously recognised, it fulfilled, with great courage, great wisdom and great devotion, its duties in accordance with the Covenant and the decisions of the Council and previous Assemblies. I feel sure that I am speaking for every member of the Sixth Committee when I say that they were deeply impressed by the high-minded conception of its task which the Commission has, as witnessed, in particular, by the speeches made before it by the Vice-Chairman of the Commission, M. van Rees, and that they have the greatest admiration for the determination of the Commission to do its duty.

There are other matters in connection with the mandates concerning which I had hoped that the Sixth Committee might be able to make positive recommendations, in particular, concerning the subject of the liquor traffic in some of the mandated areas. Owing to the circumstances to which I have referred this has not been possible. I hope, if satisfactory solutions are not reached before that time, that the next Assembly will very carefully consider the matter.

In the meantime, I desire to say again that, by the resolution which is now before it, the Assembly is expressing its confidence in the Mandates Commission, both in respect of the work which it has done during the past year and that which confronts it in the year to come, and that it is expressing its approval of the action taken by the Commission during all its sessions, both ordinary and special, held during the past year. The Assembly is also, as I understand it, expressing its unabated confidence in the rightness of the mandates system, by means of which, we all believe, the mandatory Powers may be able to build up new principles of co-operation between the advanced and backward peoples of the world for the mutual benefit of both. No one who follows these matters can doubt that these relations constitute one of the gravest of the problems which the twentieth century has to face, and that towards its solution the Mandates Commission may have a great contribution to make.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak I will put to the vote the resolution of the Sixth Committee, which reads as follows :

The Assembly :

Having taken cognisance of the report to the Council relating to the mandated territories and of the discussion on the subject which has taken place in the Council ;

And having heard the Vice-Chairman of the Permanent Mandates Commission :

Thanks the Permanent Mandates Commission for the devotion and zeal with which it has carried out its delicate task ;

Has confidence in the members of this Commission as well as in the Members of the Council to ensure the application of the principles of Article 22 of the Covenant in a cordial spirit of co-operation with the mandatory Powers.

The resolution was adopted.

The Assembly rose at 1.25 p.m.

VERBATIM RECORD

OF THE
SEVENTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY
OF THE
LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SEVENTEENTH PLENARY MEETING

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1926, AT 3.15 P.M.

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71. — SLAVERY CONVENTION: REPORT OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President:

Translation: The first item on the agenda is the Sixth Committee's report on the Slavery Convention. (Annex 20. Document A.104.1926.VI).

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Broeckère, Chairman of the Sixth Committee, and Viscount Cecil, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: Viscount Cecil will address the Assembly.

Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (British Empire), Rapporteur:

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before I say anything with regard to the question of slavery, may I be permitted to make one observation concerning a declaration made by the Norwegian delegate, Dr. Nansen, this morning? He then explained what, I think, has been in the minds of a great many delegates and others, namely, that we have been working under conditions of great pressure, particularly during the last few days. That pressure manifested itself to some extent when we were dealing with this question of slavery, and I gather that it has been much more severe in connection with other questions. I venture therefore to express the earnest hope that care will be taken to avoid such pressure in future Assemblies and that it will be recognised that it is really impracticable for the Assembly to get through its work with due efficiency and dignity unless at least four weeks are allowed for the purpose.

In spite of any imperfections which may have resulted from the conditions I have described, I now have the honour to lay before you the results of the work of the Sixth Committee in connection with the question of slavery. The Committee has succeeded in agreeing, unanimously, upon

a Convention on this subject. That Convention is, in the main, similar to the draft Convention of last year, and deals with three main subjects. It recalls the unanimous resolve of all civilised nations to put an end once and for all to the slave trade. It makes some provision to facilitate that great object. It proposes that slavery, in all its forms, shall, as soon as possible, come to an end, but it recognises that in some countries this must still take a little time; the Convention, therefore, requires that it should be done progressively and as soon as possible. Lastly, it deals, for the first time in international documents, with the question of forced labour, which, as everyone who has studied the subject knows, may, in some of its forms, easily degenerate into conditions not very far removed from slavery.

You will remember that last year the Assembly had under consideration a draft Convention dealing with all these problems. It was examined with a great deal of care by the Sixth Committee and a revised text was submitted to the Assembly. We had hoped that it would have been signed at once, but for various reasons this turned out to be impracticable and it was arranged that the matter should be adjourned until this Assembly, when the draft Convention would be reconsidered, and that the various Members of the League should be invited, as far as possible, to authorise their representatives at this Assembly to sign such a Convention if they agreed with it. Accordingly, we have gone very carefully through the Convention again clause by clause and, I may say, line by line. We have made certain amendments, to which I will draw your attention, and we are going to ask, and indeed we do ask, all the States which are represented here to sign the Convention.

I do not propose to read at length the report of the Sixth Committee. It is necessarily rather a lengthy document, because an effort has been made to make it a full commentary on the text of the Convention and, therefore, a good deal that was in last year's report has been again repeated. I ought, perhaps, to add a word of warning; there are passages in last year's report which have been omitted in order to save space and anyone who wishes to know what is the full policy of the Assembly in this matter will still have to refer to last year's report also. One example of this, perhaps the most important, is that in last year's report some attempt was made at a definition of what was meant by public services, and that passage does not reappear in this year's report.

I think that the best way in which I can be of assistance to the Assembly is to take the Convention article by article, mentioning anything to which I think it worth while to call your special attention, referring you for any fuller comment to the report of this year, supplemented by the report of last year.

Article 1, which defines slavery and the slave trade, calls for no further remark.

In Article 2, which provides for the suppression of the slave trade and the complete abolition of slavery in all its forms as soon as possible, a slight but important change has been made since last year. In the article last year the phrase "domestic slavery and similar conditions" was included. Those words have now been left out because it is hoped and believed that the definition of slavery as contained in the Convention will cover all those conditions, at any rate, in their more objectionable form. In connection with every legal definition there is always some possibility of doubt, and you will find that in the report the definition is expanded and explained by the statement that it includes the maintenance by a private individual of

rights over another person of the same nature as the rights which an individual can have over things. In my judgment this is not in any respect wider than the actual definition so far as the English text is concerned, though I am advised that, without that explanation, there might be a little doubt as to the full meaning of the French text.

As regards Article 3, which is an attempt to improve existing provisions dealing with the suppression of the slave trade at sea, the British Government was anxious, and would still prefer, to have done that by the simple process of declaring the slave trade as being on the same level as piracy. That would have given very wide powers to deal with any slave trader who was found pursuing his nefarious purpose. Objections, however, were raised to the proposal, and we fell back on the idea that we might perhaps apply the provisions of the Convention on the International Trade in Arms to the slave trade so far as maritime search was concerned.

Even that idea proved to be rather further than some of those represented on the Committee were prepared to go, and in the clause in the Convention we arrived at this compromise: that the parties will negotiate a general Convention including provisions of the same nature as those found in the Convention on the International Trade in Arms, subject to the necessary adaptation, and we have provided, in order to meet the anxiety of a certain Power, that this provision does not imply a preference for any one of the signatory States over any other—all of them are to be treated on the same terms.

Some anxiety, I believe, exists about the wording of the Convention on the International Trade in Arms, and I think that statements to that effect will be made from this tribune. I will only say that, while fully recognising the right of any State to make such a reservation, I hope and believe very strongly that it is quite unnecessary in this case, because the obligation in the Convention itself, which does not extend to every detail of the Convention on the International Trade in Arms, will leave any question of the wording to be settled by negotiation afterwards. In addition, we have provided that any two or three Powers may make special agreements carrying, if they so choose, the rights of search, and so on, further than the Convention on the International Trade in Arms would carry them. We hope that in that way a real step forward may be made toward increasing the powers whereby any slave trade still existing may be suppressed.

