

The Prime Minister
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CABINET.

**THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND THE SITUATION IN THE
NEAR EAST.**

Summary of the Discussion at the Meeting of the Sixth Committee of the Assembly of the League of Nations, held on September 22, on a Proposal that the League of Nations should use its good offices to secure the immediate Cessation of Hostilities in the Near East.

(Circulated for Information.)

THE NINTH MEETING OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE.

THE Sixth Committee held its ninth meeting yesterday (Friday) at 4 P.M. under the chairmanship of Jonkheer Loudon.

The Position in the Near East: Proposal of Dr. Nansen.

DR. NANSEN (Norway) begged to move the following resolution:—

“The assembly resolves to request the council to consider what steps it could take on behalf of the League of Nations, whether by offering its good offices to the belligerent parties or otherwise, to secure the immediate cessation of hostilities in the Near East.”

Dr. Nansen, presenting this resolution, argued that it was the duty of the League to take action in accordance with article 3 and article 11 of the Covenant. The war in the Near East was a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League was bound to take any action which might prove wise and effectual to bring hostilities to an end.

He proposed in his resolution that the council should consider what could and ought to be done.

There was a group of Powers which was endeavouring to arrange a settlement, and these negotiations might lead to a successful result. He thought, however, that the council would have to play a direct part in these negotiations. The council might invite the two parties to a conference to be held under the auspices of the League, at which the council, either as a whole or through a sub-committee, might act as a mediator. For this purpose, both parties should be treated on a footing of complete equality, and the Government of Angora would necessarily be invited, under the provisions of article 17 of the Covenant, to accept the rights and duties of membership of the League while a settlement was being prepared.

SIR JOSEPH COOK (Australia) congratulated Dr. Nansen on his motion, and said he would like to see it strengthened. People in Australia found it difficult to understand why the League of Nations, with its council, its secretariat and the various technical bodies at its disposal, should be unable to do anything when faced with a crisis in European affairs.

The countries which were negotiating a settlement were represented on the Council of the League, but they apparently preferred to act not through the League but in some other way and in some other place. No doubt there were difficulties. Turkey was still at war with the Allies. Negotiators were actually at work trying to restore peace. Precipitate and unwise action might make matters worse.

Was it not, however, possible to ask the League of Nations to ascertain the facts of the position and to set them forth fairly and dispassionately? Negotiations might

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