Article 4 calls for no comment. It provides that every nation is to give assistance to others in putting a stop to this evil. The special method by which something of the kind might perhaps be done may be by the effective exercise of the rights of manumission which exist in certain countries, those rights to be exercised by the Consul of certain of the Powers represented there. We have exercised that right fairly freely ourselves in one country, and we trust, and I daresay with some foundation, that other countries are doing likewise.

I now pass to Article 5, which deals with forced labour. The terms of that article are almost exactly the same as last year. It provides, as you probably remember, that forced labour for private purposes is, in principle, to be abolished, and that forced labour for public purposes is declared only to be permissible if it does not in any way resemble slavery. We were urged to add certain specific provisions providing for adequate remuneration, particularly in the case of forced labour for public services. We considered this proposal very carefully, but were faced with great practical difficulties in including such a provision in the Convention,

because in many cases, or in some exceptional cases, forced labour for public services is not, strictly speaking, paid for, though it is taken in the place of taxes and things of that kind. We therefore agreed, while stating the whole of our view in the report (which I trust those who are interested in the subject will read), also to urge the Assembly to pass a special resolution on the subject, which, although it will not form part of the Convention, will indicate the strong feeling of the League on this question. You will find it as resolution No. III of the report. It says:

"III. The Assembly :

"While recognising that forced labour for public purposes is sometimes necessary ;

"Is of opinion that, as a general rule, it should not be resorted to unless it is impossible to obtain voluntary labour and that it should receive adequate remuneration."

In addition, we have made one change. We said last year that, in principle, forced labour may be exacted only for public services. That provision has been somewhat strengthened, and we now say that, subject to the transitional provisions laid down in paragraph 2, forced labour shall only be exacted for public purposes. In other words, we make clearer what we always meant, namely, that forced labour for private purposes ought to come to an end as soon as possible.

A possible ambiguity has been pointed out to me. I do not see how it could arise, but it has been suggested. The use of the term "transitional provisions" does not mean that recourse may be had to any new forced labour for private purposes however transitory the period involved ; on the contrary, no new case of forced labour for private purposes should, under any circumstances, be admitted. Only in those cases where it already exists can it be treated with this kind of transitory toleration until steps can be effectively and justly taken to put an end to it.

Meanwhile, in the same way as last year, we lay down certain principles which in no case must be evaded, even in connection with forced labour of a transitional character for private purposes. Even during the transitional period these principles must be observed. They are as follows: the labour shall only be exacted for exceptional reasons, it shall always receive adequate remuneration, and — the most important of all — it shall not involve the removal of the labourers from their usual place of residence. That, to my mind, is almost the most important provision in the whole of the Convention. This is as far as we have attempted to go in regulating forced labour. We thought that to do more would be to go beyond our province. An institution exists — the International Labour Office — whose business it is to deal with the conditions of labour, and to make enquiries, studies and recommendations with regard to labour conditions all over the world, whether free labour or forced labour, and we were aware that the International Labour Office had already begun enquiries which would enable it to consider this question of forced labour. We thought it right, therefore, in order to remove any possible doubt or ambiguity on the subject, to recommend the Assembly to pass the following resolution :

"IV. The Assembly :

"Taking note of the work undertaken by the International Labour Office in conformity with the mission entrusted to it and within the limits of its constitution ;

"Considering that these studies naturally include the problem of forced labour :

"Requests the Council to inform the Governing Body of the International Labour Office of the adoption of the Slavery Convention, and to draw its attention to the importance of the work undertaken by the Office with a view to studying the best means of preventing forced or compulsory labour, from developing into conditions analogous to slavery."

One other condition applies to all forced labour, whether private or public, namely, that it must be exacted only under the responsibility of the competent central authorities of the territory concerned.

Article 6 deals with the penalties to be inflicted. I need say nothing about that.

Article 7 provides that the High Contracting Parties shall furnish to the League of Nations the laws and regulations which they enact with a view to the application of the provisions of the present Convention. We went a little further than that and were anxious that the League of Nations should not lose touch with this question but should continue to watch over it. We did not see our way to recommend — at least the majority of the Committee did not see its way to recommend — that an annual report should be made by the Members of the League. They were anxious that an opportunity should be given every year for the matter to come up for debate or discussion before this Assembly, if it were so desired, and they accordingly agreed to the following resolution, which we ask the Assembly to pass :

"The Assembly :

"Desires that the League of Nations should continue to interest itself in securing the progressive abolition of slavery and conditions analogous thereto and therefore begs that the Council will prepare and communicate to the Assembly every year a document mentioning the laws and regulations which parties to the Convention on Slavery, in accordance with Article 7, will have communicated to the Secretary-General, and that the Council will include therein any supplementary information which the Members of the League may be disposed spontaneously to furnish with regard to the measures taken by them to this end."

The Sixth Committee believes that this resolution, if carried out, as no doubt it will be, will prove a very valuable safeguard in dealing with this serious, though happily diminishing, evil.

Article 8 is new. It adds to the Convention what is now a very usual clause — namely, that the Permanent Court of International Justice shall be entitled to settle any dispute with regard to the construction or application of the Convention. I do not know that I need say anything to justify this provision because it has become such a very usual clause in all modern Conventions, particularly those signed under the auspices of the League.

The remaining articles, though they have been a little changed in form, remain substantially the same as last year. They deal with the coming into force of the Convention, its possible denunciation and similar matter.

One other change has been made since last year. In the previous Convention there was an article, Article 8, which provided that all provisions of an international character anterior to the date of the Convention should be regarded as abrogated. That applied particularly to such

Conventions as the Brussels Convention and the Berlin Convention. Considerable doubt exists as to the exact international position of those Conventions and it was felt that, from every point of view, it would be much better to leave them on the Treaty Record — on the International Statute Book, so to speak — for what they are worth. The article in question was, therefore, abolished, and it is only right to say that in taking that course the Sixth Committee had in view the strong representations which had been made to the League by the Apostolic Nuncio at Berne.

I have now come to the end, I trust, of my short *exposé* of the provisions of this Convention. I have only to add that, as soon as it has been approved, as I trust it will be, by the Assembly, the Convention will be open for signature in a room at the back of the Presidential Chair.

I am glad to know that a considerable number of States have already signified their intention to sign the Convention. The following is the list of those States: Abyssinia, Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, the British Empire, Canada, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Esthonia, Germany, Greece, India, Lithuania, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Persia, Salvador, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Uruguay. I have also been informed by the first delegate of New Zealand that he is only prevented by a mere formality from signing the Convention; this means, I hope, that he has no doubt, as I have no doubt, that his Government is thoroughly in favour of the Convention and will sign it very shortly.

Certain countries, of course, as anyone who has listened to the list will see, are omitted from it. I have no reason whatever to think that those omissions are due to any doubts as to the desirability of the Convention, and I think there is little question that, in the course of a very few days at the latest, the signatures of those States will also be appended to it.

The President :

Translation : Count Bonin-Longare, delegate of Italy, will address the Assembly.

Count Bonin-Longare (Italy) :

Translation : The Italian delegation has welcomed the opportunity of co-operating in the noble and philanthropic work of framing a Convention for the suppression of slavery. No country, we can safely say, has taken up a firmer or more decisive attitude towards slavery than Italy. The moment she set foot in the territories which now form her colonial possessions, she decreed in every one of those territories the abolition of slavery in every shape and form. Although sometimes her task has thereby been rendered more difficult, she has all the greater satisfaction in the knowledge that she has never compromised. Our delegation is delighted at the conclusion, under the auspices of the League, of a general agreement providing that the campaign against slavery shall be carried on with increased energy and by all countries.

Because that campaign requires to be waged with increased energy, the Italian delegation would have preferred to retain the text drafted in 1925. However, in order to meet the views of other delegations, we readily discussed any amendments to the 1925 draft which seemed suitable, and endeavoured solely to secure the rejection of any clause that might complicate and consequently handicap the work of suppression. Nothing is more harmful to a good cause than the employment of unsuitable or dangerous instruments, which may give rise to difficulties or distract from the

main object those who are attempting to bring the work of suppression to a successful conclusion.

We were accordingly grateful to the British delegation for not pressing its amendment to Article 3, the object of which was to place the slave trade in the same category as piracy. Though justifiable on moral grounds, the embodiment of this clause in the Convention would, we believe, have overshot the mark. A different wording was adopted, though we should have liked this wording to be more comprehensive. We were quite ready to accept it, however, because it leaves the door open to special agreements between Powers which stand in a special position as regards the slave trade, and such agreements assuredly provide the most effective and vigorous means for the suppression of the trade. We should also have preferred the total withdrawal of Article 6 of the draft — a step which would have entailed the abolition, rather than the regulation, of forced labour in all its forms. We realised, however, that in certain colonial territories a period of transition was indispensable to enable this form of slavery to be gradually abolished.

We readily agreed to the withdrawal of the former Article 8 in the light of the very pertinent observations communicated to the Secretariat by the Apostolic Nuncio at Berne, who urged the necessity of maintaining the lofty and humanitarian provisions regarding missions and the improvement of moral conditions among natives — provisions, too, which are to be found in other Conventions.

The slave trade and slavery, although restricted to a small region of the earth, are none the less a slur, a moral stigma of which our civilisation must rid itself as soon as may be. Italy made this work a feature of her colonial policy from the very beginning, and she has never looked back. She could have wished that it had been possible to make greater progress than we are making to-day. But "*le mieux est l'ennemi du bien*", and the best reforms are those that are applied by easy stages and with caution.

The Italian delegation, therefore, wholeheartedly approves the Convention, and trusts that special agreements of the kind suggested in Article 3 will shortly be concluded, so as to complete the work which has been undertaken, for they will greatly aid in the abolition of slavery, the scourge which the League is bound to combat until it is completely suppressed.

The President :

Translation : Sir William Vincent, first delegate of India, will address the Assembly.

Sir William Vincent (India) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I am advised that it is incumbent on me to read out here certain reservations which India will make on signing this Convention. I am not satisfied that this is strictly necessary or that this practice has always been followed in the past. But *ex majori cautela* I am prepared on the present occasion to adopt this course.

Under the terms of Article 9 of this Convention I declare that my signature is not binding, as regards the enforcement of Article 2, sub-section (b), and Articles 5, 6 and 7 of this Convention, upon the following territories; namely, in Burma, the Naga tracts lying west and south of the Hukawng Valley, bounded on the north and west by the Assam boundary, on the east by the Naphuk River and on the south by the Singaling Hkamti and the Somra tracts; in Assam, the Sadiya and Balipara frontier tracts, the tribal area to the East of the Naga Hills district, up to the Burma boundary, and a small tract in the south of the Lushai Hills

district, nor on the territories in India of any Prince or Chief under the suzerainty of His Majesty.

I also declare that my signature to the Convention is not binding in respect of Article 3 in so far as that article may require India to enter into any Convention whereby vessels, by reason of the fact that they are owned, fitted out or commanded by Indians, or of the fact that one-half of the crew is Indian, are classified as native vessels, or are denied any privilege, right or immunity enjoyed by similar vessels of other States signatories of the Covenant, or are made subject to any liability or disability to which similar ships of such other States are not subject.

But, Sir, it is not only these reservations, but the great importance of the resolutions now under discussion which justifies my taking a few moments of your time to-day to explain the attitude of India on this question of slavery. I regard this Convention as a tangible and effective achievement of great moment and as a practical illustration to the world, in one direction at least, of the great work done for humanity by the League.

I have no desire to enter into the history of previous efforts to eradicate the slave trade and slavery, but the truth is that, in various forms and disguises, they still do subsist in certain parts of the world, and the present Convention, if it is accepted, as we hope it will be, by the Powers here present, constitutes a definite advance not only in increasing the effectiveness of measures against the slave trade proper and eradicating slavery generally but in preventing and putting a stop to those more insidious forms of servitude which approximate to slavery though called by other names.

The principles laid down, particularly in regard to forced labour, taken in conjunction with the action of the International Labour Office, cannot fail to have far-reaching effects throughout the world and, so far as I know, this is the first occasion on which a definite undertaking, or at any rate so complete an undertaking, in regard to forced labour has been accepted. I refer particularly to forced labour for private purposes. May I say that India heartily welcomes the conclusion of this Convention and is glad to undertake the duty of making every effort to root out conditions of servitude which approximate to slavery.

It is true that we have to make certain reservations on signing the Convention, but one of these, which relates only to the search of ships suspected of carrying slaves, need in no way impede the execution of an effective agreement on this subject. I can assure the Assembly that, in fact, no Indian ships are engaged in the slave trade, and that the law of India prohibits slavery and this slave trade under penal clauses of great severity.

Another reservation which we have been compelled to make relates to Indian States, and a small area of unadministered territory. The reason for this reservation as regards the Indian States is not that slavery is prevalent there, for this is not the case at all; it arises from the constitutional position which these States occupy, a position which I have fully explained in the Sixth Committee. The Convention will, however, be brought to the notice of all States, and provision exists in the Convention for extending its obligations to these areas should this be necessary or desirable in the future.

In the meantime, in the unadministered areas of which I spoke, tracts situated on the extreme north-eastern frontier of British India, the population of which is estimated at a few hundred thousand persons only, steady, systematic efforts are being made by the local governments to eradicate traces of slavery and conditions analogous

thereto. In one of these areas already over 3,000 slaves have been released (last year) on payment of substantial compensation to their owners. In another area a special expedition has been sent this year charged with the mission of securing, by persuasion and payment of compensation, the release of all slaves in that territory.

But the efforts of the Government of India have by no means been confined to measures of this kind. In other provinces steady progress has for many years been made in the direction of measures to prevent any condition of forced labour approaching to slavery, or even likely to lead to oppression. Forced labour for private purposes is not legally recognised in India. In the province in which the greater part of my career in India was spent, where forced labour was in some parts exacted as a predial obligation, and also in lieu of debt, the predial obligation has been commuted into cash payments and an enactment has been passed which prohibits any kind of servitude for debt or the enforcement of contracts of that nature. Similar efforts have been made in other parts of India, and indeed the enforcement by penal sanctions of any form of indentured labour or of contracts to labour has been abolished. Generally, it may be said that the Government of India has made and will continue to make every effort to get rid of the evils against which this Convention is directed.

Lastly, may I say that such has been the moral influence of the work of the League and of the high ideals for which it stands, that I saw in the *Times* the other day a statement, and I have no reason whatever to doubt it, that the State of Nepal, an independent State not in India but on the northern frontier, has recently completed the liberation of 59,000 slaves at a cost of £275,000 paid by the State. That is a result on which the State of Nepal may, I think, be congratulated, and is clear evidence of the influence of the League in the East.

My object in placing these details before you is to indicate by direct evidence that India, if apt to scrutinise with jealousy any agreement which is proposed, has gone a great way towards the goal which is the aim of the Convention. If we examine the terms of these agreements in detail, it is because we are careful to enter into no solemn undertaking which we are not prepared fully to implement, and because we have also to consider the effect of such an agreement on a vast population, one-fifth of the population of the world, living in very varying conditions and permeated by varying traditions and customs. But, as I have said, India is behind no State in its desire to eradicate slavery, and if the present Convention does not meet the approbation of all, it achieves a great deal. Further, should necessity arise in the future it can, and no doubt will, be supplemented by further agreements until slavery and conditions akin to it, truly described in the Committee as a crime against the human race, are utterly and wholly rooted out.

The President :

Translation : M. Freire d'Andrade will address the Assembly.

M. Freire d'Andrade (Portugal) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I should like to give you a brief and succinct account of my Government's views on slavery; but, before doing so, I am very glad to be able to inform you that the head of my delegation has just received full powers to follow the example of my colleagues by signing the Protocol.

The Portuguese delegation has made known, both here and elsewhere, the Portuguese Government's

firm resolve to combat and check every form of slavery. My country has given in the past, and will continue to give, its full and entire approval to any and every measure which the Assembly may judge necessary to combat this scourge of humanity.

The Portuguese delegation received powers to sign the Convention which was approved last year, after having duly forwarded its observations in a letter communicated to the Secretary-General in compliance with the provisions of paragraph (a) of the Assembly resolution dated September 26th, 1925.

On its arrival at Geneva, however, our delegation found that the discussion of this subject was to be revived and the Convention was at once to be radically changed. In our opinion this step was not perhaps the best or most effective that could have been taken to attain the object in view without delay, since the Convention is to be applied universally, and better results would have been obtained had this very serious question been given full consideration. Remember the Latin proverb, "*Festina lente*".

With your permission, I will recapitulate the past history of this important question. For two years a Special Commission, the Temporary Slavery Commission, was at work with the object of submitting to the League of Nations the most practical suggestions it could devise for the suppression of slavery. The Commission's report, the authors of which, I would observe, were not mere theorists and philanthropists but were anxious to attain practical results, was approved by the Sixth Committee and the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly, and the British Government thereupon authorised Viscount Cecil to propose a Convention as being the best way of giving effect to the Slavery Commission's proposals and of accomplishing the work undertaken by the League of Nations for the suppression of this scourge.

The Sixth Committee discussed at great length the draft Convention submitted to it. A Sub-Committee was appointed, but, as it failed to reach complete agreement, a smaller Sub-Committee was appointed, containing spokesmen of all the different views which had been expressed. The Committee and Sub-Committee were occupied with the question for some considerable time, and the draft Convention was not ready for approval until the sixth ordinary session of the Assembly had almost come to an end. The draft was to be signed at the beginning of the present session.

This year, however, as I said, the discussion was revived, despite all that had taken place. The Temporary Slavery Commission's report seemed to be fading into the background, and this year the proposals which were rejected last year were taken up afresh and approved. In consequence, I am sorry to say that several States may no longer be able to sign this Convention at once, because the text is not the same as that which had previously been submitted to them and which had already been considered by their Governments.

Between the last and the present session of the Assembly a new factor has arisen. The International Labour Office has taken steps to prepare for an International Conference on native labour; and it would perhaps have been wiser to await the outcome of this action before modifying the Convention in its original form.

Changes of opinion on this question, which is of great importance for the whole of mankind, are due, I think, to transitory influences. In our opinion, these changes reflect the struggle between idealism and realities, and the decisions which are taken lean to one side or the other according to

whichever school of thought happens to be in the ascendant.

The Slavery Commission's report, which has been approved by the Assembly, takes into account the rights of the individual, but it also takes the view that, if changes are abruptly introduced in existing situations which cannot be immediately liquidated, the result will be complete disorganisation or even disaster. Accordingly, the Slavery Commission's suggestions were used as the basis of the Convention which was discussed last year.

The two most controversial articles of the new draft Convention are (1) the article dealing with measures to suppress the slave trade by sea, and (2) the article dealing with forced or compulsory labour.

As regards the former, it was agreed that the suppression of this form of the slave trade was necessary, but opinions differed as to the means of accomplishing it.

As regards the second point, there was general agreement that forced labour for the benefit of private undertakings, including those in which Governments participate, should be formally condemned. At the same time it was recognised, not only in the Slavery Commission's report but also under the terms of the mandates, that forced labour should be resorted to in the public interest, this idea being expressed in the present Convention by the term "for public purposes".

Thus we have laid down that compulsory labour is to be prohibited or tolerated according to whether it is intended for private undertakings or for public purposes.

The Portuguese Government, in its letter to the Secretary-General, stated — although this point would not have prevented it from signing the Convention — that in its view it was highly desirable that compulsory labour should be defined, just as slavery had been defined, and this not only in order to prevent abuses, but also to avoid any possibility of censure.

I put this point to the Sub-Committee of the Sixth Committee, and was thereupon invited by the Chairman to submit an amendment embodying this definition. I replied that I had no means of doing so, that only an organisation such as the International Labour Office was equipped for such a task, and that for that reason the Portuguese delegates had long been in favour of asking the Labour Office to study this difficult question, which is largely the key to the future of those peoples, both in mandated territory and elsewhere, which are not yet capable of governing themselves.

I am glad to say, however, that the measures which my Government has been advocating for so long are now embodied in one of the resolutions to be submitted to the Assembly.

Last year Article 6 of the Convention was fiercely attacked by M. Palacios, delegate of Spain, a country to which we are attached by many ties of affection, and which I sincerely regret to see absent to-day, as I regret also the absence of our kinsmen from Brazil. We shall not cease to feel these regrets until the day comes — as I am sure it will — when these nations return among us and take the places which are their due through the distinguished services they have rendered the League.

As I was saying, M. Palacios fiercely attacked Article 6 of the Protocol, but I am sure his arguments would have lost a great deal of their weight if we had had a formula defining forced labour.

In a document such as that which we have been discussing it is most important that there should be no possible ambiguity, so that those

who sign it, with the intention of strictly complying with the duties which it imposes, should be quite clear, as to what those duties are."

The suggestions put forward by the Temporary Slavery Commission in Chapter VII, paragraph B of its report, which was approved by the Assembly, merit our closest attention, and I also think that the statement made in paragraph A of the same chapter should be our guide in defining the "public purposes" referred to in Article 5 (1) of the Convention.

In conclusion, I am glad to have been able to announce that our delegation would sign the proposed Convention, for this is a token that the Portuguese Government, which has already approved the Temporary Slavery Commission's report, is happy to associate itself with the humanitarian action of the British Government, which has been so eloquently advocated by its distinguished delegate, Viscount Cecil.

The President :

Translation ?

His Highness Prince Arfa will address the Assembly.

Prince Arfa (Persia) :

Translation : Mr. President — In giving my adhesion to the Slavery Convention I wish to state, with reference to Article 3, that my signature will not bind Persia to accede to any arrangement or convention classifying her vessels, of whatever tonnage, as "native vessels" within the meaning of the Convention on the International Trade in Arms.

I desire that my interpretation of Article 3, as adopted with the Persian delegation's amendment, be duly noted.

Having made this necessary stipulation, I beg to offer the League my sincere congratulations upon the establishment of this Convention on slavery, and I earnestly hope that it will contribute towards the final abolition of the shameful traffic in slaves.

Persia abolished slavery long since, and she now desires to afford all the help in her power to put an end to it in every corner of the world.

The President :

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

M. Serot (France) :

Translation : The French delegation will recommend its Government to sign this Convention, although it does not yet know exactly what its final form will be, as the Committee dealing with it has only just concluded its work.

This Convention, the principles of which have for long been applied in the French colonies, is largely a reproduction of the Convention drawn up last year, but it has been given an added force and precision which will help it to bring about the complete abolition of slavery and analogous conditions. The most important modification relates to the slave traffic, and in this connection the French delegation is glad to see that the Committee has adopted its proposal to the effect that the Convention on Slavery should as far as possible be modelled on the Convention on the International Trade in Arms. It trusts that on this basis a general Convention may shortly be concluded which will put an end for all time to the abominable crime of slavery.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Sixth Committee, which read as follows :

I. The Assembly :

Approves the Slavery Convention drafted by its Sixth Committee and earnestly trusts that it will be signed and ratified as soon as possible by all the Members of the League of Nations ;

Instructs the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to bring the Convention officially to the knowledge of all States Members or non-Members of the League of Nations which may not have signed it before the end of the present session of the Assembly, to the end that they may sign or adhere to it in accordance with the provisions of Article II of the Convention.

II. The Assembly :

Desires that the League of Nations should continue to interest itself in securing the progressive abolition of slavery and conditions analogous thereto and therefore begs that the Council will prepare and communicate to the Assembly every year a document mentioning the laws and regulations which parties to the Convention on Slavery, in accordance with Article 7, will have communicated to the Secretary-General, and that the Council will include therein any supplementary information which the Members of the League may be disposed spontaneously to furnish with regard to the measures taken by them to this end.

III. The Assembly,

While recognising that forced labour for public purposes is sometimes necessary :

Is of opinion that, as a general rule, it should not be resorted to unless it is impossible to obtain voluntary labour and that it should receive adequate remuneration.

IV. The Assembly,

Taking note of the work undertaken by the International Labour Office in conformity with the mission entrusted to it and within the limits of its constitution ;

Considering that these studies naturally include the problem of forced labour ;

Requests the Council to inform the Governing Body of the International Labour Office of the adoption of the Slavery Convention, and to draw its attention to the importance of the work undertaken by the Office with a view to studying the best means of preventing forced or compulsory labour from developing into conditions analogous to slavery.

The resolutions were adopted.

The President :

Translation : I have to inform you that the Convention on Slavery is open for the signatures of delegations from to-day, September 25th, 1926. It may be signed in the Secretary-General's Office.

72. — SETTLEMENT OF ARMENIAN REFUGEES: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the discussion of the Fifth Committee's report on the

settlement of Armenian refugees (Annex 21. Document A. III.1926.IV).

(On the invitation of the President, Count Mensdorff-Pouilly-Dietrichstein, Chairman of the Fifth Committee, and Dr. Breitscheid, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President :

Translation : Dr. Breitscheid, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

Dr. Breitscheid (Germany), Rapporteur :

Translation : I have the honour to read to you the Fifth Committee's report on the settlement of Armenian refugees and the accompanying draft resolution.

On behalf of the Fifth Committee, I ask you to approve these resolutions and, by doing so, to pay a tribute to the distinguished delegate of Norway, Dr. Nansen, and to the work he has accomplished.

The President :

Translation : If no one wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Fifth Committee, which read as follows :

The Assembly,

(1) Takes note of and adopts the report of the Armenian Refugee Settlement Commission, and expresses its appreciation of the valuable work done by this Commission in the elaboration of a workable scheme, found after careful enquiry to be technically sound, which it is estimated will result in the settlement of at least 25,000 Armenians in their national home ;

(2) Takes note of the resolution of the Council of September 16th, 1926, stating that, if the money to finance the initial outlay required by the scheme is forthcoming, the Council would, subject to certain conditions and if requested to do so by the parties interested, be willing to appoint a person or persons to supervise the due expenditure of that money for the objects specified in the scheme ;

(3) Requests the Council to consider the possibility, after due enquiry, of setting up a small committee, under the chairmanship of a member appointed by the Council and consisting partly of representatives of private organisations interested in the promotion of this scheme, to investigate the possibility of obtaining the sum required, and of using it for the purposes of the scheme in the Republic of Armenia ;

(4) Decides that a sum of 15,000 francs be allowed, subject to the conditions already set forth, in order to provide for the printing and distribution of literature regarding the proposed financial operation and to permit Dr. Nansen — or his representative — to lay his proposals before possible contributors in Europe or America.

The resolutions were adopted.

73. — QUESTIONS CONCERNING ARMENIAN AND RUSSIAN REFUGEES : REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the examination of the question concerning Russian and Armenian refugees (Annex 22, document A.109. 1926.IV).

Dr. Breitscheid, delegate of Germany, and Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, will again address the Assembly on this subject.

Dr. Breitscheid (Germany), Rapporteur :

Translation : The Fifth Committee has adopted the following resolution, and now submits it to the Assembly :

The Assembly,

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

Approves those reports :

Expresses its high appreciation of the important work which they have accomplished for the refugees ;

Expresses the opinion that this work should be prosecuted to a satisfactory conclusion in the interests both of the refugees themselves and of political, economic and social order :

Having regard to the precarious position of thousands of Armenian refugees in the Near East ;

Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office and the High Commissioner for Refugees to consider the possibility of making an effective response to the appeals for their co-operation in the permanent settlement of these refugees and of co-ordinating the activities of private organisations working for the refugees ;

Urges the Governments of the States Members to further the settlement of unemployed Russian and Armenian refugees by giving notice as soon as possible of their ratification of the Arrangement drawn up by the Inter-Governmental Conference on May 12th, 1926, particularly as regards contributions to the working capital fund ("revolving fund") and the issue of visas to refugees on the recommendation of the High Commissioner and of the International Labour Office ; and

Invites the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to appoint a co-trustee to be responsible jointly with Dr. Nansen for the administration of the fund in question ;

Considering the necessity of maintaining a delegation of the Refugee Service in Berlin in view of the large number of refugees in Germany ;

Takes note of the possibility of a contribution of one-half the cost being made by the German Government ;

Urges the Assembly to increase the Refugee Budget by 18,750 francs in order that the important delegation of the Refugee Service may be maintained in Berlin.

This credit was approved by the Fourth Committee.

You will find all the considerations which were adduced in the report which has just been distributed to you. I will beg leave, however, to say one word on the reduction of the German contribution for the refugees agency in Berlin.

In evidence of the interest it feels in the work in question, the German Government, before entering the League, used to pay an annual contribution of 30,000 marks. Now that she has joined the League, however, Germany, like the other Members, pays a contribution towards all the League's organisations, and therefore considers that she would, in principle, be justified in withdrawing her special contribution to the Berlin agency. In view of the humanitarian character of the work, however, she is willing to pay 15,000 marks annually instead of 30,000.

Thanks to the conciliatory spirit displayed in the Fourth Committee, the difficulties arising out of the German Government's decision have been overcome.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolution of the Fifth Committee.

The resolution was adopted.

74. — EXTENSION TO OTHER ANALOGOUS CATEGORIES OF REFUGEES OF THE MEASURES TAKEN TO ASSIST RUSSIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES: RESOLUTION PROPOSED BY THE FIFTH COMMITTEE.

The President :

Translation : We will now pass to the next item on the agenda: the resolution proposed by the Fifth Committee on the draft proposal put forward by the Belgian delegation regarding the question of extending to other refugees the measures taken to assist Russian and Armenian refugees.

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Brouckère, Rapporteur, took his place by the side of the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. de Brouckère (Belgium) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — The Fifth Committee has adopted the following motion, proposed by the Belgian delegation, and submits it to the Assembly.

The Assembly invites the Council to request the High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Labour Organisation to consider how far the measures already taken to give protection to, to provide employment for, and to afford relief to, Russian and Armenian refugees can be extended to other analogous categories of refugees.

There is no need to say much concerning this proposal. We are all familiar with the great services rendered by the League in protecting and settling Russian and Armenian refugees. I should like to call your attention, however, to a coincidence which occurred in this morning's debate on the proper limits to the League's activities. Two speakers, desiring to indicate, in support of arguments which in some respects were opposed to one another, the type of activity which fell definitely within the sphere of the League's competence, both cited the work of protecting and settling refugees.

At the present time, however, the League's work is confined to protecting and settling Russian and Armenian refugees, and I need not remind you that there are, unhappily, many other refugees, other groups, in a similar position, and that sometimes groups of Russian and Armenian refugees include persons belonging to other nationalities. Should we not attempt on behalf of these other groups what we have already achieved on behalf of those belonging to the two nationalities I have mentioned?

Our proposal does not settle the question once and for all. We have been satisfied to bring it to your notice. The proposal asks for information. It suggests that an enquiry should be made, so that the exact position may be ascertained by

next year, and you may then be able to take a decision after due consideration of the facts. You will realise that the proposal is a very modest one, and I need say no more in support of it.

The President :

Translation : Does anybody else wish to speak? If no one else wishes to speak, I will consider the resolution adopted.

The resolution was adopted.

75. — PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE NEAR EAST: REPORT OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the Fifth Committee's report on the Protection of Women and Children in the Near East (Annex 23. Document A.106.1926).

(On the invitation of the President, Dame Edith Lyttelton, Rapporteur, took her place upon the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.)

The President :

Translation : Dame Edith Lyttelton will address the Assembly.

Dame Edith Lyttelton (British Empire) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — With your permission, I do not propose to read the whole report which is now before you. The Assembly, I think, is very familiar with the wonderful work done by Miss Jeppe in the Near East. The bravery, courage and resource that she has shown are worthy of the highest praise. I wish to add that the Fifth Committee very much regrets the decision of the Fourth Committee not to continue the subsidy to Miss Jeppe's work. We have, of course, bowed to the decision, but we have a slight feeling that if there had not been so much hurry we might perhaps have been able to soften the hearts of the members of the Fourth Committee as regards this matter. I say "soften the hearts", but their hearts are not hard at all. It is only when it is necessary to translate human things into figures that it is very difficult to keep alive the imagination which enables the heart to be softened.

I am glad to say that, in spite of the fact that she is not going to get a grant from the League of Nations, Miss Jeppe has, nevertheless, determined to continue her work. She succeeded last year in raising more money than she had had before, chiefly from England, though I am glad to be able to say that Germany also gave a very handsome contribution. Now that the League has refused her more money, Miss Jeppe has to add to her duties the work of getting enough funds to continue; but although our supply of money has ceased, it is a great pleasure to be able to report that Miss Jeppe is to continue to be a League of Nations Commissioner. I am very glad that this is so for her sake, because I think it will help her, and I am very glad for the League that this wonderful piece of work should still bear its imprimatur. I pass over the anomalous position that the League of Nations will get the palm without the dust for the next year, but that is something which cannot be helped.

Miss Jeppe will work under precisely the same conditions this year as she did last year; that is to say, under the supreme control of the mandatory Power. She speaks in the highest terms of the assistance which has been given her on every occasion by French officials. She has found them courteous and helpful in the highest degree, and asks for nothing better than to go on working with them. Last year 300 women and children and boys were rescued by the efforts of Miss Jeppe. This year, owing to the fact that some Kurdish tribes have come over into Syria and have a considerable number of girls with them, she believes that she will be able to rescue a good many more.

The reason why she feels that her work is nearly over is, in one sense, a sad one and, in another sense, a happy one. The happy side of it is that she has been able so far to rescue the greater part of the women, girls and children who were unhappy; and, perhaps, the sad side of it is that there are many women who, for the future, will always remain with the people who have taken them. It is difficult for women ever to be quite free, and when the troubles and joys of motherhood are added to their fate it is difficult for them not to resign themselves and to continue the life which they have been forced at one time to lead. I think there are people who feel that the women should not be so reconciled. I cannot agree with them there, but I think we should extend our sympathy to those who have been forced against their will and by the claims of motherhood to remain in an alien country and subject to an alien fate.

A similar decision to that taken about this work has been taken about the work done in Constantinople at the League of Nations Neutral House. The Fourth Committee had decided that this House must now be closed, but the Fifth Committee asks the Assembly, as Miss Mills, like Miss Jeppe, has already determined to carry on the work for another year with money subscribed from outside, and because, in a smaller sphere, she is doing precisely the same work, to grant her not the House, but the equipment of the House for another year; that is to say, the Committee asks that its value should not be realised now but that Miss Mills should be allowed to use it for another year. I think this is the least we can do as a sign of gratitude for the very remarkable work which this American lady has performed.

With your permission, I will now read the resolutions which the Fifth Committee puts before you:

The Assembly:

(1) *Desires to express its admiration for the work Miss Jeppe has performed and its gratitude for the devoted way she has carried it out;*

(2) *Approves Miss Jeppe's report and expresses its satisfaction with the results obtained during the course of the past year;*

(3) *Decides that the mission for the rescue of women and children, which has been entrusted to Miss Jeppe by the League of Nations, shall be prolonged for one year more under the conditions fixed by the Assembly, at its last ordinary session, that is to say, under the high authority of the Power which holds a mandate in Syria under the League of Nations;*

(4) *Seeing that the work of Armenian colonisation and any other work undertaken by Miss Jeppe personally in connection with the mission for the rescue of women and children entrusted to her by the League of Nations fall within*

the class of work entrusted by the mandatory Power, in the general interest, to a central organ representing the Refugee Service at the International Labour Office and the direction of the International Red Cross Committee, invites Miss Jeppe to come to an understanding as regards the general direction of those works mentioned under heading 3, with the liaison organisation established by the mandatory Power;

(5) *Seeing that Miss Jeppe is of opinion that her task will be discharged during the coming year, requests her to submit to the next ordinary session of the Assembly a final report on all the results of her mission;*

(6) *Thanks Miss Mills for her devoted and excellent work and regrets that it has not been found possible to continue the grant from the League of Nations for another year.*

Before I leave the tribune, I should like to express my personal regret that these resolutions are more in the form of a vote of thanks for work done than the basis for new work.

The President:

Translation: If no one else wishes to speak, I will regard the resolutions of the Fifth Committee as adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

76. — AUDITED ACCOUNTS AND BUDGET OF THE LEAGUE AND OTHER FINANCIAL QUESTIONS: REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE: RESOLUTIONS.

The President:

Translation: The next item on the agenda is the report of the Fourth Committee on financial questions (Annex 24. Document A.105.1926.X).

(On the invitation of the President, M. Titulesco, Chairman of the Fourth Committee, and M. Oldenburg, Rapporteur, took their places on the platform.)

The President:

Translation: M. Oldenburg, Rapporteur, will address the Assembly.

M. Oldenburg (Denmark), Rapporteur:

Translation: I have the honour to submit the general report of the Fourth Committee. The report has been printed and distributed, so I shall make only a few brief comments.

The Fourth Committee has this year instructed me as Rapporteur on general questions to deal with all the subjects placed on its agenda, with the exception of that of contributions in arrears, which, in accordance with precedent, was referred to a special Sub-Committee. The Fourth Committee's proposals on this latter point form the subject of a special report to the Assembly.

At the beginning of its report, the Committee desires to pay its tribute to the First Financial Director of the League of Nations, who has just relinquished his duties as a member of the Secretariat. The sound financial organisation of the League is in no small measure due to the untiring efforts and thorough technical knowledge of Sir Herbert Ames.

The Committee has held many sessions and done a great deal of hard work. It subjected the budget to a meticulous examination and noted the orderly and methodical manner in which the League's finances are managed.

The Committee further noted the energetic action taken by the Supervisory Commission and its care in going into matters of detail.

A perusal of the report will have shown that the Fourth Committee requests you to approve the General Budget, for the financial year 1927 amounting to 24,512,341 gold francs. The 1926 budget amounted to 22,930,633 gold francs.

This latter figure was divided into 937 units, the amount of each unit thus being 24,472.39 francs. The total budget for 1927 has to be divided into 1,015 units, each unit being approximately equal to 24,150 francs, or a little less than last year.

In arriving at this sum, we took into consideration the amount of 1,400,000 francs, which will be distributed in 1927 among those States which, by the prompt payment of their contributions, assisted in the constitution of the Building Fund. This fund now amounts to 7,972,135.51 francs.

The Working Capital Fund, which is regarded as the property of the States who contribute to it, amounted on December 31st, 1925, to 4,389,497 francs.

I will not dwell upon the serious danger to the finances of the League arising out of the very high figure for contributions in arrears. The League is owed as much as 6,451,318.67 francs under this head. M. de Vasconcellos, Rapporteur for this special question, will make a statement on the subject later.

The President :

Translation : M. Hambro, delegate of Norway, will address the Assembly.

M. Hambro (Norway) :

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — Before I make a few general remarks upon the budget which has been laid before us, I want to associate myself with the observations made by the distinguished delegate of the British Empire, Viscount Cecil, some time ago and to call attention to the hurried way in which we have had to pass even the budget of the League. I should like to call attention to Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, which states : "As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all representatives not later than the day preceding the meeting". We have been voting, all the afternoon, documents which have been placed before the delegates this very afternoon. We even had to pass over one item on the agenda because the draft resolution was not yet printed.

I would also like to call attention to what is stated in Rule 14, paragraph 6, of the Rules of Procedure, which says that each Committee "shall keep a register of its discussions and Minutes, which shall be published at the earliest possible date, but not until they have been approved by the Committee. They may at any time be consulted by any member of the Assembly". I know, Mr. President, that my point can be answered by saying that all delegations are represented on every Committee. But I want to call attention to the fact that we have been obliged to comply with the wishes of the Bureau and to have meetings of our Committee while the Assembly was in session here and when members of our Committee had to be here. We finished our work in the Committee this morning, after a session lasting two hours, but all the draft resolutions have not yet been printed; some of them have been distributed without being printed.

I do not raise any formal objection to this mode of procedure, but I call the attention of all the

Members of the League and the attention of the Bureau to it, and I wish to add that, if I personally do not object, it is because I have the greatest trust in the financial organs of the League of Nations whose work we have been discussing in my Committee, because I have full confidence in the work done by the Supervisory Commission, and because I think that all the members of the Fourth Committee also have the greatest confidence and trust in the work done by our Rapporteur. But I think it is necessary to remind the Bureau of the Rules of Procedure and to remind them of the words spoken by the President of the Second Assembly, namely, that he presided in the spirit that we should comply on every point with the Rules of Procedure and the resolutions passed by the Assembly.

We have been discussing here the way in which interest can be aroused in the work of the League and the way to create respect for the dignity of the Assembly and to make propaganda. I want to say that there is no better propaganda than the work done in the Assembly and by the Assembly, and if we cannot interest the Members of the Assembly in it, if we cannot interest the Bureau, how can we interest the public and the Press ? To-day we have seen the opinions which have been circulated in the Press concerning the attitude of public opinion. I will not dwell upon it, but I will mention the impression which this procedure, this rushing of our work, this informal way of doing things which would not occur in any parliament which sends delegates here, must make upon new delegates who, like myself, come for the first time to the Assembly of the League and who hold the very highest conceptions of its dignity and of the high moral character of the work done here.

I had certain reservations to make with regard to the draft resolution on the budget, but I am not going to deal with any of them here. I think it is unnecessary to do so. I have called attention to certain points in the Committee, and that will be sufficient for the moment.

I want, however, to emphasise the two things which have found expression in the report submitted by the Fourth Committee to the Assembly. I might emphasise the need of all small nations and all distant nations for a better representation on the Secretariat and on the International Labour Office. I do not criticise and I do not complain, especially as my country has no reason to complain. I do not complain because I know what has been felt, what we all have felt when we have met members of the Secretariat — we have felt the spirit of the League of Nations. We have felt an independence of national aspirations; we have met in eagerness to further the work of the League of Nations. This being so, no member of the staff will be hurt by the words that I have uttered.

It is a fact, however, that all those nations which are not French-speaking or English-speaking are under a disadvantage when they wish to be represented on the personnel of the staff, and I ask you to remember, and I ask the Council also to remember it when appointing the superior officers of the League, that we are constantly labouring under a difficulty in being unable to speak our own language here and in having to try to express our thoughts in a language which we but imperfectly command. I am satisfied with the remarks made by the Secretary-General and inserted in the report, to the effect that only for certain classes of the staff of the Secretariat shall a perfect knowledge of the two languages be made a condition. Qualifications which are independent of language will be taken into consideration. I want, however, to call the attention of the Council to the fact that,

when it is going to appoint new superior officers of the League and Under-Secretaries or Chiefs of Sections, it will have to take care not to give the world at large the impression that only the subjects and citizens of the great Powers will have the opportunity to fill those positions. I want to remind you that in the Mixed Courts of Justice in Egypt the small nations have been privileged, because it was felt that they were more likely to be politically impartial, and that the first President of the Permanent Court of Justice was a Dutchman, while the second was a native of the country whose guests we are. This is proof enough that, where people are under equal conditions, the men of the small nations have an opportunity to obtain the posts which we all want them to have.

I also wish to remind the Council of the fact that it is perhaps rather difficult for it to understand the full importance of these considerations; it is perhaps also rather difficult for a good many members of the Assembly to understand them. Many of the representatives of the Members of the Council are Ambassadors or Ministers to Paris or London and so have a perfect command of one of the official languages of the League. They must remember, however, that it is important for every delegate who comes here to be able to meet on the staff some man or woman who can understand him when he is talking his own language and asking for help in his own language.

I am perfectly confident that the leaders of the Bureau will do everything in their power, as has been promised and as is stated in this report. I am convinced that one of the great dangers for the League of Nations and its work would be undue impatience. I prefer the idea of proceeding by fractions of an inch rather than taking any step which we might afterwards have to retrace. I know the obstacles of pride and prejudice and prestige that have to be overcome in dealing with these questions, but I have spoken these words with the feeling that, being the delegate of a nation which is in the happy position of living in friendship with every neighbouring nation, and never having had any claim upon the League, it is also our duty to try to express the wishes felt by the delegations of all the small nations, wishes to which not every delegation can feel it politically wise to give expression from this rostrum.

The President :

Translation : Baron Marks von Wurtemberg, delegate of Sweden, will address the Assembly.

Baron Marks von Wurtemberg (Sweden) :

Translation : Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen — I do not wish to detain you or to try the patience of those who are anxiously looking forward to the termination of this session of the Assembly. I cannot, however, forego this opportunity of associating myself with the Norwegian delegate's remarks in so far as they concern the haste which has characterised the proceedings of this Assembly. This mode of procedure is neither compatible with the dignity of the Assembly nor likely to be productive of good results.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I will put to the vote the resolutions of the Fourth Committee, which read as follows :

1. *The Assembly, in virtue of Article 38 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League, finally approves the audited accounts of the League for the seventh financial period, ending December 31st, 1925.*

2. *The Assembly, in virtue of Article 17 of the Regulations for the Financial Administration of the League :*

Approves, for the financial year 1927, the general Budget of the League, of the Secretariat and of the Special Organisations of the League, of the International Labour Organisation and of the Permanent Court of International Justice, including supplementary credits the total amount of which is 24,512,341 gold francs ;

And decides that the said budgets shall be published in the "Official Journal".

3. *The Assembly adopts, in so far as they have been approved by the Fourth Committee, the conclusions of the various reports of the Supervisory Commission submitted to its consideration.*

4. *The Assembly approves the schedule showing the proportional interest of each Member of the League in the League Building Fund (see document A.39.1926).*

5. *The Assembly fixes at 79 the number of units allocated to Germany in the scale of allocation of the League's expenditure.*

6. *The Assembly adopts the conclusions of the report of the Fourth Committee.*

7. *The Assembly :*

Notes that the Internal Control Service of the League of Nations experiences difficulty and is caused considerable trouble by the fact that members of Committees and other persons who have to submit requests for repayment do not always take into consideration the exact terms of the Regulations of the League of Nations governing the administration of the funds ; and, therefore,

Requests members of Committees and all other persons performing work of any kind whatever at the request and at the expense of the League of Nations to comply strictly with the above Regulations, and, in case of doubt, to apply for information beforehand to the competent officials.

8. *The Assembly :*

While appreciating the results of the sale of publications and approving the proposals submitted to it by the Supervisory Commission and the Secretary-General relative to the extension of these sales and a stricter supervision of the employment of the grants for printing ;

Decides to draw the attention of the Advisory Committees and the Conferences convened by the League to the heavy expense entailed by the publication of their Minutes and requests them to consider whether the publication of their discussions would not frequently be better effected by means of a detailed report giving as exactly as possible an account of their work ;

Decides that the Minutes of Sub-Committees will in no case be published unless a formal request, containing a statement of the reasons for such a course, is submitted to the Council through the Secretary-General ;

Requests the Supervisory Commission to report to it again next year on the printing expenses and to indicate the saving effected, in consequence of this decision.

The resolutions were adopted.

77. — CONTRIBUTIONS IN ARREARS : REPORT OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE : RESOLUTION.

The President :

Translation : The next item on the agenda is the Fourth Committee's report on Contributions in Arrears (Annex 25. Document A.95.1926.X).

(On the invitation of the President, M. de Vasconcellos, Rapporteur, took his place on the platform by the side of the Chairman of the Fourth Committee.)

The President :

Translation : The Rapporteur will address the Assembly.

M. de Vasconcellos (Portugal), Rapporteur :

Translation : Ladies and gentlemen — The task of the Rapporteur on contributions in arrears is always a thankless one. For one thing, the subject in itself is very un congenial, and then the Rapporteur is not allowed to expound his report, because it is confidential and the discussions have been held in secret.

I must therefore content myself with saying that, after having been drafted, the report was carefully discussed at great length, and at the end of its proceedings the Committee arrived at the conclusions which I am about to read to you. You are asked to pass what is in effect a vote of confidence. You favoured the Committees of preceding Assemblies with this vote, and I trust you will give it to the present one also.

The following are the conclusions which I have the honour to submit on behalf of the Fourth Committee :

The Assembly :

(1) Authorises the Secretary-General, as the result of previous negotiations, to write off from the accounts of the League the sum of 22,478.71 gold francs due from Panama for the financial year 1925 ;

(2) Requests the Secretary-General :

(a) To give his support, when necessary, to any steps which he may consider useful with a view to the recovery of arrears ;

(b) To submit to the Council at its session of June 1927 a detailed report on the position with regard to contributions in arrears ;

(3) Requests China to propose effective and concrete methods, acceptable to the League of Nations, with a view to the payment of her contributions in arrears ;

(4) Requests the Council to cause a study to be made of the legal position of States which do not pay their contributions to the League of Nations, with a view to informing the Assembly at its eighth ordinary session.

The President :

Translation : If no one else wishes to speak, I shall regard the resolutions of the Fourth Committee as adopted.

The resolutions were adopted.

78. — CLOSE OF THE SESSION : SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT.

The President :

Translation : When opening this session of the Assembly on September 6th, the President of the Council stated that a year ago in this hall you drew up the programme of work which the organisations of the League were to carry out in the course of the year. He thus drew attention to a very valuable asset in your work — its continuity — and to the fact that, in addition to the direct results obtained by the League of Nations, your former discussions had helped to create by degrees the atmosphere in which the main political negotiations have been conducted during the last twelve months.

Now, at the end of our meetings, may I, relying on the confidence you have bestowed on me and the privilege you accord me to-day of saying a word of farewell to your delegations, say that the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly has enriched the tradition established by its predecessors and has greatly contributed to the progress of the League ?

I feel that I am faithfully interpreting your wishes in thanking the Swiss Confederation and the Republic and Canton of Geneva for the cordial hospitality which they have offered us and all the facilities they have placed at our disposal, and for the friendly atmosphere which is so noticeable every year when we come here to work together for the cause of peace — a cause so dear to this noble country.

I do not think I need bestow any further praise upon the Secretariat ; you are already so well acquainted with its devotion to the League. But I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to express my regret, which is certainly shared by all the delegates, that two distinguished members of the Secretariat, two who have rendered invaluable service to the League, will no longer be with us when we meet next year — at any rate in their present capacity. I refer to Dr. Nitobé and M. Mantoux.

I hope they will accept this expression of our thanks for all that they have done and our best and most sincere wishes for the future. If I have not mentioned Sir Herbert Ames, it is not because he is not included in this expression of our gratitude but because he is present with us as a delegate, and I would scarcely dare to ask him to sit and listen to his own praise.

I shall not attempt to summarise your work. You have carefully considered in your Committees all the problems with which the League has had to deal ; you have given your opinions on the results obtained, you have shown the path to be followed, and you are now relying on the Council to carry out the work of the future. It would therefore ill become me to remind you in detail of the results of which you are resolved, when you return to your respective countries, yourselves to be the advocates.

I am convinced that the effects of our work will soon make themselves felt and that the resolution here adopted to hasten the ratifications of the conventions drawn up by the League of Nations will, thanks to your united efforts, shortly become a reality.

The special characteristics of this Assembly, which will assuredly pass into history, should not cause us to forget the vast amount of solid work we have accomplished. That each of the six Committees has done its ample share is proved by the resolutions adopted and, on certain points, the definite agreements which have been concluded, as for instance that on slavery.

If in other respects the Assembly during its seventh ordinary session has contented itself with preparing the way for other meetings, it has, in this respect at least, displayed a lively determination to arrive at tangible results. I refer, in particular, to the Economic Conference and to the Disarmament Conference, which in this Assembly have formed the subjects of such interesting and encouraging discussions. Certainly these are serious questions, fraught with difficulties of every kind, which you yourselves have defined with eloquence. But at the same time the real scope of the Economic Conference, even if the powers of that Conference are limited, has been established, and, on the other hand, we have all been made to realise the great hopes raised by the first endeavour to attain that general and loyal disarmament which will gain for the League the whole-hearted support of all peoples. This is the programme of work for the ensuing year. We leave a tremendous task to the organs of the League. I hope — as you all hope — that the two proposed Conferences will have been crowned with success before the eighth session of the Assembly.

But the two dominant features of this session will always be the reorganisation of the Council and the entry of Germany into the League. You are all aware of the many discussions which, in the past few years, have taken place around the question of elections to the Council. We have all heard the League of Nations criticised in this connection, and the uninitiated have expressed surprise that this question should involve such minute investigation, such long negotiations. But is there, in reality, any problem of greater importance for the future of the League than that of the Council, and is it not a true sign of progress that the Members of the League should be taking an interest in the details of its procedure, its

organisation and the perfecting of this international machinery which has been placed at the disposal of all our Governments?

In order that this new institution should operate surely and evenly, it is indispensable that the rules provided for it should be known in all countries and by all our national administrations, and that the representatives, delegates and experts of all the Members of the League should realise as clearly as possible both its potentialities and the exact limits of its activity. Naturally, the crisis which you have satisfactorily solved has given us cause for serious anxiety, but I am sure that it will produce at least one good result — it will make the principal organs of the League better known and their high importance more generally understood.

I should like to add, in the hope that the authority you have been good enough to confer upon the President of the Assembly will enable his words to penetrate far beyond these precincts, that one of the arguments generally advanced by the opponents of the League has henceforth lost all force and power. The adversaries of international understanding were all agreed that our League included only a portion of the nations of the world, those who were not separated from one another by any difficulties of vital importance. But during this session we have in this hall witnessed a great event. We have seen nations which had been divided by hideous strife sit side by side and work together under the common ideal of voluntary obedience to the Covenant of the League. If the League of Nations is not yet universal, events have shown that it can and will be so.

Ladies and gentlemen, I declare the seventh ordinary session of the Assembly closed.

The Assembly rose at 6.10 p.m.